

## Parts 2-6

### Institution-led QA – Annual Information

Parts 2-6 are completed annually with information pertaining to the reporting period (i.e. the preceding academic year only).

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#### Part 2: Institution-led QA – Annual

Part 2 provides information relating to institution-led quality assurance for the reporting period.

##### Section 1: Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Developments

**1.1** How quality assurance procedures and enhancement systems have supported the achievement of strategic objectives in the reporting period.

On August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018, an independent review panel visited CCT College Dublin on behalf of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to undertake the site visit as part of the re-engagement process implemented by QQI following the formation of the agency under the 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act.

In preparation for the site visit, the College had completed an extensive self-evaluation against the QQI Core Quality Assurance Guidelines, with input from a broad range of stakeholders and utilising information sources to evidence the findings. The College developed a Quality Improvement Plan, based upon the findings of the self-evaluation. Following the site visit by the review panel a report was issued which included specific advice from the panel to assist CCT College in its future development. In particular, at the request of the College, the panel focused on advice to support the College's intentions to extend its scope of provision to level 9 taught Masters programmes.

While formal confirmation of QQI's approval of quality assurance arrangements was issued in December 2018, the College commenced addressing the panel advice and the QIP objectives from the outset of the 2018/19 academic year. A specific development in this regard was the creation of, and appointment to, the role of Head of Enhancement. The College created this role having identified its ambitions and the post holder took up the position from January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019.

The following report provides a progress update on College developments to address both the panel's advice and the College's QIP objectives, under the headings as outlined in the QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. The College conducted its standard annual monitoring processes and the information provided within this report is drawn from the findings of those review mechanisms and from the January 2019 review of the CCT Strategic Plan 2018 - 2020.

## 1.2 Significant specific changes (if any) to QA within the institution.

Through the re-engagement self-evaluation, CCT identified the following actions:

- Finalise risk minimisation relating to potential absence of the College President for a sustained period of time.
- Investigate opportunities to further increase externality in governance

The re-engagement panel supported the College's intentions in this regard when they acknowledged the separation of commercial and academic governance reinforced by the intentions to appoint independent Chairs to both Academic Council and the Board of Directors. The panel advised that the same openness to external expertise be maintained and expanded, especially in the planning and development of Level 9 programmes.

### **2019 update**

The College has taken a number of steps to address the above actions and the advice of the re-engagement panel and is of the view that these matters are now largely complete, albeit that matters of governance will naturally continue to be monitored, with the action regarding learner engagement on Academic Council to be finalised.

Arrangements to facilitate continuation of duties and fulfilment of responsibilities in the event of the absence of the College President have now been formalised. The Dean for Administration and Finance can access all records for the day to day operation of the College and is in a position to deputise for the President. The Dean of Academic Affairs supports the President in HR planning and development matters with Business Solicitors Flynn O'Driscoll providing legal direction and oversight on personnel recruitment, selection, management and performance matters. The Dean of School works with the President in identifying programme / business development opportunities, planning academic staffing requirements according to discipline and the allocation of faculty to programmes. With the firmer establishment of the roles of the three Deans, delineation of responsibilities is now more clearly defined. In addition to the arrangements to facilitate continuation of duties, towards the end of the 2018/19 academic year the College was actively seeking keyman insurance to facilitate the provision of financial support in the event of the death of the College President.

In September 2018 Dr Dermot Douglas commenced in the role of Chair of Academic Council. Dr Douglas is an experienced academic and former registrar with extensive knowledge of quality assurance and QQI policies and procedures. This appointment has strengthened the independence and externality in academic governance and decision-making within the College. More recently, the College has secured a new appointment to the Board of Directors to take up the position of non-executive Chair of the Board. The role requirements and expectations were drafted and agreed by the Deans and President early in the 2018 / 19 academic year and a non-executive Chair of the Board joined the Board in September 2019.

In January 2019 the College embarked on the first annual review of its strategic plan 2018 - 2020. Through this process it identified that the Advisory Board was no longer required due to the combined breadth of expertise present in the College Senior Management Team, along with the appointment of the independent Chairs of both Academic Council and the Board of Directors. The creation of an Industry Advisory Forum further supported this position. The decision was therefore taken to dissolve the Advisory Board, extending invitations to join the newly formed Industry Engagement Forum to applicable members. The effectiveness of the revised approach to the strategic development of the College will continue to be monitored by the Board of Directors.

Throughout the 2018 /19 academic year further changes to academic management have taken place within the College, including the creation of the Head of Enhancement role and the replacement of two Head of Faculty positions with a School Manager role, strengthening the academic expertise within the College Management Team and increasing the School level, as opposed to faculty level, approach to academic and operational management and development. Reflecting the College's strategic intentions, the College also created the roles of Programme Development Lead (appointed March 2019) and Student Success Lead (recruitment commenced end of 2018/19 academic year).

The end of year review of governance arrangements, committed to as part of the one-year implementation review of QA arrangements following re-engagement, took into consideration these changes and Council and Committee membership have been updated accordingly. Notable changes to the governance structures include the removal of the Advisory Board and the defining of the Executive Leadership Team within the broader Senior Management Team, as per the revised organisational structure included at appendix 1.

In addition to the afore-mentioned changes, the review identified that the current naming and terms of reference of the QA Committee didn't reflect the College's broader commitment to quality enhancement. It was felt that the Committee should be renamed as the Quality Enhancement Committee, with the Head of Enhancement as Chair. Further to this, the inclusion of the Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of School as members of the committee was considered to be unnecessary given the availability of senior management members to represent each area of the College. It was felt that the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of School should be removed from the membership and retained on Academic Council as the highest level of academic governance to which the committee is accountable. Revised terms of reference and membership are included at appendix 2.

### 1.3 The schedule of QA governance meetings.

#### Academic Governance

| Academic Council Meetings | QA Committee Meetings | Programme Boards  | Boards of Examiners  |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Sept 6, 2018              | Nov 5, 2018           | <b>Business Faculty</b><br>Sept 10, 2018<br>Jan 4, 2019           | <b>Business Faculty</b><br>Jan 31, 2019<br>June 25, 2019<br>Aug 29, 2019 |
| Nov 13, 2018              | Feb 28, 2019          | <b>IT Faculty</b><br>Sept 11, 2018<br>Mar 19, 2019<br>May 7, 2019 | <b>IT Faculty</b><br>Feb 7, 2019<br>June 20, 2019<br>Aug 27, 2019        |
| Mar 21, 2019              | May 16, 2019          |   |  |
| Jun 21, 2019              | Aug 6, 2019           |   |  |

#### Corporate Governance

| Board of Directors Meetings | Senior Management Meetings | Operations Meetings |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Sept 28, 2018               | Sept 25, 2018              | Oct 4, 2018         |
| Jan 28, 2019                | May 31, 2019               | Feb 1, 2019         |
| May 11, 2019                |                            | May 31, 2019        |

## Section 2: Reviews in the reporting period

### 2.1 Internal reviews that were completed in the reporting period.

The 2018 / 19 included a review of effectiveness of revised QA procedures and a progress review of the CCT Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020.

In accordance with CCT policy, the following annual monitoring and review activities took place during the 2018/19 academic year:

- Admissions audit
- Board of Examiners audit
- Annual monitoring review of:

- CCT Library and Library Services
- Students Services and Careers
- CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning
- Annual programme review of:
  - BA Hons in Business
  - Bachelor of Business
  - Bachelor of Business Honours
  - BSc in Information Technology
  - BSc Hons in Information Technology
  - Higher Diploma in Computing

The following new programme validations took place in the 2018 / 19 academic year:

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

There were no programme reviews and revalidations during the 2018/19 academic year.

In addition to quality assurance reviews, annual financial auditing review, annual marketing and communications review, and monthly and annual facilities and resources reviews also took place, informing enhancement of the learning environment and student experience.

## Section 3: Other Implementation Factors

**3.1** Factors (internal and external) that have impacted on quality and quality assurance in the reporting period.

### **Benchmarking**

With regard to benchmarking, as stated in its response to the re-engagement panel report, CCT acknowledges the value that benchmarking brings and is always keen to engage in activities which will assist in self-learning and enhancement. Subsequent to the re-engagement panel visit, CCT commenced publishing awards data for CCT programmes leading to QQI awards. More recently, the QQI publication “Report on QQI Award Classification Distributions for QQI Higher Education and Training Awards (2012-2017)” has enabled the College to undertake a degree of benchmarking for awards in the 2018/19 academic year. The data in the QQI publication doesn’t provide a year on year breakdown per programme, per provider and it also isn’t possible to determine factors such as whether an award is an ab-initio or and add on, and therefore without this specificity there remains potential for misinterpretation. Nonetheless, the publication has enabled CCT to undertake a greater degree of external benchmarking, something that has not been possible thus far. A comparative analysis is provided in appendix 3.

