

Independent Panel Report on a Provider's Programme Review

Provider	The International College for Personal and Professional Development (ICPPD)
Programme(s) Reviewed	Principal Programme: Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy Embedded Programme Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

Independent Panel Members

Name	Role on Panel	Affiliation
Dr David Denieffe	Chair	South East Technological University
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Consultant
Mary Cooney	Subject Matter Expert	Munster Technological University
Dr Lee Richardson	Academic Expert	Dublin Business School
Elaine Ryan	Industry Representative	Let's Get Talking
Rachel McCauley	Learner Representative	Trinity College Dublin

All members of the independent panel declared their independence of ICPPD and that they have no conflict of interest

Part 1. Introduction

This report outlines the findings of the Independent Evaluation Panel in respect of the revalidation of ICPPD's BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy and the Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy exit award.

The BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy is a 4-year, 240 credit programme which leads to a major award at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy is a 60-credit exit award at level 6 on the NFQ available to learners who successfully complete Year 1 of the principal programme but who, for one reason or another, are unable to continue their studies and withdraw from the programme.

Part 2. Evaluation Process

2.1 Documents Supplied to the Panel

	Document Type	Document Name
1.	Agenda	Panel Site Visit Agenda
2.	Descriptor	Module Documentation – Stage 1
3.	Descriptor	Module Documentation – Stage 2
4.	Descriptor	Module Documentation – Stage 3
5.	Descriptor	Module Documentation – Stage 4
6.	Descriptor	Programme Revalidation Descriptor 2022
7.	Report	Programme Review Report 2022
8.	Report	Self-Evaluation Report against Validation Criteria

2.2 Provider's Representatives Met

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Tom Foran	College President
2.	Micheál Ó Faoláin	Chair of Board of Directors
3.	Chris Melican	College Manager / Registrar
4.	Christine Moran	Academic Director
5.	Lorraine Moran	College Administrator
6.	Anna Mielewczyk	College Administrator
7.	Louise Bryant	College Finance Officer
8.	Therese Gaynor	Programme Leader / Tutor
9.	Anne Marie Lowry	Programme Leader / Tutor
10.	Melanie McGovern	Programme Leader / Tutor
11.	Gearoid Manning	Programme Leader / Tutor
12.	Olive Burke	Programme Leader / Tutor
13.	Liz Sugar	Clinical Practice Co-Ordinator

Note: ICPPD requested that Donna Bell, QQI Expert and QA Mentor, be present at the site visit. This request was approved by the Panel.

2.3 Description of evaluation process

Following receipt of the programme documentation, the Panel undertook a desk review of the material before convening in Athlone for the site visit. Due to space limitations at ICPPD's own premises, the site visit instead took place at the Shamrock Lodge Hotel.

The Panel had some time the evening before the site visit to exchange preliminary observations and identify areas where further probing was required. Some additional private planning time was available to the Panel the morning of the site visit in advance of the opening session. This allowed the Panel to designate areas of questioning.

Over the course of the site visit, the Panel was pleased to see such a high level of staff engagement, which provided valuable insight into the programme and ICPPD's practices, often beyond what could be discerned from the documentation alone. It was evident that significant restructuring had taken place within ICPPD as a result of recommendations of past panels, changing sectoral requirements, and ICPPD's strategic plan over the next validation period, and staff members demonstrated a keen awareness of the implications of these changes on their role within the institution.

A recurring theme which appeared throughout the site visit was ICPPD's learner-centred approach and the commitment of staff to ensuring learners are well-supported during their time on the programme.

The Panel also identified areas where reflection, consideration, articulation, formalisation and/or clarity are required. These include the use of the word 'Holistic' in the title of the programme, how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications, the criteria by which a learner may be refused progression to the next year of their programme in spite of their competencies and assessment results, the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development, ICPPD's approach to formative feedback, and how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes and provision of resources across all centres.

Taking cognisance of the strengths of the programme and programme staff as well as the areas of consideration and enhancement outlined above and throughout this report, the Panel ultimately agreed on a recommendation that the programme is satisfactory subject to proposed conditions.

Part 3. Panel Findings on Provider Programme Review Report

Section A. Context and Terms of Reference for the Programme Review

Commentary:

An Independent Evaluation Panel has been convened in accordance with statutory revalidation requirements in respect of the 240-credit Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy principal programme and the 60-credit Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy exit award delivered by ICPPD. As part of this process, the Panel has been asked to examine the performance of the programme over the last validation period, evaluate the proposed modifications to the revised programme and the rationale for/appropriateness of these, identify areas of strength and vulnerability in the programme, and recommend whether the programme is satisfactorily aligned with the requirements of QQI's Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training.

The programme is intended to be delivered part-time face-to-face, though some online, synchronous elements will also be scheduled.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the context and terms of reference for the programme review and has no recommendations to make.

Section B. Provider Information and Programme Context

Commentary:

The International College for Personal and Professional Development (ICPPD) is a third-level education and training institution with its administrative headquarters in Athlone, Co. Westmeath, and two other delivery centres in Galway and Dublin. ICPPD provides education and training in the domains of Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, Personal and Professional Development, Expressive Arts and Spirituality.

As outlined in Section A, this evaluation is focused on the 240-credit Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy principal programme and the 60-credit Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy exit award. This 4-year programme was initially validated in 2019 and aims to equip learners with the theory, knowledge, competencies and clinical practice skills for a career in counselling and psychotherapy.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the provider information and programme context and has no recommendations to make.

Section C. Baseline qualitative and quantitative information

Programme Data Overview

Commentary:

The number of applications to the BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy has consistently been above the number of places available, with the Athlone centre receiving 30+ applications per year since 2019. The highest number of applications received for a single centre was 46 for the Galway centre in 2021/22. The recently opened Dublin centre has also seen application numbers higher than the number of places available, despite the programme only being advertised in April 2022 for the September 2022 intake. A waiting list is in place to manage the overflow of applications.

Enrolment has also been generally strong, rising from 14 (Athlone) and 18 (Galway) in 2019, to between 22 and 24 since 2020. The profile of learners is overwhelmingly female, with an average of 80% over the last 4 years. There has, however, been a notable increase in male learners in the 2022 intake, with the gender split averaging at 70/30 (female/male). A majority of learners (53%) are aged between 30 and 44, with the 40-44 bracket proving the most common with 23% of learners.

The Panel noted an absence of clear and formalised criteria for scoring learners in the mandatory admission interview and in the assessment of RPL (recognition of prior learning) applications. As a means of ensuring consistency in this process, the Panel has identified a special condition of validation in respect of this.