Notwithstanding the above, the College engages in other activities to facilitate different types of benchmarking. This includes the comparison of programme content and learning outcomes, assessment strategies, admissions standards, and the provision of student support services and initiatives. Representatives from the College remain engaged in a wide range of sectoral, professional and disciplinary networks in order to stay abreast of developments in the sector nationally and internationally and ensure CCT’s continued development in line with this.

### **Professional Development**

In preparing for re-engagement the College articulated its intentions to continue to promote and facilitate engagement in scholarship, research and innovation, and to also continue to increase the sectoral engagement of staff. This was supported by the re-engagement panel along with specific advice that focused on the professional development of staff in preparation from extension of scope to level 9 taught Masters.

The 2018/19 academic year saw the launch of the CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL), Headed up by the Dean of School and supported by the Head of Enhancement, the Librarian and the Assistant Head of Faculty for ICT as associates of the CTL. The CTL took the lead on addressing the professional development of staff, including to support the Masters programme delivery. The following initiatives of the CTL have been implemented in 2018/19:

- Commencement of the CCT Excellence in Teaching Seminar Series. Seminars have included:
  - Dr Kevin O’Rourke, Digital Campus Architect, TU Dublin – promoting academic integrity;

- Dara Cassidy, Head of Online Learning at RCSI - Moodle for Teaching and Learning;
  - Dr Michael Hallissy, Partner H2 Learning - pedagogy and assessment for the level nine learner; and
  - Graham Glanville Dean of School at CCT College - effective group work.
- The introduction of Subject Alerts: The Library now offers an automated subject alert service so that faculty can receive research of relevance to their teaching area direct to their emails.
  - The creation of a Teaching and Learning page on Moodle providing access to key reports on Teaching and Learning from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, JISC and other relevant organisations.
  - The introduction of a Professional Development Bulletin to faculty with details of key conferences and seminars including the National Forum's Seminar Series.
  - Creation and publication of the College's Research Strategy. The Strategy has a strong focus on research generated from pedagogical practice.

Additional institutional developments in the year under review include:

- The continued support for faculty to complete accredited programmes up to and including PhD.
- An institutional Register of Professional Development activity was established capturing the professional development and scholarly activity of College staff.
- The Expert Gallery Suite was purchased from Bepress to create online profiles of staff which are available openly and in a transparent fashion in the public domain. Profiles of all staff members have been created and are now published live on the College website. The Expert Gallery Suite facilitates the inclusion of research works, conference presentations, interviews and multi-media content. Online profiles also contain details of the staff members' qualifications, courses that they teach, professional memberships and areas of research interest.
- Digital Commons software has been purchased to showcase the scholarly output of College staff and students on an open access basis. CCT College is the first private higher education college in Ireland to purchase the software. The Dean of School, Head of Enhancement and Librarian met with the Digital Commons Manager at TU Dublin, Yvonne Desmond in the CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning to inform institutional engagement with the platform.

As a direct result of the increase in institutional support for CPD, engagement with the CTL has increased throughout the year and faculty participation in internal and external professional development initiatives, programmes, conferences and networks has increased. The CCT Excellence

in Teaching Seminar Series will continue into the 2019/20 academic year and an evaluation of the benefit of these will be undertaken.

Sectoral engagement by staff has continued to grow through engagement in CPD activity and also through membership of committees, working groups, sectoral and national bodies.

### **Extension of Scope**

In 2019, CCT secured QQI approval for an extension of scope to level 9 taught Masters programmes through the validation of a Master of Science in Applied Software Development, including the embedded award of Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Software Development. This development included the College approval of revised quality assurance procedures.

## **3.2 A description of other implementation issues.**

### **Internal Factors**

A review of annual monitoring activity highlighted that annual reports in some instances still tend to be descriptive, with limited reflection and evaluation. This is more apparent in the monitoring of services rather than programmes and may be due to programme monitoring having clear thresholds and benchmarks against which performance is monitored.

To further enhance service monitoring activity and ensure meaningful reporting that can inform improvement planning, it is proposed that the report template be revised to include the relevant QA guideline statements against which authors will be required to provide evidence-based evaluative commentary which leads to the identification of clear, measurable actions relating to opportunities for enhancement. To support departmental heads in this activity, guidance and training will be provided on using the guidelines for evaluative report writing.

From an information risk management perspective, the College has migrated from its purpose designed, internally managed, student information system to an externally hosted and managed platform. An external company has been contracted to manage this, thus reducing the risk presented by loss of internal knowledge or expertise and increasing data security measures. The College has also acquired a CRM which is hosted by a third party. Compliance with GDPR was evaluated as part of the acquisition process and the College assured itself of the requirements of the regulation being satisfied. A template data processing agreement was established, with legal support, for such circumstances.

**External Factors**

CCT has been keen to become a member institution of the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) for some time but membership was closed due to a review of the NStEP initiative. It is anticipated that CCT will become a member in the 2019 / 20 academic year. It is envisaged that this will further strengthen the culture of student partnership in CCT.

## Part 3: Effectiveness and Impact

Part 3 provides information relating to the effectiveness and impact of quality assurance policy and procedures for the reporting period.

### 1. Effectiveness

Evidence of the effectiveness of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

A review of fitness for purpose of the new QA policies and procedures was undertaken in July and August 2019. The College identified this action in recognition of the extensive changes made to the College QA arrangements in preparation for reengagement. Focus groups were established and asked to identify instances where policies had presented challenges, created conflicts, and unintended consequences or where there was no applicable policy. The feedback was then used to inform changes. A report of the changes made, including those changes stemming from additional appointments and changes in governance, was submitted to Academic Council and approved at its September 2019 meeting, see Appendix 4.

The review identified that there has been limited engagement with diagrammatic information sources. Staff and students' preference appear to be for a combined approach of information being made available in written form along with a named point of contact for further clarification or discussion. The College currently applies this model and satisfaction with this was confirmed. Notwithstanding this, the College is mindful of its growth plans and having the continued capacity to respond to queries where the staff and student body increases. Opportunities to increase the knowledge and familiarity with policies and procedures for key student facing staff are therefore being implemented and will continue. Similarly, the use of technology to provide further support through, for example, FAQs, live chat, or discussion fora, are also being considered. The potential for increased use of visuals to support QA documents will remain under review as part of the cyclical review of QA policies and procedures.

In implementing the revised QA arrangements some forms have been made available through Moodle for staff and students. This isn't however as broad as was originally hoped. There remains a tendency for students to be directed to an individual rather than an online source. Until such a time as additional technology supports can accompany the online forms, CCT will continue with the dual approach.

Through self-evaluation in preparation for re-engagement, the College outlined its intentions to

- Establish the Industry Advisory Group, as per strategic plan
- Establish mechanisms and incentives to promote more consistent learner engagement on Academic Council

The re-engagement panel supported this and encouraged CCT to formally embed industry engagement across all levels from programme level upwards.

Following the re-engagement site visit, the Executive Leadership Team undertook extensive research to establish the most effective approach to industry engagement for the College in the context of its programmes and ambitions. The intent to have a spectrum of engagement that could be tailored to needs of specific employers or industry organisations as well as the needs of the College was identified as the primary objective. This would mean that engagement would be mutually beneficial, meaningful and of value. The team identified a desire to avoid the simple creation of a database of members or holding of meetings for no real benefit or purpose and instead look to have tangible interactions that would serve all parties. The spectrum of engagement was subsequently identified as spanning from light touch to include, for example attendance at CCT Careers Fairs, to full engagement such as strategic partnerships, and a range of variations in between including guest lecturing, provision of venues for site visits, participation in assessment creation and review, contribution to programme development or support for developing student / graduate employability.

As with the advice at 1.2, the Masters validation panel, in part 1A of its report, noted CCT's fulfilment of this recommendation stating:

*"The recommendation that CCT formally embed industry engagement across all levels of its programmes has been acted on by the provider. This is evident in the provider's establishment of an Industry Engagement Forum. The strategic rationale and purpose for this forum, models for employer engagement and a current membership list are listed in the CCT document Industry Engagement Forum Guide, which was provided to members of the panel during the site visit."*

([https://www.qqi.ie//sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-40871\\_Panel\\_Reports\\_PG24099.pdf](https://www.qqi.ie//sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-40871_Panel_Reports_PG24099.pdf))

In the 2018/19 academic year the industry engagement forum activities have included:

- the College forming a strategic partnership with Microsoft Ireland for the development and delivery of programmes in niche areas of IT for ICT professionals. This has included the validation by QQI (subject to PAEC approval at the time of writing) of 5 special purpose awards, 1 at level 6 and 4 at level 7, and a Microsoft accredited diploma.
- the inaugural CCT Careers Fair
- provision of student internship opportunities
- a guest lecture series
- input into the design, content and assessment of CCT's first Masters programme and a suite of special purpose awards
- The launch of career focused workshops for students

Industry engagement has been contained to within specified disciplinary areas and focused activities. For the 2019/20 academic year the College intends to widen the opportunities for industry engagement as well as increase the number of industry representatives with whom the College engages. A communication to forum members is due to be issued in September 2019 outlining the College initiatives for the upcoming academic year and inviting expressions of interest for participation. This will include similar activities to those completed in the current year but will also extend to include industry involvement in programme monitoring and review,

contributing to assessment design and student performance feedback, co-publishing, as well as engagement in an end of year student exhibition.

The College recognises the value of engaging external expertise in different aspects of its work and development. In the 2018/19 academic year, specifically in relation to the development of level 9 programmes, the College engaged external expertise from industry and academia to inform matters including pedagogic approach, postgraduate student supports and preparing a developing staff for postgraduate programmes. As the College continues to grow, opportunities for increased externality will continue to be utilised. By way of example, as part of the approach to develop staff to teach on level 9 programmes, CCT has developed a Certificate in Teaching and Learning which commences in September 2019. Significant external expertise has been drawn upon in the development of the programme and will also be utilised for the delivery of the programme.

Securing consistent learner representation on Academic Council was identified as a challenge though the self-evaluation process. The significance of the learner representative role is not lost on the College who have actively pursued participation in the NStEP initiative in an effort to strengthen supports for effective learner representation on Academic Council. CCT College has also attended NStEP's annual conference; contributed to a national NStEP consultation and participated in the delivery of an event to train student members of the Student QA Reviewers Pool. The principles of student engagement as published by NStEP, have also been adopted by the College and underpin and inform our approaches to student partnership. A nomination and election campaign for Academic Council student reps is scheduled for September 2019.

The CCT policy for External Examining was also reviewed as part of the July 2019 review of quality assurance arrangements and this has been revised to reflect the requirement for External Examiners to have the ICT confidence and competence to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities using technology e.g. access student assessments by login to the CCT learning environment. This is to reduce the risk of data breach and also facilitate an increased window of opportunity for External Examiners to review assessments.

CCT conducted its re-engagement self-evaluation prior to the commencement date of the General Data Regulations (GDPR) and therefore was not in a position, at that time, to finalise policies relating to the use of personal data. Subsequent to the re-engagement meeting, there has been extensive work undertaken to address GDPR compliance in CCT systems, policies and procedures. In respect of the applicable section of the QA Manual (section 10) the College published comprehensive policies as follows:

- CCTP1001 – Privacy Statement 2018
- CCTP1002 – Data Protection Policy 2018
- CCTP1003 – Data Access Request Policy 2018
- CCTP1004 – CCTV policy 2018
- CCTP1005 – Information Management Policy 2018

This section of the manual was subject to some editing throughout the academic year in relation to matters of legal clarification that became apparent as the GDPR was implemented and

following review of these policies by CCT's legal representatives. The policies were reviewed in July 2019 to ensure continued compliance and were updated to reflect data processing arrangements that have been implemented more recently, including new data sharing arrangements and the development and agreement / signing of data processing agreements with third parties. The 2019 publication of the QA Manual will also include the College Record Retention Policy. Previously this has been utilised as an internal document but CCT recognises the need for this to be published.

## **2. Impact**

Evidence of the impact of QA policies and procedures during the reporting period.

### **Academic Integrity**

Following discussions at Academic Council, the Centre for Teaching and Learning identified academic integrity as the core theme for student learning and assessment. An Academic Integrity Project was launched and the Centre for Teaching and Learning engaged academic management, faculty and Student Support Services in the institution's inaugural Academic Integrity Week which incorporated a range of activities to raise awareness of this area. The week incorporated a number of innovations including an Honour Code and a survey to assess students' understanding of academic integrity. During Academic Integrity Week students completed an Academic Integrity Quiz, adapted from a Turnitin survey. This measured students' understanding of academic integrity. The average score was 8/11. The significant finding from the data was that 49% of quiz respondents stated that "I sometimes have difficulty expressing my own ideas." The CTL used this information to inform the development of a programme of library classes as well as the creation of an academic integrity resource page on Moodle for students to access for advice and guidance materials at any time. The programme of Library Classes on a range of topics such as academic writing, academic integrity, assignment planning, exam preparation and referencing were piloted throughout the year. These will be extended in the coming academic year and students can book into them at a time that suits them. The Academic Integrity Week also incorporated activities for faculty to raise their awareness of required referencing protocols, the CCT Academic Misconduct Policy and the process for identifying and addressing suspected misconduct.

### **Programme development and validation**

The effectiveness of the programme proposal process is fundamental to evaluating the potential demand for programmes as well as matters such as academic suitability and potential viability. Having recognised this, the SMT approved a revised programme proposal template which commenced for use in September 2018. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the template and the approval process, conducted in July 2019, confirmed that the document and process, while well intended, was restrictive and rigid and presents the risk of the College not being responsive enough in cases where more rapid decisions were required e.g. responding to Springboard + call. As a result, the process has been further streamlined and the requirement to complete the

template has been removed. The requirement for programme proposals to receive the support of the SMT and be considered by Academic Council continues to be the case. The appointment of a programme development team will only occur once approval has been granted and no programme can progress to application for validation without sign off from the President following recommendation from Academic Council and the Executive Leadership Team. In 2018/19 the College created and appointed to the post of Programme Development Lead. This is an academic post with lecturing duties but holds the responsibility for supporting the Dean of School in leading programme development teams through the programme development process and completing the validation document in accordance with QQI requirements.

Confidence in programme validation has grown significantly within CCT as a result of a combination of staff development, provided in-house and externally, and the involvement in the validation of new programmes during the 18/19 academic year. The panel for the validation of the MSc in Applied Software Development felt that a commitment to the processes surrounding programme validation evident among staff was noteworthy and thus recorded it in the panel report

#### **RPL**

With regards to further implementing the RPL process, the College has developed guidance materials and delivered training on the RPL process and decision-making to those staff who will be involved in the RPL process. Admission via RPL remains limited and the Dean of Academic Affairs or Dean of School provides advice should admissions or academic faculty have any uncertainty relating to such applications. Following the standard admissions audit in 2018/19, a recommendation to standardise the recording of evidence of learning against award standards for those seeking admissions on experiential learning grounds was supported by the Academic Council. This has since been developed and will be trialled in the 2019/20 academic year.

#### **Digital Enhancements / Transformation**

Through re-engagement the College identified its intentions to maximise technology to support teaching, learning, assessment and the wider student experience. A number of developments in relation to this have been outlined at different stages throughout this report. In addition, enhancements have been made to Moodle at CCT as a direct result of learning from the CCT Teaching Excellence Seminar Series. These include:

- The activation of progress tracking functionality so that students and faculty can track completion of course content and assessments. This will assist with institutional student retention and engagement initiatives.
- The activation of H5P functionality for the creation of multi-media content to enhance teaching and learning.
- The installation of a Grid plugin that gives Moodle pages the appearance of a website. This is a useful feature for pages such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning, Academic Integrity page, Student Services etc that are not structured around the provision of weekly classes.

More effective use of Moodle was identified as an enhancement for postgraduate programmes to facilitate teachers in using pedagogic approaches such as the flipped classroom, to promote the

independent learning required of postgraduate students, but also to increase accessibility for part time learners.

## Part 4: Quality Enhancement

Part 4 provides information which goes beyond the description of standard quality assurance procedures. Quality enhancement includes the introduction of new procedures but also extends the concept of quality assurance to other initiatives, activities and events aimed at improving quality across the institution.