ICPPD has recorded an average retention rate of 85%, though the 2020-21 intake exhibited a lower than average retention, at 79% for the Athlone centre and 80% for the Galway centre. However, given that the 4-year programme has not yet reached its award stage, the documented completion figures are actually based on stage completion data. ICPPD should review this practice and ensure its figures are aligned with national standard practice.

In relation to ICPPD's grades and awards classifications, the data shows "a high percentage of awards attained at the higher classifications (Distinction/1st Class Honours)" with the 2019/20 intake "on course to achieve 100% first class honours at the end of the programme" (Programme Review Report, Section 4.1.4.2, p. 51). Grade inflation was a matter of serious concern for one of the external examiners, a matter which was recorded in the External Examiner's report. ICPPD is now aware of this and is "conducting a thorough analysis of the marking matrices of all modules" (Programme Review Report, Section 4.1.4.2, p. 51).

Although the programme has not yet reached award stage, data drawn from the surveys of graduates of ICPPD's BA in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 7, and BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy – 1 Year add-on, has shown that 83% of graduates are working either part-time or full-time in counselling and psychotherapy (54% working part-time and 29% working full-time).

Recommendations:

- ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications. [Condition]
- ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice. [Recommendation]

Programme Delivery and Teaching & Learning Strategies

Commentary:

ICPPD utilises three locations, Athlone, Galway and Dublin, for the delivery of the programme. All learners have access to Moodle and the various resources which are hosted there, as well as the EBSCO e-library and e-journal. The Athlone premises features an on-site library, while copies of books are sent to the Galway and Dublin premises also. Given the potential limitations on the breadth of resources available in Dublin and Galway compared to Athlone, the Panel commented that ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres.

With regard to the timetabling of contact hours and learner workload, no particular issues were identified in any of the feedback received from stakeholders. As delivery had moved online during the Covid-19 pandemic, the programme team identified that the theory-based modules “were suited to being delivered in an online teaching environment” (Programme Review Report, Section 3.2.2.2, p. 64).

No major issues were identified in relation to learner workload, though some issues were reported in relation to modules in Year 4. This is commented upon in the Programme Review Report, which states that “Year 4 of the programme is considered as the Stage with greater challenges in terms of assessment workload” (Section 3.2.3.2, p. 71). Some changes have also been proposed to modules in Years 1,2,3 and 4, though these are not based on any negative feedback about the learner workload.

IACP requires learners to maintain an average attendance rate of 85% and, in most cases, full attendance was recorded by ICPPD on the programme’s modules. There were, however, some instances where learners were granted compassionate consideration.

The maximum number of learners on a given intake is 24, and most modules operate a teacher-learner ratio of 1:24, with the exception of group in-house supervision (1:6), external supervision (1:1), and the lectures/tutorials of select modules.

Underpinned by a holistic ethos, the programme places a particular emphasis on personal and professional development, schools of theory, research skills, and clinical practice and skills, facilitating these with a variety of approaches, including lectures, workshops, presentations, journaling, in-class debates, modelling exercises, meditation, creative exercises, holistic reflections, study groups, research, and skills practices, among others. However, the Panel was unable to identify where provision for formative feedback, and the consistency of this, had been accounted for in the teaching and learning strategy.

Finally, with regard to assessment strategies, the Panel advised ICPPD to review its approach to assessment **for**, **as** and **of** learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate. This arose as the Panel found it challenging to identify where assessment **as** learning was being utilised despite the documentation commenting on its inclusion.

Recommendations:

- ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres. [Condition]
- ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development. [Condition]
- ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback. [Condition]
- ICPPD should ensure consistency in the quality of tutor feedback across modules, learner cohorts and centres. [Recommendation]
- ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate. [Recommendation]

Section D. Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders

Evaluation by current learners and graduates of the programme

Commentary:

Anonymised samples of graduate feedback, in addition to the results of a survey of current learners, were documented within the Programme Review Report (Section 4.1, pp. 105-108).

Learner satisfaction with their experience of the programme was overwhelmingly positive, with 95% responding 'Yes' compared with 5% responding 'Somewhat'. Even greater, 98% of learners felt that the programme meets their education and training needs. Positive responses were also received in relation to the manageability of the workload, the effectiveness of the teaching approach on the learner's development as a counsellor/psychotherapist, and the knowledge, experience and practice gained from the programme.

70% of graduates responded that they would be "Very likely" to recommend the programme, with specific praise given to the support from ICPPD staff, the module contents, and the emphasis on the learner's own personal journey.

Recommendations:

The Panel has no specific recommendations to make in relation to this section.

Evaluation of the programme by Staff

Commentary:

As with the learner and graduate feedback, the Panel had an opportunity to review anonymised samples of tutor feedback. This was again largely positive, with tutors complimenting the strength and experience of their peers, the ethos of the College, the programme content, and the holistic approach.

Tutors also commented that they would like to see further additions to the e-Library, improved induction sessions for new tutors, ongoing reviews of assessments, continuous monitoring of module workload, and CPD opportunities which align to tutors' specific modules.

Recommendations:

While the Panel has no specific recommendations to make in relation to this section, some of the Panel's overall special conditions of validation and recommendations for the programme relate to the areas of enhancement identified by tutors and should be addressed accordingly.

External Examiner Feedback

Commentary:

Excerpts of feedback from two different external examiners have been documented in the Programme Review Report (Section 4.4, pp. 114-116). ICCPD has commented upon the value of this feedback in informing the programme's development.

This feedback complimented the overall development of the programme, the strong standards of training, the clarity of the module descriptors, and the comprehensiveness of the teaching and learning strategies.

This feedback also encouraged ICCPD to place continued emphasis on critical skills and the important ability to blend theory and experiential knowledge.

However, one examiner expressed significant concerns over grade inflation and that a majority of learners "were awarded significantly higher marks than was appropriate." (p. 115) ICCPD is aware of this matter and, according to the examiner, recognises "the gravity of this situation."

Recommendations:

The Panel has no specific recommendations to make in relation to this section.

Section E. Programme Quality Assurance

Complaints, appeals and commendations

Commentary:

No formal complaints have been recorded since the last validation of the programme. Similarly, other than grade queries, no formal appeals have been recorded since the last validation of the programme. Feedback on the programme and programme delivery has been overall very positive, with the Programme Review Report (Section 5.1.1, p. 117) noting that “The responses to the surveys across all modules are consistently in the range of 80%-100% on the categories Strongly Agree/Agree or Always/Regularly.