### 4.1 Improvements and Enhancements for the Reporting Period

Improvements or enhancements, impacting on quality or quality assurance, that took place in the reporting period.

Improvements and enhancements during the 2018/19 academic year have been referenced repeatedly throughout the report. A selection of these is summarised here.

#### **CCT Library Expansion and Relocation**

In August 2018, the CCT Library relocated to a central ground floor location, providing increased shelving capacity, study space and bookable study rooms. This was made possible through the College securing the neighbouring unit, comprising of an additional 3,500 square foot, and investing in extensive refurbishment. The in-library space complements the additional library study areas located throughout the CCT building. The re-location was partially to extend the capacity of the library but primarily to emphasise the strategic position of the library being the heart of the college to promote scholarship in students and staff. An extension in library opening times was also introduced to reflect the increase in evening programmes in the college and also to provide the central point of student services outside of office hours.

As part of the expansion, in 2018/2019 the library's collection of physical books increased by over 20%. This is in addition to the access to over 20,000 journal articles and thousands of ebooks provided through the College's subscription to EBSCO. Circulation statistics (incorporating loans, returns and renewals) for the year to July 2019 showed an increase of just over 31% on the same period in the previous year. This is likely due to a combination of factors, including increased student numbers but the expansion and relocation of the library has resulted in a visible increase in library use.

#### **Establishment of the CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning**

As part of the relocation of the library, CCT established a Centre for Teaching and Learning, with its dedicated space being located within the library. The establishment of a Centre for Teaching Learning is clearly articulated in the CCT Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2020 as part of the strategic objective to maintain and strengthen academic excellence. The primary objectives of the development were to promote the development of faculty and staff and further facilitate the mutually beneficial integration of faculties and library to enhance teaching, learning and assessment.

As a result of the establishment of the Centre, there is now an increased awareness of the teaching and learning supports available to faculty and students. There has also been notable increased engagement by faculty in internal and external professional development, including

through the CCT Teaching Excellence Seminar Series, bringing about changes to practice or enhancements to support learning. The Centre for Teaching and Learning was also responsible for the Academic Integrity Project.

### **Academic Integrity Project**

This project was launched on the back of discussions at Academic Council, and national and international conversation, relating to promoting plagiarism, collusion and the use of essay mills. The rationale for the project was built on the findings of the Academic Standards Board that many students who plagiarise or collude appear unaware of what is acceptable practice.

The project saw an academic integrity page created on Moodle, populated with resources for faculty to assist them in better promoting academic integrity within the student body. A Teaching Excellence Seminar with Dr Kevin O'Rourke from DIT (now TU Dublin) focusing on academic integrity in the fake news era took place for faculty as part of the project. The Academic Integrity Project team also initiated the academic integrity week for students of CCT which saw a range of activities implemented to raise awareness and understanding around academic integrity. A survey of students was undertaken which showed that awareness was raised and understanding increased as a result of the project.

### **Student Mentoring Academy**

The student mentoring academy was initially a small-scale project within the ICT Faculty that aimed at degree and honours degree award year students providing lab-based support to first and second year students. It was built on the understanding that when students don't understand something, they are more likely to express continued lack of understanding to a peer than to a lecturer. Having seen the success of the project, for both mentor and mentee, this was expanded and integrated into the Centre for Teaching and Learning as the Student Mentoring Academy. Students volunteer to be mentors and are trained in what it means to be a mentor. Typically, they mentor small groups of students, supporting lecturers in practical lab sessions, but support for students on a one to one basis is also provided.

### **Establishment and Implementation of the CCT Industry Engagement Forum**

The forum was first established as a means of formalising the College's proactive approach to industry engagement. As the College grows, the potential for engagement with industry to become disjointed with multiple members of the college contacting different members of industry organisations was identified as a risk. The College wanted to avoid this and ensure that interactions with industry were streamlined but also targeted to the areas of interest and benefit to each specific organisation. The industry engagement forum guide, developed by the Senior Management Team, outlined the role and purpose of the forum and highlighted the spectrum of engagement that different industry organisation could participate in. Officially launched in 2018, the forum provided a strong foundation for increasing industry engagement within CCT. Industry engagement forum activities have included:

- a strategic partnership with Microsoft Ireland
- the inaugural CCT Careers Fair
- student internship opportunities
- a guest lecture series

- contribution to programme design
- career focused workshops for students

#### **Investment in digital infrastructure**

Within the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, the college identified its strategic objective to continue to enhance the campus as an ever-evolving digital learning environment, with the provision of cutting-edge digital infrastructure.

In Summer 2018 CCT migrated from an in-house student information system to the Moodle learning management system, extending the use of Moodle from only being used as a VLE. As part of this migration the College engaged in a relationship with Enovation, a specialist E-Learning provider and Moodle certified services provider. The College went live with its new Moodle platform in January 2019. This customised Moodle platform is now used as the college's VLE and LMS.

In late 2018 CCT College subcontracted Capstone Intelligent Solutions to conduct a comprehensive network site survey. The College then heavily invested in additional networking equipment to allow students to access wireless downloads speeds of up to 200mb each. Each classroom is equipped with a 1GB fixed connection for lecturers to allow streaming if required. Each room has access to Logitech Pro C290 webcams, condenser microphones and touch screen monitors to use with digital whiteboard technologies. The College has a network wide Enterprise edition of Google Gsuite that allows unlimited access to online teaching tools.

On-going refinement and expansion of the CCT Moodle installation has been prioritised with the hosting and support arrangements migrating to Enovation. The Head of Enhancement, Schools Manager and Dean of School have promoted new and existing features on the platform to enhance teaching and learning such as discussion forums, live chat and use of the progress tracker. H5P functionality has recently been activated for the creation of multi-media platforms.

#### **4.2 Quality Enhancement Highlights**

Analysis of quality enhancement activities that were initiated during the reporting period and which would be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination.

#### **CCT Case Study: Academic Integrity Week**

##### **What was the nature of the project and when did it take place?**

Academic Integrity Week (second semester, academic year 2018/2019)

##### **Which department and / or staff member(s) managed the project?**

The project was driven by the CCT Centre for Teaching and Learning. The team driving the project included Kathleen Embleton (Head of Student Services), Graham Glanville (Dean of School), Greg South (Student Success Lead), Justin Smyth (Librarian) and Marie O' Neill (Head of Enhancement).

##### **Describe the aims of the project**

To raise awareness of academic integrity, particularly in the context of new challenges such as essay mills and fake news

### **What were the learning outcomes of the project?**

1. Students can define academic integrity and the values associated with it
2. Students can identify examples of academic impropriety with reference to new challenges such as essay mills
3. Students are aware of the range of resources and classes which are available from the CCT Hume Library to develop their knowledge of academic integrity
4. Students are aware of the CCT Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism Policy,  
<http://www.cct.ie/wp-content/uploads/Policy-CCTP511-Academic-Misconduct-2018.pdf>

### **Describe the project**

The week incorporated a variety of activities for students which included:

- The design of a CCT academic integrity logo
- The introduction of an institutional honour code
- The delivery of classes on academic integrity
- The establishment of an academic integrity page on Moodle with key support resources
- The creation of an online survey in which students could test their knowledge of academic integrity

### **What data was collected during the project?**

A survey tool in which students could assess their knowledge of academic integrity was designed. The construction and content of the Survey was influenced by the following tools and academic articles:

- Eva Jereb et al. (no date) 'Factors influencing plagiarism in higher education: A comparison of German and Slovene students', PLoS ONE, Vol 13, Iss 8, p e0202252 (2018), (8), p./e0202252. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0202252. Accessed 17/02/2019.
- Turnitin (no date) 'Academic Quotient Quiz,' accessed 17th February 2019, <https://www.turnitin.com/static/aiq-quiz/>
- York University (no date) "Academic Integrity Quiz," accessed 17th February 2019, <http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/quizzes/ai/nologin/ai.quiz>

### **What insights were gleaned from the project data?**

Positives

- 97 % of respondents understood the term academic integrity
- 88 % of students understood that websites are not regulated for the accuracy of their content
- 83 % of students understood what collusion means

Negatives

- 67% of students said that they had difficulty expressing themselves

The full findings of the survey can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/sy7ck9h>

The survey attracted a response rate of 26 percent with 263 responses

**How has practice changed on the ground at CCT as a result of the project?**

The CCT Student Success Lead, Greg South communicated the findings to faculty and support staff to address the major finding of the project which was that a significant proportion of students found it difficult to express themselves in their assignments. CCT has a high percentage of international learners. In light of this finding, a new programme of Library classes was launched with an intensified focus on academic writing. These classes are also augmented by the launch of a series of guides on academic integrity, referencing and academic writing on Subjectsplus at: <http://learningspace.cct.ie/subjects/index.php>

## Part 5: Objectives for the coming year

Part 5 provides information about plans for quality assurance in the institution for the academic year following the reporting period (in this instance 1 September 2017 – 31 August 2018).