Recommendations:

The Panel has no recommendations to make in this section.

Quality Assurance Systems and Processes

Commentary:

The BA (Hons) programme and its exit award are supported by a QQI-approved quality assurance system. The oversight and enhancement of this system is the responsibility of ICPPD’s internal Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and there are multiple mechanisms in place to gather feedback from stakeholders. The College has not identified any particular issues regarding its data capturing mechanisms.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with ICPPD’s quality assurance systems and processes and has no recommendations to make.

Additional Quality Assurance Systems and Processes required (e.g. online delivery / assessment)

Commentary:

A number of additional quality assurance procedures have been developed for the BA programme which are outlined in Section 2.3.5 (p. 36) of the Programme Revalidation Descriptor. These include an update to the Admissions Policy, the addition of an Intra-Programme Progression Policy, the addition of a Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures, the addition of a Clinical Practice Policy and Procedures, revisions to the quality assurance procedures relating to the learning environment and learner supports, and the addition of a Learner Code of Conduct.

The Panel understands the need for the inclusion of these and is satisfied that they have been developed according to the relevant guidelines, professional body requirements, and national

standards.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the additional quality assurance systems and processes required for the programme and has no recommendations to make.

Section F. Summary Analysis of the programme

Commentary:

ICPPD's SWOT analysis is comprehensive and demonstrates a culture of genuine self-reflection. The programme's holistic focus, the balanced use of theory, competency and reflective practice, the learner-centred approach, the expertise and dedication of staff, and the College's strong stakeholder relationships have all been identified as strengths to the programme.

In contrast, the College has identified vulnerabilities relating to the relatively small staff size (and the limitations of this, particularly in the event a tutor falls ill), the lack of an "ideal" physical learning environment, changing societal trends and their impact, and the absence of certain topics within the current programme.

While changing societal trends has in one instance been flagged as a vulnerability, it also presents an opportunity to integrate additional knowledge which will be of value to the learner as a practitioner. Opportunities have also been identified in the future purchase of owned premises and the potential to build upon the BA (Hons) programme with the development of a Master's programme.

The College views national financial instability, its status as a relatively small provider, the lack of owned premises, and the administrative challenges of managing three centres, as threats.

The Panel appreciates the honest approach taken to the SWOT analysis. The awareness of which areas are performing well and which areas need further attention will provide a foundation for ICPPD to make grounded and informed decisions for both the programme and itself as a growing College.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that ICPPD's SWOT analysis of the programme is fair and genuine and will help inform the College's future strategic plan. There are no recommendations.

Section G. Revision of the programme

Commentary:

ICPPD has proposed the following modifications to the programme:

1. Additional wording has been added to the MIPLO 02, MIPLO 07, and MIPLO 09.
2. The title of Module 105 has been changed to 'Counselling Skills **and Practice**'.
3. The title of Module 205 has been changed to 'Advanced Counselling Skills **and Practice**'.
4. Changes have been made to the module content / MIMLOs of the following six modules:
 - 106 – Lifespan Development and the Journey Principle
 - 107 – Holistic Approaches
 - 108 – Cognitive Behaviour Therapies
 - 206 – Research Methods
 - 305 – Clinical Practice 1
 - 405 – Research Project
5. Some changes have been made to assessment as documented in the module descriptors.
6. Three policies have been revised/amended during the programmatic review. They are:
 - Assessment of Learners Policy/Responsibility for Assessment (*QA Manual, Section C, Chapter 4, 4.1.5*)
 - Teaching and Learning Strategy – Remote Teaching and learning (*QA Manual, Section C, Chapter 4, 4.1.7*)
 - Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy (*QA Manual, Section C, Chapter 4, 4.7*)
7. Due to ICPPD and the programme's continued growth, and the opening of a new delivery location in Dublin, ICPPD's tutoring faculty has increased from 14 to 22.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed modifications are based on sound rationale and will contribute value to the revised programme. The Panel has no specific recommendations to make regarding these proposed modifications.

Part 4. Overall Findings

In this section the panel will give its overall feedback on the conduct of the review and the findings therein. This feedback will inform future provider review processes and will also contribute to the refinement of any programmes being proposed for revalidation following this review process.

Section A. Commentary on review process:

The Panel is satisfied that ICPPD has conducted a thorough review of the programme with the genuine aim of identifying areas where enhancement may be beneficial, as well as to recognise the strengths of the programme. This has appropriately been informed by feedback from current learners, graduates, tutors, external examiners, and external supervisors/practitioners.

Section B. Recommendations on review process:

The Panel has no recommendations to make in relation to ICPPD's review process, though some of the conditions and recommendations identified by the Panel in relation to the revised programme may inform future programmatic reviews.

Section C. Commentary on programme revisions:

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed revisions and modifications to the programme are based on sound rationale and have a genuine place within the programme.

Section D. Recommendations on programme revisions:

For a complete list of special conditions and recommendations, please see Part 3 of the Independent Evaluation Report.

Special Conditions of Validation

- ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications. [Condition]
- ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres. [Condition]
- ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development. [Condition]

Recommendations

- ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback. [Condition]
- ICPPD should ensure consistency in the quality of tutor feedback across modules, learner cohorts and centres. [Recommendation]
- ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate. [Recommendation]

- ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice. [Recommendation]

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Hume". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Signed:

Panel Chairperson:

Date: 14/1/2023

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

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

Part 1. Provider details

Provider name	International College for Personal and Professional Development (“ICPPD”)
Date of site visit	23 November 2022
Date of report	23 December 2022

Section A. Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy
	Award	Major
	Credit	240
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Embedded programme 1	Title	Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy
	Award	Minor
	Credit	60
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Section B. Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr David Denieffe	Chair	South East Technological University
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Consultant
Mary Cooney	Subject Matter Expert	Munster Technological University
Dr Lee Richardson	Academic Expert	Dublin Business School
Elaine Ryan	Industry Representative	Let's Get Talking
Rachel McCauley	Learner Representative	Trinity College Dublin

Section C. Principal Programme - Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)	Minimum number of learners
Coláiste Chiaráin, Summerhill, Athlone	24	14
Galway Business School, GCI House, Salthill, Galway	24	14
Zestlife College, Unit 1A, Earls court Industrial Estate, Beaumont Avenue, Churchtown, Dublin 14	24	14