### 5.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement System Plans

Plans for quality assurance and quality enhancement relating to strategic objectives for the next reporting period.

To date, CCT has focused on the delivery of undergraduate full-time education. These types of programmes appeal to specific groups of learners. As is the norm for independent providers, take up of undergraduate programmes from domestic school leavers is limited, with the demand from this particular demographic being geared towards publicly funded HEIs, where access to the SUSI grant is an added incentive. As a result, the CCT student community has a significant international (non-EU) student body. CCT values the diversity of its student community and recognises the enrichment to learning and the wider student experience that comes from this. Nonetheless, the College wishes to further diversify its current student community.

The ambition to broaden the student demographic will look to retain continuity of the current student demographic but further add to this with different categories of learners including part time, postgraduate and professional students. It is anticipated that this will also bring an increase in domestic students. In seeking to address this ambition, in 2018/19 the College has expanded its offering of non-accredited professional programmes, offered during the evening targeting working professionals looking to upskill. The College has also increased the offering of part time programmes leading to QQI awards and is increasing this offering further. Specifically, the College aims to design and develop a series of part time QQI validated special purpose awards relating to priority skills areas identified by both State and industry. The validation of the College's first Masters programme which is offered on a full and part time basis, is a significant step forward in addressing the objective to diversify the student demographic and over the next 5 years the College anticipates a gradual increase in student demand for postgraduate studies in CCT.

The changing student demographic will bring different requirements relating to accessibility of programmes, delivery methodologies, student services and availability of personnel outside of the traditional full-time daytime provision hours. The College is mindful of this and has therefore planned a stepped approach to this change. As part of programme development and programme monitoring the College considers specific needs stemming from this diversification of offering and responds accordingly.

Broadening the student demographic requires the College to expand the programmes on offer and the modes of study available. This requires the ongoing review of QA procedures for fitness for purpose in any proposed new contexts. The development of QA procedures as part of the re-engagement process prepared for the extension of scope to level 9, but also factored in future developments relating to collaborative provision and blended learning, reflecting the College's strategic ambitions. Aligned to this, throughout 2018/19, CCT has been engaged in discussions with another higher education provider in Ireland with a view to formalising a collaboration which will see CCT deliver programmes validated by this provider as part of a collaborative initiative. It is

intended that the collaboration will be formalised in the following academic year with a view to programme delivery commencing in the 2020 / 21 academic year.

As referenced earlier in the report, CCT intends to further evidence its commitment to student partnership in the upcoming academic year and beyond. Student membership of Academic Council is a priority and membership of NStEP remains a key objective of the college.

## **5.2 Review Plans**

A list of reviews within each category (module, programme, department/school, service delivery unit or faculty), as per the internal review cycle, planned for the next reporting period.

No programme reviews are scheduled for the 2019/20 academic year.

Annual review activity will be undertaken for all programmes and services in accordance with CCT policy.

## Part 6: Periodic Review

Part 6 provides information that acts as a bridge between the AIQR and periodic external review.

### 6.1 The Institution and QA Evaluation

A description of the impacts of re-engagement within the institution.

In January 2017 CCT undertook a strategic review and planning day involving all staff and representatives of the now disbanded Advisory Board. The purpose of the day was to review attainment of the strategic objectives in the current strategic plan and identify the objectives for a new plan commencing in 2018. At that stage the College was aware that re-engagement would be occurring within the lifecycle of the next strategic plan but had not been advised of a possible timeline. Nonetheless, the strategic planning was taking in place at a significant juncture in the development of the college, at a time when it was planning to progress to Masters level provision and considering how to best prepare for further significant developments in the medium term. Recognising that re-engagement, and the insights of a re-engagement panel, could further inform strategic developments, the college opted to use the reengagement process as a means of securing formative feedback to support a subsequent application to extend scope of provision. The self-evaluation element of the re-engagement process was particularly beneficial in identifying further actions and enhancements to support the college in fulfilling its newly determined strategic objectives. Presenting these findings and recommendations to a panel provided an invaluable opportunity to sense-test the college's intentions. The process also proved to be extremely helpful in terms of the specific advice provided, which predominantly related to preparations for level 9, serving the college well in its extension of scope application.

### 6.2 Self-Reflection on Quality Assurance

A short evaluative and reflective summary of the overall impact of quality assurance in the reporting period or, over a more extensive period, in the review.

The self-evaluation and panel report of the re-engagement process confirm CCT has robust quality assurance policies and procedures in place and the fitness for purpose of these for the strategic organisational context. As the student body grows and diversifies, increasing the number of part time, evening / weekend or remote staff and learners, the college needs to be prepared for effective dissemination of QA policies and procedures to continue consistent implementation and application of these.

The range of enhancements implemented within the reporting period have proven their value to the College, and particularly the student community, in a very short time frame. Many of these are in their early implementation phase – the industry engagement forum, the Centre for

Teaching and Learning, new digital platforms, and more firmly embedding these can only be beneficial.

These developments leave CCT in a position of strength to continue its commitment to quality assurance and enhancement. The increased digitisation of CCT provides the foundation for the College to increase its capacity to use data to inform decision-making, particularly in the context of influencing potential for student success. This will be enriched by the strengthening of the student voice through Academic Council membership and greater engagement in national student focused initiatives such as NStEP.

The stability and agility of the College, its culture of cooperation and collaboration and an on-going institutional focus on creating an inclusive and transformative educational experience for a diverse range of students is reflected in the commitment to quality assurance and enhancement evident in this report. The College is now approaching the point of developing the next strategic plan which will continue to remain focused on quality and student success in a culture of integrity and continuous improvement.

### **6.3 Themes**

Developmental themes of importance to the institution which will be relevant to periodic review.

#### **Strategic Planning and Implementation**

As the College brings the Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020 to a close over the course of the next academic year, the creation of the next Strategic Plan will commence. Once established this will inform the operational plans of the College. Throughout the latter part of 2018/19 academic year, the College has been actively engaged in discussions to purchase the campus building to underscore the dedicated commitment to education and to the College's strategic goals in the long term.

#### **Quality Enhancement Culture**

Extensive development has taken place during the reporting period and an increasingly formalised commitment to continuous improvement is increasingly taking shape. This will remain a priority for CCT moving forward and will include opportunities for using data to inform quality enhancement activities.

#### **Partnership and Collaboration**

During the reporting period CCT has increased its engagement in partnership and collaborative initiatives with industry, sectoral bodies, education providers and the student body. A continued commitment to partnership and collaboration, in the context of strategic objectives, will remain an ongoing focus for the College. In particular, the College hopes to strengthen communication and engagement with Alumni to establish a more active Alumni network.