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	September 2024
Maximum number of annual intakes	1
Maximum total number of learners per intake	24
Intake Schedule (<i>e.g. September, January</i>)	September
Programme duration	4 years
Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment: The Panel is satisfied that the proposed enrolment is appropriate to the programme, the size of the provider, and the resources available.	
Target learner groups	
ICPPD target learners are typically motivated to enrol on a counselling and psychotherapy training programme for a variety of reasons including: • Experience of being in personal therapy • Personal and professional development / personal journey • An interest in helping people • To acquire or enhance already existing therapeutic skills • To attain a professional or academic qualification • Career change • To avail of adult education / 2nd chance learning The expectations of the target learners are that the programme would provide: • Experiential learning that combines a robust theoretical element with transferable skills and personal and professional development • A professional qualification that is recognised nationally and internationally • A recognised degree in counselling and psychotherapy • Supports to fulfil academic and professional programme requirements • Guidance and supervision as trainee counsellors/psychotherapists	

- Support with sourcing clinical placements

The holistic ethos of the college and the underpinning of the programme with this ethos is quoted by almost 50% learners as the reason why they chose to apply for ICPPD's programme in particular. Other factors for choosing ICPPD include:

- Reputation of the college
- Syllabus/Components of the programme
- Experience of the college through Information Evenings, interaction with admissions staff
- Delivery modes – face-to-face delivery
- Geographic locations

Age Profile:

Applicants range in age from 22 – 66+. The typical learner on the programme is aged 30-60.

Previous Qualifications of applicants:

Over 50% of applicants for the programme, have previous third level educational qualifications of NFQ 7+ or equivalent.

Foundation/Certificate in Counselling/Psychotherapy:

On average in each cohort of learners, 30% have completed a foundation/certificate level programme in counselling, psychotherapy or related area.

Occupation/Profession of Learners:

Applicants/Learners on the BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy programme are employed as of the following occupations/professions:

- Financial Services/Accountancy/Banking
- Nursing/Care assistant/Social Work
- Civil/Public Servant
- Homemaker/Carer
- Self-employed – trades/hair & beauty/farming
- Engineering - medical devices/pharmaceutical/ research & development
- Retail manager/assistant
- Solicitor /Legal secretary
- Complimentary Therapies – Reiki/ Hypnotherapy/Yoga Instructor
- Childcare
- Teaching /School Counsellor/School chaplain/Special Needs Assistant
- Information Technology – engineering/software
- Office administration/management
- Marketing/Business Development
- Hospitality/Tourism
- Unemployed

[Extracted from Programme Revalidation Descriptor]

Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Part-Time

The teaching and learning modalities
Classroom / Face-to-Face Workplace Online (Synchronous)
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 Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy provides adult learners with the opportunity to develop their knowledge of a range of theoretical models of counselling and psychotherapy, and the capacity to integrate these counselling and psychotherapeutic skills within their practice. The programme was initially validated in September 2019 and validated by the professional body, the Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), in 2020. Academic validation by QQI and professional accreditation by IACP ensures the learner of standards being upheld by the provider and supports them as graduates to acquire employment within the field of counselling and psychotherapy. The programme is delivered in Athlone, Galway and Dublin, the Dublin location having been added in September 2022 following approval of an additional centre by QQI. The programme is highly experiential in its delivery, hence class sizes are restricted to 24. The favoured mode of delivery for this programme is face-to-face with some virtual, synchronous delivery timetabled for theoretical aspects of the programme, within criteria set out by the professional accrediting body, IACP. As learners progress through the programme, they deepen and expand their knowledge, skills and competence in the field of counselling and psychotherapy, underpinned by the holistic ethos of the programme and the college. At ICPPD, self-awareness is seen as vital to personal and professional development and is encouraged and promoted throughout this programme. Learners on the programme: (i) Acquire competency in academic writing, research and reflective enquiry (ii) Develop their knowledge and skills in a range of evidence-based counselling modalities (iii) Practice within ethical frameworks and apply ethical decision-making skills to their practice (iv) Demonstrate sensitivity to all forms of cultural diversity (v) Gain insight into the human condition through their self-development and examination of professional requirements and standards (vi) Provide a safe service to a wide range of clients To further develop their practical application of knowledge and skills in workplace contexts with clients, learners undertake Counselling and Psychotherapy Practice. This will be delivered in Year 3 and 4 through the Clinical Practice modules when learners become trainee counsellors in supervised placement settings. The Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy provides learners with a comprehensive and flexible approach to theoretical, experiential, and skills-based learning. The

programme is delivered in small group environments, by well-qualified and experienced academic tutors, using a quality curriculum.

Graduates are employment-ready, reflective practitioners, who can make significant contributions as counsellors and psychotherapists to the community and in the workplace.

[Extracted from Programme Revalidation Descriptor]

Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE
Tutor Tutors are selected on the basis of their academic and professional qualifications, teaching and clinical experience and person-related skills. They are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of programmes at ICPPD, and for ensuring the quality of the delivery of those programmes, under the guidance of the Academic Director. Tutoring staff are required to hold a minimum of an Level 8 qualification in Counselling/Psychotherapy, or equivalent and a Level 9 qualification. At ICPPD, tutors are employed for their expertise in a module, thus providing an authentic learning experience therefore specific modules require a tutor to have specialised training and expertise e.g. Trauma and Body Psychotherapy, Research Modules, Gestalt Approach, Psychodynamic Perspectives, Cognitive Behavioural Approaches, Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy. The tutor will also be an accredited and practising counsellor/psychotherapist. Pedagogy, andragogy and paralogy experience is required.	8
Core Tutor Core Tutors at ICPPD are essential in providing support to students throughout the course. Core Tutors have central involvement in admission, course management, theory, skills training, supervision and assessment. They are crucial to the professional formation of the student Counsellors or Psychotherapists and as such undertake the bulk of training and assessment. Core tutors are expected to be available to support the admissions process at interviews and support the Programme Leader in conducting Learner Support Meetings, Fitness-to-Practice (Year 2) and end-of-year Progression Meetings. IACP Course Accreditation Criteria requires a minimum of 2 Core Tutors per cohort. In order to fulfil the role of Core Tutor, in addition to the criteria for tutors above, these staff members must be accredited members of IACP and be appropriately qualified to teach and supervise the main elements of the programme.	4
Programme Leader The Programme Leader has responsibility for the day-to-day management and coordination of the organisation, operation, and delivery of a specific College programme, or group of programmes, and has central involvement in admission, course management, theory, skills training, supervision and assessment, when/as relevant. The Programme Leader supports the other programme staff including other Tutors, Clinical Practice	1.0