#### **Student Success**

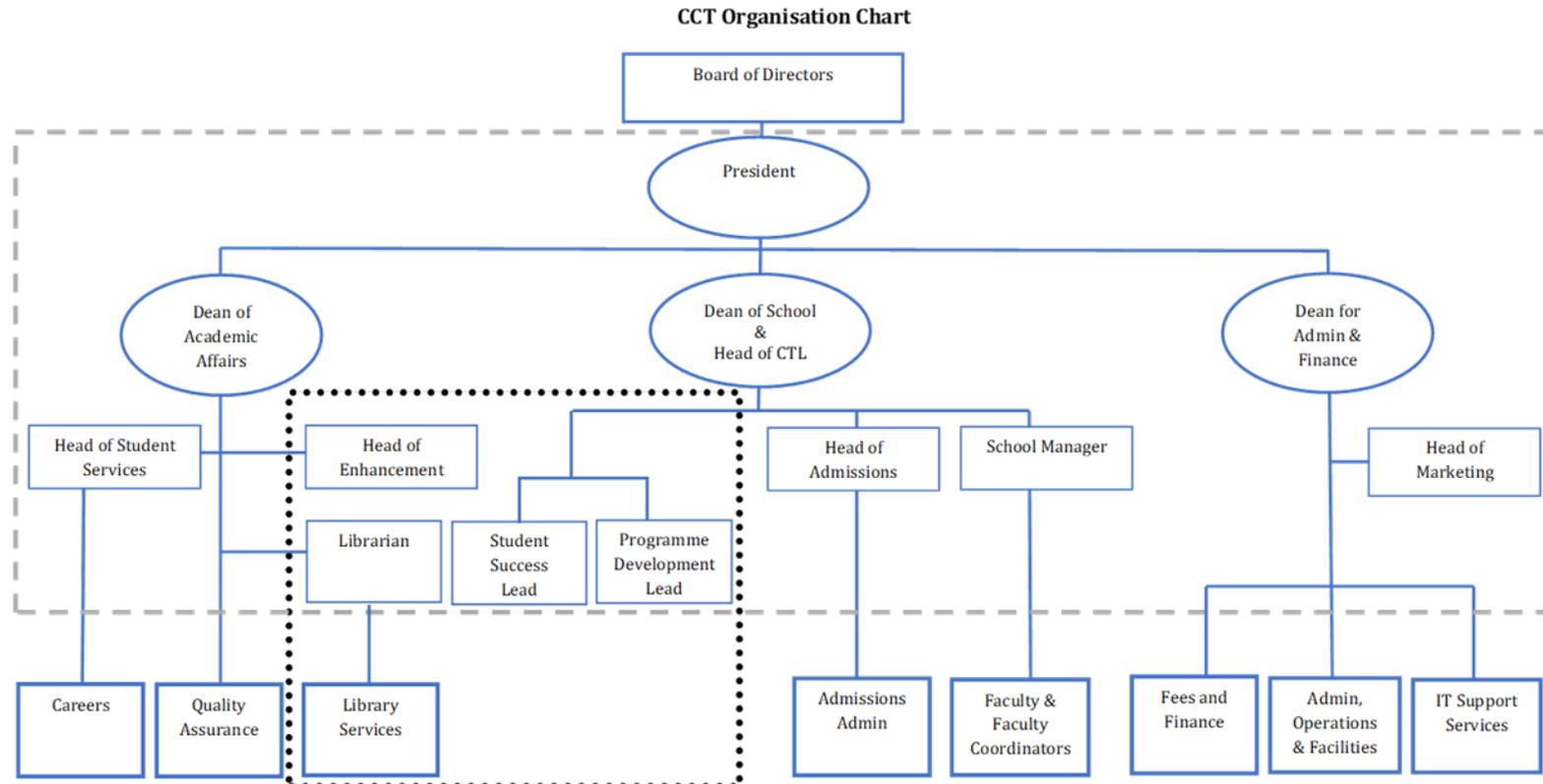
The focus on continuous improvement and partnership and collaboration will be central to the development and implementation of the CCT Student Success Strategy. The strategy will look to formalise the existing approach to supporting learners in all aspects of their learner journey, inside and outside the classroom, and will build upon this better support student success.

**Teaching and Learning**

During the reporting period the College has extended scope of provision to postgraduate programmes and has outlined its commitment to further increase its professional education programmes along with specialist, skills-based programmes responding to industry demand and Irish state initiatives. Alongside this, the College established the Centre for Teaching and Learning and launched its Teaching Excellence Seminar Series along with plans for a Certificate in Teaching and Learning. These developments along with the increased digitisation of the campus and the commitment to collaboration and partnership will inform and influence teaching and learning developments in CCT. In particular the College will be looking to maximise the use of technology to enable and enhance teaching and learning.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Organisation Chart



- Key:
-  Executive Leadership Team
  -  Management Team
  -  Centre for Teaching & Learning

## **Appendix 2: Quality Enhancement Committee**

The QE Committee is a committee of, and accountable to, Academic Council. The aims of the Committee are:

- to work with the staff, management and other committees in CCT to implement a total quality culture throughout the College
- to promote excellence in teaching, learning, research, and the student experience
- support Academic Council in developing systems, policies and procedures to quality assure and improve CCT services and programmes based on the outcomes of robust evaluation processes and analysis of quality indicators or impact assessments.

### **Membership**

- Head of Enhancement, or nominee (Chair)
- QA Officer (Secretary)
- Head of Student Services
- School Manager
- Librarian
- Head of Marketing
- 1 Academic representative

The Dean of Academic Affairs reserves the right to attend meetings of the QEC.

### **Quorum**

The quorum for the meeting shall be a minimum of 4, including the Chair.

### **Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference of the Committee are to:

- foster a quality culture throughout the College, supporting excellence in teaching and learning and supporting research, innovation, scholarship and professional development.
- facilitate the sharing of good practice in academic activities and student services
- facilitate staff and student engagement in quality assurance and enhancement activities
- to oversee the annual review of the CCT QA system and make recommendations for the approval by Academic Council of QA policies, or changes to same, arising from monitoring and review activity or resulting from legislative or sectoral change
- to receive nominations for external examiner appointments and make a recommendation to Academic Council.
- to monitor programme development and review activity and report to Academic Council accordingly.
- review and analyse the outcomes of quality processes and recommend to Academic Council actions, projects or developments to facilitate continued attainment of standards or to enhance standards, services or practice. As such, the Committee shall receive the following annual reports:
  - Programme reports
  - External Examiner Reports
  - Admissions audit report
  - Student satisfaction survey results
  - ASB report

- Exam Board audit and monitoring report
  - Student Services report
  - Library Report
  - Report from Centre for Teaching and Learning
- 
- To advise on matters relating to quality enhancement that the Academic Council may refer to the Quality Enhancement Committee.
  - To formulate, oversee implementation and monitor a quality enhancement plan for the College, aligned to the strategic plan, and report on this to Academic Council

### **Appendix 3: Benchmarking and Analysis of Award Data**

#### **Introduction**

The following report provides per programme / award type year on year analysis of awards data for CCT programmes leading to QQI awards. In addition, it includes comparative analysis using external benchmarks based upon publicly available data. The external benchmarking is undertaken by award type and discipline for:

- all awarded by QQI for the period 2012 – 2017
- awarded by QQI for Dublin based HECA members 2012 – 2017 and
- awarded by the Institutes of Technology 2016 only

Per programme data is not currently publicly available. This is the first year of CCT undertaking such external benchmarking, due to the data now being in the public domain and available for use. For this reason, the report includes some historic analysis also.

**Bachelor of Science in Information Technology**

| Year | Total Number Awarded | Award Classification |         |         |       |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|---------|-------|
|      |                      | Distinction          | Merit 1 | Merit 2 | Pass  |
| 2019 | 101                  | 31.7%                | 24.8%   | 17.8%   | 25.7% |
| 2018 | 70                   | 41.4%                | 28.6%   | 5.7%    | 24.3% |
| 2017 | 45                   | 48.9%                | 4.4%    | 22.2%   | 24.4% |
| 2016 | 39                   | 35.9%                | 38.5%   | 10.3%   | 15.4% |
| 2015 | 31                   | 45.1%                | 29%     | 6.5%    | 19.4% |

Table 1: Year on Year Award Data for CCT BSc in Information Technology

Comparing 2019 with 2018 awards data for the CCT BSc in Information Technology highlights:

- a notable reduction in students achieving distinction
- a small reduction in students achieving merit one
- a notable increase in students achieving merit two
- a small increase in students achieving a pass award

The most notable change relates to the awarding of distinction classifications. A review of distinctions awarded over the duration of the programme from 2013 to date highlights that this year represents the lowest ever percentage of students achieving this standard, the previous lowest being 35.9% in 2016. Perhaps not unrelated, this year also represents the highest number of awards with 101 students graduating from this level 7 degree, versus the 70 graduating in 2018 and 39 graduating in 2016. Historically, distinction awards have represented between 35 and 49% for this programme. Students on this programme are typically mature learners returning to education with relevant employment experience, and often with higher education qualifications already so the high distinction rates don't come as a surprise in that context.

While the reduction is noted, external examiner feedback and internal QA processes suggest there is no cause for concern now or historically. Using publicly available data to benchmark against, it would appear that the breakdown of award classifications is broadly comparable to that of QQI awarded degrees and isn't too far different to Institute of Technology awarded degrees at level 7 in ICT, likely reflecting the difference in student demographic.

Seven students exited this programme with a Higher Certificate. One achieved a distinction, one a merit 2 and the remainder a pass award.

| Body                     | Time period | Award Classification |         |         |       |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------|---------|-------|
|                          |             | Distinction          | Merit 1 | Merit 2 | Pass  |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2019        | 31.7%                | 24.8%   | 17.8%   | 25.7% |
|                          |             |                      |         |         |       |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2012 – 2017 | 32%                  | 28%     | 9%      | 31%   |
| QQI                      | 2012 - 2017 | 35%                  | 29%     | 12%     | 23%   |
| Dorset College           | 2012 - 2017 | 17%                  | 48%     | 9%      | 26%   |
| Dublin Business School   | 2012 – 2017 | 35%                  | 35%     | 6%      | 23%   |
| Griffith College         | 2012 - 2017 | 47%                  | 20%     | 29%     | 4%    |
|                          |             |                      |         |         |       |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2016        | 35.9%                | 38.5%   | 10.3%   | 15.4% |
| Institutes of Technology | 2016        | 28%                  | 21%     | 27%     | 24%   |

Table 2: External Benchmarking of CCT College Dublin Ordinary Degree Classifications for ICT

**BSc Honours IT Level 8**

| Year | Total Number Awarded | Award Classification |       |       |       |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|      |                      | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass  |
| 2019 | 29                   | 13.8%                | 35.5% | 37.9% | 13.8% |
| 2018 | 14                   | 42.9%                | 21.4% | 21.4% | 14.3% |
| 2017 | 13                   | 30.8%                | 38.5% | 23.1% | 7.7%  |
| 2016 | 12                   | 83.3%                | 16.7% | 0     | 0     |

**Table 3: Year on Year Award Data for CCT BSc Honours in Information Technology (1 year add on)**

Comparing 2019 awards data for the CCT BSc Hons in Information Technology compared with 2018 awards data for the same programme highlights the following:

- a substantial reduction in students achieving first class honours
- a marked increase in students achieving merit one
- a marked increase in students achieving merit two and
- a small reduction in students achieving a pass award

Of note, the number of graduates in 2019 was just over double the number of graduates in 2018.

Historically, this programme has only graduated two further cohorts – 2017 and 2016, comprising of 13 and 12 graduates respectively. In 2016, 10 of the 12 graduates achieved a first-class honour. This was a particularly high performing cohort who had been the highest performing students on the preceding higher certificate and ordinary degree programmes which they had completed in CCT also.

In 2018 there was an increase in first class awards but this correlates with the 2017 increase in distinction awards on the feeder programme BSc in Information Technology and reflects the nature of that specific cohort, many of whom were graduates of other disciplines and some in related areas such as engineering or maths.

Not surprisingly, where the data indicates a reduction in first class honours awards, there is a higher rate of achievement of the upper second-class honours award. In 2019 this has further extended to an increase in lower second-class honours award also. 2019 has seen a more even spread of grades across the classification boundaries with notable changes in respect of reduced first class honours classifications and increased lower second-class honours classifications, as discussed. A key factor in the classification distribution changes is attributed to the increase in admissions to the programme from other providers. The CCT programme was purposefully designed as an add on to the CCT level 7 degree. Where students come from other programme that may not have addressed discipline elements such as programming to the same extent, those students are less likely to achieve higher marks. This pattern was noted by the college in the past and, as a result, programming bootcamps are provided to external admission students in advance of the programme proper.

Benchmarking the awards data externally against publicly available information is interpreted with caution due to the nature of the CCT programme. It is not possible to distinguish level 8 add on programmes from ab-initio level 8 programmes in the publicly available data. While the entry and award standards are assumed to be comparable, the nature of the student on an add-on programme can vary significantly from those on an ab-initio degree with the latter more typically being a school leaver progressing through third level and the former more likely to include mature learners with relevant work experience. The level 8 add on learner can in many cases be more reflective of a Higher Diploma student, except their prior studies are more typically in the same discipline. Further to this, level 7 IT

studies can vary significantly in the extent to which they address different elements of the curriculum. This then impacts on a student’s preparedness for and performance within the add-on programme.

The external benchmarking immediately highlights that the 2019 awarding of first-class honours is notably less and the awarding of lower second-class honours is higher than those awarded by QQI (2012 – 2017) and the Institutes of Technology (2016 only) but all other classifications are broadly comparable.

In benchmarking CCT award data (2012 – 2017) against QQI award data and that of Dublin based HECA members providing honours degrees in ICT, it is immediately apparent that the exceptional performance of the 2016 graduating cohort in CCT has created the impression of CCT being a statistical outlier. This is further exacerbated by the fact that only two cohorts had graduated in the time period and not the five cohorts that the timeframe allows for. Should the same calculation be carried out today, including all four cohorts (2016 – 2019), the percentage of first-class awards is 35.3%.

| Body                     | Time period | Award Classification |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          |             | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass  |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2019        | 13.8%                | 35.5% | 37.9% | 13.8% |
|                          |             |                      |       |       |       |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2012 – 2017 | 56%                  | 28%   | 12%   | 4%    |
| QQI                      | 2012 – 2017 | 31%                  | 36%   | 23%   | 11%   |
| Dublin Business School   | 2012 – 2017 | 42%                  | 34%   | 16%   | 9%    |
| Griffith College         | 2012 - 2017 | 41%                  | 34%   | 19%   | 6%    |
| NCI                      | 2012 - 2017 | 23%                  | 37%   | 27%   | 13%   |
|                          |             |                      |       |       |       |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2016        | 83.3%                | 16.7% | 0%    | 0%    |
| Institutes of Technology | 2016        | 29%                  | 33%   | 28%   | 11%   |

Table 4: External Benchmarking of CCT College Dublin Honours Degree Classifications for ICT

**Higher Diploma in Science in Computing**

| Year | Total Number Awarded | Award Classification |       |       |       |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|      |                      | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass  |
| 2019 | 49                   | 42.9%                | 24.5% | 18.4% | 14.3% |

**Table 5: Year on Year Award Data for Higher Diploma in Science in Computing**

2019 was the first year of graduates from CCT's Higher Diploma in Science in Computing and therefore year on year comparison isn't possible.

Comparing the awards data with other providers period suggests that graduates of the CCT higher diploma attaining a first-class honours awards and upper second-class honours awards are lower than elsewhere and the percentage attaining a lower second-class honours and pass award are slightly higher than elsewhere. It is worth noting that the CCT Higher Diploma in Computing is a 75CETS award, compared with the 60 ECTS equivalents across the sector. Regardless, as there is only one graduating cohort's data for CCT it is too soon to draw conclusions, but monitoring will continue.

| Body                     | Time period | Award Classification |       |       |       |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                          |             | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass  |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2019        | 42.9%                | 24.5% | 18.4% | 14.3% |
| QQI                      | 2012 – 2017 | 55%                  | 28%   | 11%   | 7%    |
| Dublin Business School   | 2012 – 2017 | 54%                  | 26%   | 8%    | 12%   |
| Griffith College         | 2012 - 2017 | 69%                  | 20%   | 9%    | 2%    |
| NCI                      | 2012 - 2017 | 48%                  | 32%   | 13%   | 6%    |
| Institutes of Technology | 2016        | 49%                  | 29%   | 16%   | 7%    |

**Table 6: External Benchmarking of CCT College Dublin Higher Diploma for ICT**

**Bachelor of Business**

| Year | Total Number Awarded | Award Classification |         |         |       |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|---------|---------|-------|
|      |                      | Distinction          | Merit 1 | Merit 2 | Pass  |
| 2019 | 107                  | 41.1%                | 23.4%   | 12.1%   | 23.4% |
| 2018 | 72                   | 41.7%                | 29.2%   | 5.5%    | 23.6% |
| 2017 | 48                   | 27%                  | 31.3%   | 12.5%   | 29.2% |
| 2016 | 21                   | 28.5%                | 24%     | 0%      | 47.6% |

**Table 7: Year on Year Award Data for CCT Bachelor of Business**

Comparing 2019 awards data with that of 2018 shows a largely consistent distribution across the different award classifications, with some variation for the merit two classification. The difference between learner attainment in the latter two years and preceding years is attributed to a change in assessment strategy which previously required students to pass examinations independently of any other assessment. It is therefore not possible to draw comparisons between post 2018 and pre 2018 award years. What should be noted is that approximately 80% of learners admitted to this programme are graduates, from higher education programmes internationally looking to complete a degree through English. This figure increases to over 90% when looking at learners who have completed some element of higher education but did not complete.