Coordinator and In-house Supervisors (who are responsible for meeting criteria of professional bodies/professional accreditation). Programme Leaders are required to fulfil the criteria as outlined above for Core Tutors.	
Research Supervisor Research Supervisors are appointed to each learner in Year 4 to provide academic supervision throughout the academic year and to help and to advise their supervisees. Research Supervisors are required to have a qualification in Counselling and Psychotherapy (Level 8 or equivalent) and to have completed a Level 9 qualification or equivalent that comprised a research thesis.	1.0
Clinical Practice Co-Ordinator Clinical Practice Coordinators are responsible for the overall delivery and administration of the Clinical Practice module. They provide support to the trainee counsellor / psychotherapist and are in regular contact to offer clarity and encouragement. They are also available to offer emergency supervision when required. The Clinical Practice Co-Ordinator is required to be an IACP-accredited member and supervisor and hold a Level 8 or equivalent qualification in Counselling and Psychotherapy.	0.3
In-House Supervisor In-house Supervisors facilitate the in-house group supervision of trainee counsellors / psychotherapists. In-House Group Supervisors are required to be IACP, BACP or IAHIP Accredited Supervisors.	0.3
Academic Director The Academic Director oversees the academic planning, development, delivery, management and monitoring of the programme. The Academic Director must hold a minimum of a Level 9 qualification in Counselling / Psychotherapy and be an Accredited counsellor / psychotherapist and Supervisor.	1
Registrar The Registrar has responsibility for academic affairs within ICPPD, including responsibility for academic administration, academic regulations, academic quality and standards and maintaining academic records. The Registrar will have excellent administrative and IT skills. A minimum level 8 qualification or equivalent is a requirement.	0.5
Administration Staff The College Administration Staff have operational responsibility for the administration function within the College. Administration Staff are required to have administration and IT experience and to have excellent customer service skills.	2.0

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Lecture / Tutorial	1:24
Class Presentations	1:24
Experiential and co-operative learning (including formative peer practice sessions)	1:24
Clinical Placement	N/A
Group in-house supervision	1:6
External research supervision	1:1
Group work and discussions	1:24
In-class debates	1:24
Case Study	N/A
Directed learning	N/A
Online activity (including use of Moodle)	N/A
Creative projects / exercises	N/A
Holistic reflection, practice and journaling	N/A
Assignment completion and feedback	N/A
Poster presentation	N/A
Article and literature review	N/A
Research activities, project and reports	N/A
Peer study groups	N/A
Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing: The Panel is satisfied that there is sound rationale for the continued delivery of the programme, the learner profile is appropriate, and there is qualified and capable staff in place to deliver the programme.	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG24126	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	2022

Section C.1: Embedded Programme - Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)	Minimum number of learners
Coláiste Chiaráin, Summerhill, Athlone	24	14
Galway Business School, GCI House, Salthill, Galway	24	14
Zestlife College, Unit 1A, Earls court Industrial Estate, Beaumont Avenue, Churchtown, Dublin 14	24	14

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	N/A
Maximum number of annual intakes	N/A
Maximum total number of learners per intake	N/A
Intake Schedule (<i>e.g. September, January</i>)	N/A
Programme duration (<i>months from start to completion</i>)	
Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:	
As per principal programme.	

Target learner groups	
The Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy (60 credit, Level 6 Minor Award) is an Exit Award available to learners who withdraw from the programme having completed all Year 1 modules and assessments successfully and therefore attained the requisite number of credits (60 ECTS). This Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 6 Exit Award, is not advertised nor recruited for separately from the principal programme in which it is embedded.	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Part-Time
The teaching and learning modalities:	
As per principal programme.	
Brief synopsis of the programme (<i>e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.</i>)	
Learners who successfully complete Year 1 of the BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy and subsequently are certified with this Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, Level 6 Exit Award receive academic recognition for the modules completed.	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE
As per principal programme.	

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
As per principal programme	

Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:
As per principal programme.

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG24129	Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	2022

Section D. Other noteworthy features of the application

The Panel would like to commend:

- The significant restructuring which has taken place within ICCPD as a result of the recommendations of past panels, changing sectoral requirements, and ICCPD's strategic plan over the next validation period.
- The Panel commends the engagement of staff during the site visit.
- The Panel commends ICCPD's evident commitment to its learners and the learner-centred approach taken in the delivery of the programme.

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

Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

Not applicable.

Part 2. Evaluation against the validation criteria

The panel should complete this section with commentary against each criterion to support the recommendation given in the 'Satisfactory?' column i.e. Yes, No, or Partially.

If 'Yes', there should be a comment citing the evidence for this finding. Likewise, there should be an explanation as to why the panel have concluded that the criterion has either not been met or only partially so.

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.¹		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD meets the prerequisites to apply for validation and that ICCPD is in compliance with all applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. However, the Panel has not had sight of any signed document from ICCPD's President confirming the veracity of the information in the application.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

¹ 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 or 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 <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards</i>. 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.² (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.³		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	The Panel is of the view that further work is required before ICPPD can be considered to have met QQI's requirements under this criterion. The programme aims and objectives are articulated clearly in the Programme Revalidation Descriptor and there is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award. The Panel spent some time discussing with ICPPD representatives the use of the word 'holistic' in the title of the programme, noting that 'holistic' can mean different things to different people and that other providers delivering similar programmes would likely argue that their programme is holistic but not include the word in the title. With these factors in mind, the Panel queried ICPPD's rationale for using the word in the title of the programme and sought to understand how ICPPD delivers a programme holistically. ICPPD representatives responded to this stating that the word 'holistic' was added to reflect the programme's focus on the human person, encompassing mind, body and spirit, and the need for therapists to engage with their own process. As such, each class begins with a 3-5 learner reflection, which may consist of silence, meditation, poetry, or any other form of reflective practice.

² Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

³ Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

		Representatives further noted that consideration was given to the use of 'integrative' instead of 'holistic' but feedback from stakeholders highlighted that 'holistic' was perceived more favourably. Representatives continued by guiding the Panel through some of the modules while describing the holistic approach used in the delivery of these. It was evident from this discussion that ICCPD indeed operated more of a holistic approach than had been articulated in the documentation. In respect of this, the Panel has identified a special condition of validation: Condition 1 ICCPD must reflect on its use of the word 'Holistic' within the title of the programme and ensure that the holistic elements of the programme are appropriately articulated within the documentation so that the rationale for its inclusion in the title is clearly defined and justified. The minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) and minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) are both specified, and the Panel is satisfied that these are consistent with the relevant QQI awards standards.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	As per principal programme.