When considering the data against publicly available awards data for QQI and Dublin based HECA providers offering ordinary degrees in business, administration and law awarded by QQI (2012 – 2017) and the Institutes of Technology (2016 only) this highlights a higher percentage of students in CCT achieving a pass award or a distinction award compared with other providers. Aligned to this, CCT students are less likely to achieve a merit one or merit two award.

An in-depth review of learner attainment across the cohorts has identified that the inclusion of 30 marks in the distinction grade band, versus 10 marks in all other classifications at pass and above, is having a disproportionate impact on overall grade classification, bringing a student into the new award classification bracket. In contrast, the higher number of students securing a pass award is attributed to the no repeat for honours convention. As the CCT student community is predominantly mature learners with work and family commitments, it is not unusual for a student to opt to miss an examination or assessment and to take it as a repeat.

| Body                     | Time period | Award Classification |         |         |       |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------|---------|-------|
|                          |             | Distinction          | Merit 1 | Merit 2 | Pass  |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2019        | 41.1%                | 23.4%   | 12.1%   | 23.4% |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2012 – 2017 | 28%                  | 29%     | 9%      | 35%   |
| QQI                      | 2012 – 2017 | 17%                  | 40%     | 26%     | 16%   |
| Dorset College           | 2012 - 2017 | 22%                  | 30%     | 28%     | 20%   |
| Dublin Business School   | 2012 – 2017 | 21%                  | 36%     | 26%     | 18%   |
| Griffith College         | 2012 - 2017 | 12%                  | 31%     | 40%     | 17%   |
| NCI                      | 2012 - 2017 | 7%                   | 55%     | 27%     | 11%   |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2016        | 28.5%                | 24%     | 0%      | 47.6% |
| Institutes of Technology | 2016        | 22%                  | 31%     | 27%     | 20%   |

**Table 8: External Benchmarking of CCT College Dublin Ordinary Degree Classifications for Business, Administration and Law**

**Bachelor of Business Honours**

| Year | Total Number Awarded | Award Classification |       |       |      |
|------|----------------------|----------------------|-------|-------|------|
|      |                      | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass |
| 2019 | 38                   | 21%                  | 52.6% | 18.4% | 7.9% |
| 2018 | 10                   | 10%                  | 30%   | 30%   | 30%  |

Table 9: Year on Year Award Data for CCT Bachelor of Business Honours

Year on year data analysis at this stage in the life of the programme provides no real insights into trends and variations due to the limited lifespan. External benchmarking against historical data, however, highlights that 2019 award data compares favourably with that of QQI providers for the 2012 – 2017 period and for the Institutes of Technology for 2016. As the programme continues, opportunities to secure greater insights through year on year analysis and external benchmarking are anticipated. It is however noted that the Bachelor of Business honours programme is a one year add for holders of level 7 degrees and as identified earlier in this report, external benchmarking is undertaken with caution as it is not possible to distinguish add on programmes from ab-initio degree programmes in the publicly available data.

| Body                     | Time period | Award Classification |       |       |      |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------|-------|------|
|                          |             | First                | 2:1   | 2:2   | Pass |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2019        | 21%                  | 52.6% | 18.4% | 7.9% |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2012 – 2017 | -                    | -     | -     | -    |
| QQI                      | 2012 – 2017 | 18%                  | 37%   | 30%   | 14%  |
| Dorset College           | 2012 - 2017 | 20%                  | 57%   | 17%   | 7%   |
| Dublin Business School   | 2012 – 2017 | 26%                  | 41%   | 25%   | 8%   |
| Griffith College         | 2012 - 2017 | 18%                  | 29%   | 32%   | 21%  |
| NCI                      | 2012 - 2017 | 6%                   | 40%   | 40%   | 14%  |
| CCT College Dublin       | 2016        | -                    | -     | -     | -    |
| Institutes of Technology | 2016        | 19%                  | 44%   | 28%   | 9%   |

Table 10: External Benchmarking of CCT College Dublin Honours Degree Classifications for Business, Administration and Law

**Appendix 4: 2019 QA Review – Summary of Proposed Changes for Approval**

General updates will apply to all policies to reflect changes in organisational structure or role titles, as applicable, and removal of references to systems and programmes no longer in place.

| <b>Section</b>                                      | <b>Policy</b>   | <b>Update</b>  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Section 1: QA Principles</b>                     |   | No change  |
| <b>Section 2: Governance</b>                        | Governance document<br><br>Marks and Standards 2018<br><br>Academic Council Constitution 2018   | Revised to reflect removal of Advisory Board and replacement of QA Committee with QE Committee. Updated org chart added with revised roles and structure reflected.<br><br>Amendments as per assessment policy<br><br>Change to President membership from ex-officio to invited member   |
| <b>Section 3: Policy for Quality Assurance</b>      |   | No change  |
| <b>Section 4: Programme Development and Review</b>  | Policy – CCTP401 – Validation Policy 2018<br>Policy – CCTP402 – Programme Review and Revalidation Policy 2018   | Updated to reflect appointment of Programme Development Lead and assigning responsibilities previously attached to Head of Faculty. Removal of prescriptive proposal approval process and form. Process documented to reflect practice and requirement for responsive approach.  |
| <b>Section 5: Teaching, Learning and Assessment</b> | Policy – CCTP501 – Group Project 2018<br><br>Policy – CCTP502 – Assessment Policy 2018<br>Policy – CCTP503 – Repeat Assessment 2018<br><br>Policy – CCTP507 – Exam Writing 2018<br><br>Policy – CCTP509 – Internal Moderation Policy 2018<br>Policy – CCTP510 – External Examiner Policy 2018 | Amend to include requirements for non-capstone group assessment and rename as group assessment<br><br>Revise to clearly articulate capping repeat modules while affording full marks achieved to individual components. No repeat for honours remains unchanged. Amend penalty for late submission.<br><br>Clarification regarding role of moderator where exam questions recur on a later paper.<br><br>Revised to reflect minimum requirements and scope to agree programme level approach<br>Revised to reflect requirement to access CA sample through Moodle – IT literacy of External Examiner to be considered as part of appointment process.<br><br>Revision to reflect the use of plagiarism detection software. Addition of library class attendance for ASB attendees. |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | <p>Policy – CCTP511 – Academic Misconduct 2018</p> <p>Policy – CCTP515 – Board of Examiners Policy 2018</p>                        | <p>Revised to reflect DoS as Chair and allow for nominee. Removal of requirement for academic regulations advisor. Clarification around unexpected non-attendance of External Examiner.</p>                        |
| <b>Section 6: Access, Transfer and Progression</b>      | <p>Policy – CCTP602 – Recognition of Prior Learning 2018</p>   | <p>Minor edit to reflect requirement to complete RPL record for retention on file.</p>   |
| <b>Section 7: Protection of Enrolled Learners</b>       | <p>Policy – CCTP701- Protection of Enrolled Learners – Public Information 2018</p>   | <p>Updated to include explicit statement re data sharing</p>   |
| <b>Section 8: Staff and Human Resources</b>             | <p>Policy – CCTP801 – Recruitment Selection and Probation 2018</p> <p>Policy – CCTP804 – Performance Management Appraisal 2018</p> | <p>Amendment to reflect potential for Academic Council to accept alternative evidence of expertise to Masters for applicant lecturers with specific specialist expertise.</p> <p>Edits to roles and structures</p> |
| <b>Section 9: Learning Resource and Student Support</b> | <p>Policy – CCTP904 – Class Rep 2018</p> <p>Policy – CCTP909 – Personal Mitigating Circumstances Policy 2018</p>                   | <p>Update to increase meeting frequency</p> <p>Change to reflect faculty level approval of PMCs</p>  |
| <b>Section 10: Information Management</b>               | <p>CCTP1001 – Privacy Statement 2018</p>   | <p>Updated to reflect revised PEL requirements from QQI, use of third-party CRM provider, URKUND and website requirements</p> <p>Addition of records retention policy for publication</p>                          |
| <b>Section 11: Public Information</b>                   |  | <p>No change</p>   |
| <b>Section 12: Monitoring and Review</b>                | <p>Policy – CCTP1201 – Self-Evaluation Monitoring and Review 2018</p>  | <p>Addition of annual report from CTL and reduction of Admissions Audit frequency to once per year.</p>  |