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.⁴ 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 evidence⁵ of learner demand for the programme. (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant⁶. (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.⁷ 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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. ICCPD operates a systematic approach to the gathering of stakeholder feedback and this helps to ensure that any proposed updates to the programme are informed by industry professionals, the needs of learners, and regulatory and professional body requirements. ICCPD's own internal programmatic review (the results of which are published in the provider's Programme Review Report) found that the programme "as initially designed and with some modifications to component modules provides and will continue to provide adult learners with reputable standards and qualifications within the field of counselling and psychotherapy..." (Overall Findings, Programme Review Report, p. 6).

⁴ 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.

⁵ This might be predictive or indirect.

⁶ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

⁷ 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.

		Supporting this, ICPPD has observed a consistently strong demand for the programme, with the number of applications received generally exceeding the number of available places. A benchmarking exercise has been carried out against six other similar programmes from different providers as a point of comparison.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

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 satisfied⁸. 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 (CEFR⁹) 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 <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i>, 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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	The Panel is of the view that further work is required before ICPPD can be considered to have met the requirements under this criterion. As part of ICPPD's admissions process, prospective learners are required to attend an interview. Although the Programme Revalidation Descriptor (p. 50) states that "The interview panel follow college provided guidelines and criteria for interview adult learners," the Panel was unable to find where these guidelines and criteria were documented. The Panel explored the admission interview with ICPPD representatives during the site visit. This discussion revealed that the interview takes guidance from IACP's guidelines and looks at the maturity, openness and personal development of the candidate, in addition to their preparedness and willingness to commit to the demands of the programme. It was also noted that although the interview is a formal part of the admissions process (for all of ICPPD's programmes), there is

⁸ 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

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

		no formal scoring system. Rather, interviewers complete a tick box form based on the given criteria. The Panel expressed concern that the lack of a formal scoring system could leave ICPPD vulnerable to procedural inconsistencies, as it could be perceived that candidates can only pass the interview based on the subjective judgement of the interview panel. In the event a learner were to appeal a decision to refuse them entry, evidence of a scoring system set against defined criteria is crucial to reinforce ICPPD's decision. This need to ensure consistency also extends to ICPPD's assessment of applications for recognition of prior learning (RPL), which similarly involves a suitability interview. A special condition of validation has been identified in respect of this: Condition 2 ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications. During the site visit, representatives informed the Panel that learners are not necessarily granted progression into years 3 and 4 of the programme based on academic merit alone. Rather, there is a need to show an appropriate level of maturity and engagement, as well as a commitment to personal therapy. The Panel queried how such evaluations are made, to which representatives responded that formal learner support meetings are scheduled with the programme leader or core tutor at the end of the academic year. The Panel stressed that a decision to refuse a learner entry to the next year of their programme is a significant one and must be backed up by clear evidence. This is to ensure fairness to the learner and consistency and transparency of the process. However, no criteria had been articulated in the documentation. A special condition of validation has been identified in respect of this: Condition 3 ICPPD must articulate the criteria by which a learner may be refused progression to the next year of their programme in spite of their competencies and assessment results, and how fairness, consistency and transparency are maintained in such decisions.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	As per principal programme.

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 <i>programme</i> 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 principles¹⁰. 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.¹¹		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	The Panel is of the view that further work is required before ICPPD can be considered to have met the requirements under this criterion. The Panel is satisfied that the programme's structure and schedule is conducive to achievement of the learning outcomes and that the curriculum is comprehensively documented. The credit allocation of modules is mostly consistent, though a discrepancy was noted in the Programme Revalidation Descriptor in relation to the 'Person Centred Approach' module, which is given an allocation of 5 ECTS Credit Units instead of 10, given the module's requirement of 250 learner effort hours. However, this is corrected in the module descriptor. Nonetheless, ICPPD should ensure that this is reviewed for consistency, as per Recommendation 8 of the Panel. Over the course of the Panel's evaluation, evidence of the integration of module content explicitly addressing gender diversity and psychosexual development was notably limited. Although there is reference to the latter in the 'Lifespan Development and the Journey Principle' module, the level of depth in which it is covered is unclear. A special condition of validation has been identified in respect of this:

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

			Condition 4 ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	As per principal programme.	

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 staff¹² (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 development¹³ opportunities¹⁴. 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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. ICCPD has identified a complement of available, qualified and capable staff for the continued delivery of the programme, and specifications for staff are set out in Section C of this report. The Panel recognises that the ICCPD is a relatively small provider and, as such, it is expected that some 'doubling up' of roles will occur. Notwithstanding this, ICCPD has made a concerted effort across its quality assurance system to ensure that any 'doubling up' does not impact the integrity of academic processes. However, it was noted during the site visit that the Academic Director also assumes the role of Suicide Prevention Officer, a crucial lifeline to learners who may be struggling. The Panel expressed concern that given the already heavy workload of the Academic Director, it may not always be possible to immediately drop these responsibilities to assume the role of Suicide Prevention Officer, particularly if the learner

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

		in need is located in Dublin or Galway. It is therefore recommended that ICPPD reassign the responsibility of Suicide Prevention Officer as a more dedicated role. Furthermore, the visibility of this role should be increased so that learners are aware from the beginning that such support is available and where they can access it in times of crisis. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this: Recommendation 1 The Panel recommends that ICPPD separate the role of the Suicide Prevention Officer from the remit of the Academic Director and reassign this responsibility as a more dedicated role and increase the visibility of this role within the organisation. It is noted in Section 1C.1.19 of the Programme Revalidation Descriptor (p. 20) that “Staff are encouraged to undertake CPD measures to improve their skills, knowledge and abilities...” and that “An annual CPD training budget is allocated by the Board of Directors and administered through the Executive Management Committee” which is available to all tutors and core tutors. A Staff Development Register is maintained by the College as a log of all professional development undertaken. While this is very positive to see documented, the Panel commented that ICPPD should also articulate the types of opportunities which are available to staff, as some may not be as visible or as obvious. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this: Recommendation 2 ICPPD should articulate the opportunities available to staff for professional development of teaching and learning approaches, and in particular pedagogy, and support for online programme delivery.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	The Panel is of the view that further work is required before ICPPD can be considered to have met the requirements under this criterion. Learners enrolling on the programme will commence their studies at one of three locations, Athlone, Galway and Dublin, the latter of which is the most recent addition. Given this use of multiple delivery locations, it was incumbent upon the Panel to ensure that sufficient, quality and equitable resources would be available to learners no matter where they choose to study. ICPPD utilises an 'Evaluation of External Training Facility Form' to assess the suitability and quality of external locations, and each location is subject to ongoing review "through the use of the 'Post-Delivery Evaluation of ICPPD Centre Survey' which is submitted by each Tutor to the College Administrator upon completion of their relevant module/programme delivery." Where a delivery site is found to be unsatisfactory, it "is removed from the College portfolio of outreach centres as soon as is physically and feasibly possible" (Programme Revalidation Descriptor, Section 8.2.1, p. 82). During the site visit, representatives provided additional insight, noting that an allocation of books is sent to each venue and that, although Athlone is the College's administrative headquarters, there are contact details at each venue for local facilities as required.

		The Panel commented that the documentation did not adequately articulate how consistency would be maintained across locations, other than to say that there are forms in place to assess each location. However, how ICPPD ensures consistency in the provision of resources or in tutors' approach to teaching and learning, for example, was not expressed. A special condition of validation has been identified in respect of this: Condition 5 ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres. Classrooms are equipped with full audio-visual technology, including interactive screens, projectors and sound systems. Moodle is used as a repository for programme and module materials and also provides access to EBSCO e-Library and research database. Academic Writing workshops are available to learners for free and training sessions for learners and tutors are scheduled for the beginning of the academic year in the use of Zoom, Moodle, EBSCO and other online resources. The projected income and costs associated with the programme over the next validation period (2024-29) are detailed in the budget in Section 1C.1.12 of the Programme Revalidation Descriptor (pp. 13-14).
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	As per principal programme.

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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. The Programme Revalidation Descriptor (Section 5.8, p. 69) outlines the various formal and informal channels by which learners can interact with, and are supported by, peer learners, tutors and practitioners. These include integration activities, Moodle discussion fora, in-house supervision, programme boards, clinical practice and the Year 4 Research Project. ICCPD has clear and defined arrangements in place to ensure that learning and performance on the Clinical Practice module is appropriately monitored/supervised.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

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, support¹⁵ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	The Panel is of the view that further work is required before ICPPD can be considered to have met the requirements under this criterion. As the title of the programme would suggest, the programme teaching and learning strategy is underpinned by the College's "holistic ethos and the understanding of the development of the whole person, and the inter-relatedness of the body, mind and spirit along with humanistic principles guide and formulate the design of programmes and the policies and procedures that support these processes." (Programme Revalidation Descriptor, Section 5.6, p. 64) The programme places a particular emphasis on personal and professional development, schools of theory, research skills, and clinical practice and skills, facilitating these with a variety of approaches, including lectures, workshops, presentations, journaling, in-class debates, modelling exercises, meditation, creative exercises, holistic reflections, study groups, research, and skills practices, among others. As indicated from the above, the guiding principles and methodologies which form ICPPD's teaching and learning strategy are adequately articulated in the documentation. However, while formative assessment is addressed within the documentation, the Panel noted an absence of any clearly articulated approach to formative feedback. In spite of this, ICPPD representatives were able to respond to the Panel's queries around this, expressing that there is provision in place for formative feedback. Further to this, the Panel noted that mechanisms should be in place to ensure the quality of tutor feedback is consistent, particularly in light of the new Dublin location. One special condition of validation and one recommendation have been identified in respect of this:

¹⁵ 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.

		Condition 6 ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback. Recommendation 3 ICPPD should ensure consistency in the quality of tutor feedback across modules, learner cohorts and centres.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Partially	As per principal programme.

Criterion 10. **There are sound assessment strategies**

a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i>¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning. e) There is a satisfactory written <i>programme assessment strategy</i> for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICPPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. Following a thorough review of the documentation, the Panel is satisfied that ICPPD has developed, implemented and documented a robust assessment strategy, appropriately aligned with the learning outcomes, which includes formative assessment, and which interfaces effectively with ICPPD's wider quality assurance procedures. The Panel spent some time during the site visit discussing ICPPD's approach to assessment of learning, for learning, and as learning, which is referenced within the documentation. The Panel was interested to see how these translated through the assessment strategy and into individual assessments. However, the Panel was unable to see where assessment as learning was being utilised and encouraged ICPPD to review this. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this: Recommendation 4 ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate.

¹⁶ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁷ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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).

Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.
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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 disabilities²⁰. i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i>²¹ 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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. The Programme Revalidation Descriptor (Section 4.1, p. 48) outlines ICCPD's approach to the provision of programme and learner information. This includes the promotion of a programme via the website, information evenings, orientation sessions, dissemination of information via Moodle, and induction sessions. Entry requirements are defined, though the admission interview, as per Condition 2, must be further articulated. During the site visit, ICCPD representatives spoke of some of the supports and accommodations which are in place for learners who may require them, while also noting areas in need of further enhancement. During this discussion, accessibility supports were given particular focus, as the Panel was of the view that accessibility supports should be more visibly promoted so that learners are aware as early as possible what ICCPD can and cannot facilitate. The Panel also referred ICCPD to the many digital badges offered by AHEAD, which are a valuable resource for educators on accessibility.

²⁰ 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).

²¹ See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

		The Panel would like to make two recommendations in respect of this: Recommendation 5 ICPPD should ensure that accessibility supports for learners are made visible and accessible from the point of admission. Recommendation 5.1 The Panel refers ICPPD to the digital badges available through AHEAD relating to accessibility and recommends that staff undertake these badges. Over the course of the evaluation, the Panel became aware that some learners became quite anxious around the time of the clinical practice interviews, as many (particularly older) learners felt out of practice and unsure of the expectations of such interviews. To alleviate this anxiety and offer learners a greater feeling of preparedness, the Panel would like to make the following recommendation: Recommendation 6 The Panel recommends that ICPPD offer all learners a preparatory workshop in advance of clinical placement interviews for learners who may be out of practice or unsure of the expectations of such interviews.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

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-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 assurance²² 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
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that ICCPD has addressed QQI's requirements under this criterion. ICCPD has a robust set of QQI-approved quality assurance procedures underpinning the design, development and delivery of its programmes. The required personnel for effective management of the programme have been identified and there are satisfactory mechanisms in place to maintain programme currency in consultation with relevant stakeholders. However, one point of note relating to ICCPD's reporting which the Panel raised during the site visit was the programme completion figures. These should be based on the number of learners who started and completed the programme; however, as ICCPD has not yet reached the award stage and certification of the BA (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy, there were understandably no completion figures available. As a result, the completion figures which have been documented are based on stage completion, rather than programme completion. The Panel highlighted that this would be in contrast to national standard practice and should be reviewed as a matter of reporting accuracy. The Panel would like to make a recommendation in respect of this:

²² See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

		Recommendation 7 ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice. All quality assurance systems are subject to ongoing review and updates as appropriate or as required. Discrepancies and/or inconsistencies between documents are therefore to be expected. During the Panel's evaluation, a few examples of these were identified, such as the erroneous credit allocation as noted under Criterion 5. In view of this, the Panel would like to make the following recommendation: Recommendation 8 The Panel recommends that ICPPD conduct a comprehensive review of its programme documentation to identify and correct any errors, discrepancies or inconsistencies.
Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy	Yes	As per principal programme.

Part 3. Overall recommendation to QQI

3.1 Principal programme: Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

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;
X	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);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

1. The application for validation almost fully meets the validation criteria.

Commendations

1. The Panel commends the significant restructuring which has taken place within ICPPD as a result of the recommendations of past panels, changing sectoral requirements, and ICPPD's strategic plan over the next validation period.
2. The Panel commends the engagement of staff during the site visit.
3. The Panel commends ICPPD's evident commitment to its learners and the learner-centred approach taken in the delivery of the programme.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

1. ICPPD must reflect on the its use of the word 'Holistic' within the title of the programme and ensure that the holistic elements of the programme are appropriately articulated within the documentation so that the rationale for its inclusion in the title is clearly defined and justified.
2. ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications.
3. ICPPD must articulate the criteria by which a learner may be refused progression to the next year of their programme in spite of their competencies and assessment results, and how fairness, consistency and transparency are maintained in such decisions.
4. ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development.
5. ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback.
6. ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres.

Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that ICPPD separate the role of the Suicide Prevention Officer from the remit of the Academic Director and reassign this responsibility as a more dedicated role and increase the visibility of this role within the organisation.

2. ICPPD should articulate the opportunities available to staff for professional development of teaching and learning approaches, and in particular pedagogy, and support for online programme delivery.
3. ICPPD should ensure consistency in the quality of tutor feedback across modules, learner cohorts and centres.
4. ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate.
5. ICPPD should ensure that accessibility supports for learners are made visible and accessible from the point of admission.
 - 5.1 The Panel refers ICPPD to the digital badges available through AHEAD relating to accessibility and recommends that staff undertake these badges.
6. The Panel recommends that ICPPD offer all learners a preparatory workshop in advance of clinical placement interviews for learners who may be out of practice or unsure of the expectations of such interviews.
7. ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice.
8. The Panel recommends that ICPPD conduct a comprehensive review of its programme documentation to identify and correct any errors, discrepancies or inconsistencies.

Embedded programme 1: Certificate in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy

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;
X	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);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

1. The application for validation almost fully meets the validation criteria.

Commendations

1. The Panel commends the significant restructuring which has taken place within ICPPD as a result of the recommendations of past panels, changing sectoral requirements, and ICPPD's strategic plan over the next validation period.
2. The Panel commends the engagement of staff during the site visit.
3. The Panel commends ICPPD's evident commitment to its learners and the learner-centred approach taken in the delivery of the programme.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

1. ICPPD must reflect on the its use of the word 'Holistic' within the title of the programme and ensure that the holistic elements of the programme are appropriately articulated within the documentation so that the rationale for its inclusion in the title is clearly defined and justified.
2. ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications.
3. ICPPD must articulate the criteria by which a learner may be refused progression to the next year of their programme in spite of their competencies and assessment results, and how fairness, consistency and transparency are maintained in such decisions.
4. ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development.
5. ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback.
6. ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres.

Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that ICPPD separate the role of the Suicide Prevention Officer from the remit of the Academic Director and reassign this responsibility as a more dedicated role and increase the visibility of this role within the organisation.
2. ICPPD should articulate the opportunities available to staff for professional development of teaching and learning approaches, and in particular pedagogy, and support for online programme delivery.
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4. ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate.
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 - 5.1 The Panel refers ICPPD to the digital badges available through AHEAD relating to accessibility and recommends that staff undertake these badges.
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7. ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice.
8. The Panel recommends that ICPPD conduct a comprehensive review of its programme documentation to identify and correct any errors, discrepancies or inconsistencies.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

1. ICPPD must reflect on the its use of the word 'Holistic' within the title of the programme and ensure that the holistic elements of the programme are appropriately articulated within the documentation so that the rationale for its inclusion in the title is clearly defined and justified.
2. ICPPD must further articulate how consistency is maintained in the scoring of learners in the admission interview and in the assessment of RPL applications.
3. ICPPD must articulate the criteria by which a learner may be refused progression to the next year of their programme in spite of their competencies and assessment results, and how fairness, consistency and transparency are maintained in such decisions.
4. ICPPD must consider the integration of module content which explicitly addresses gender diversity and psychosexual development.
5. ICPPD must formalise its approach to formative feedback.
6. ICPPD must provide greater clarity as to how consistency will be maintained in the delivery of programmes (i.e. teaching and learning) and provision of resources (e.g. e-library) across all centres.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. The Panel recommends that ICPPD separate the role of the Suicide Prevention Officer from the remit of the Academic Director and reassign this responsibility as a more dedicated role and increase the visibility of this role within the organisation.
2. ICPPD should articulate the opportunities available to staff for professional development of teaching and learning approaches, and in particular pedagogy, and support for online programme delivery.
3. ICPPD should ensure consistency in the quality of tutor feedback across modules, learner cohorts and centres.
4. ICPPD should review its approach to assessment for, as and of learning with the aim of incorporating each as appropriate.
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 - 5.1 The Panel refers ICPPD to the digital badges available through AHEAD relating to accessibility and recommends that staff undertake these badges.
6. The Panel recommends that ICPPD offer all learners a preparatory workshop in advance of clinical placement interviews for learners who may be out of practice or unsure of the expectations of such interviews.
7. ICPPD should review its approach to reporting learner completion figures and ensure these are aligned with national standard practice.
8. The Panel recommends that ICPPD conduct a comprehensive review of its programme documentation to identify and correct any errors, discrepancies or inconsistencies.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

Nil.

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

Panel chairperson: David Denieffe

Signed: 

Date: 14/1/2023

3.2 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 4. **Proposed programme schedules** *(post panel feedback and consequent amendments, if any)*