**Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes leading to QQI Awards-
Higher Education and Training**

Report of the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel

**Stage 1
Assessment of Capacity and Approval of QA Procedures [Re-submission]**

Part 1   Details of Applicant Provider and its proposed Education and Training Provision

1.1   Applicant Provider

Registered Business/Trading Name:	**The Institute for Supply Chain Excellence**
Address:	Cois Cuain, Kilcrohane, Bantry, Co. Cork
Date of original Application:	15 December 2015
Date of Resubmission Application:	30 September 2016
Date of Resubmission Evaluation:	7 November 2016
Date of Site Visit (if applicable):	N/A
Date of Recommendation to the Approvals and Reviews Committee:	7 December 2016

1.2   Profile of Applicant Provider

The Institute for Supply Chain Excellence [ISCE] has been established to provide higher education opportunities to new, current and senior managers in supply chain management in both the public and private sectors.

Other prospective learners identified by ISCE are recent graduates who have come directly from college into the logistics and supply chain sector. ISCE also intends accommodating mature individuals who have the experience of working in the supply chain discipline and are now seeking formal qualification for the experience they have acquired to date and to be exposed to developing practice in the area in which they are working.

The company has three directors but no full-time permanent staff. It is envisaged that all academic, quality assurance and administrative staff, will be engaged on a contract for services basis.

The three owners have each provided executive supply chain education for over 15 years as part of the National Institute for Transport and Logistics [NITL], which in turn provided an associate lecturer team to Dublin Institute of Technology's postgraduate programmes in supply chain management.

1.3   Proposed Education and Training Provision

ISCE is proposing to provide a programme leading to an M.Sc. in Leadership in Supply Chain Management at level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Part 2   The Quality and Capacity Panel Membership

Name	Role of panel member	Organisation
Mr. Jack O'Herlihy	Chair	Formerly Head of Development, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and a Visiting Fellow at Manchester Business School, Jack is currently a visiting lecturer in Hochschule Bremen in Strategic Management and has extensive experience of education and training issues.
Mr. Keith Brumfitt	Quality Assurance in Higher Education	Education and Training Consultant to the UK Government and the European Commission
Prof. Aideen Long	Quality Assurance in Higher Education	Former Dean of Graduate Studies, Trinity College Dublin
Kevin Monks	Student Representative	
QQI Staff		
Mr. Walter Balfe	Observer	Head of Provider Approval, QQI
Dr. Trish O'Brien	Independent Secretary	O'Brien / Governance Design

Part 3 Findings of the Panel

3.1 Summary Findings

The Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel's (the panel) role is to evaluate the capacity of The Institute for Supply Chain Excellence, hereafter in this report named ISCE, to provide quality education and training to learners in the context of the education and training provision proposed. This report relates to the resubmission by ISCE of draft quality assurance procedures, and supporting information on its quality infrastructure, in response to the recommendations of the panel following its consideration of the original application from ISCE in February 2016.

The panel reviewed the revised documentation presented by ISCE and submitted to QQI (Annex 1). The panel met representatives of ISCE and considered their responses to a series of questions based on the submitted documentation over the course of the evaluation meeting (Annex 2).

3.2 Recommendation of the Panel

In considering the resubmission of quality assurance procedures and supporting documentation by ISCE, the purpose of the panel meeting was to review and assess the developments made to address the panel's recommendations arising from ISCE's original submission. The panel is satisfied that the revised documentation submitted, and the responses received to its questions, provide evidence of a significant development in thinking by ISCE since its first application.

The panel has identified some conditions which ISCE is required to address. When ISCE has addressed these conditions, it is required to provide this evidence to the panel. If the panel is satisfied that its conditions have been met[1], it will recommend to the QQI Approval and Reviews Committee that it approves the draft quality assurance procedures of ISCE. Subject to the agreement of the Approval and Reviews Committee to this recommendation, ISCE will be eligible to proceed to Stage 2 of the initial validation process.

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[1] This will be established via an incorporeal meeting of the panel.

Part 4 Detailed findings - Evaluation of the capacity of the applicant to provide quality education and training to learners

4.1 Legal and Compliance Requirements

4.1.1(a) Criterion

Is the applicant an established Legal Entity who has Education and/or Training as a Principal Function?

4.1.1(b) Finding

As confirmed in the original panel report, ISCE is an established legal entity with education and training provision as its principal function. There are other functions proposed for ISCE e.g. research and consultancy in the field of supply chain management.

A Certificate of Incorporation for **CLGG Institute for Transport and Logistics Ltd**. and a certificate of Company Registration for its trading entity, **Institute for Supply Chain Excellence**, were supplied as part of the provider's application to QQI.

4.1.2(a) Criterion

Is the legal entity established in the European Union and does it have a substantial presence in Ireland?

4.1.2(b) Finding

As confirmed in the original panel report, ISCE is a wholly Irish owned company. Per the documentation submitted, it only has operations in Ireland.

4.1.3(a) Criterion

Are all dependencies, collaborations, obligations, parent organisations, and subsidiaries clearly specified?

4.1.3(b) Finding

As confirmed in the original panel report, ISCE is a newly established company with no parent organisations or subsidiaries. The existing and past relationships which have led to the establishment of ISCE have been clearly described.

As part of its resubmission, ISCE informed the panel that it has had positive meetings with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT - International), a recognised body for professionals in the logistics and transport industries. The two parties have discussed the potential for collaborative provision of international executive education and development courses, including a postgraduate diploma and the proposed MSc in Leadership in Supply Chain Management. The ISCE

documentation indicates that CILT operates in 30 countries and has a membership of 30,000 professionals. ISCE also communicated that it is negotiating an agreement with Aston University to deliver a module in leadership. It is anticipated that the module in question (Developing Leadership and Management Capability through Enquiry) will be included in the suite of modules available to learners undertaking the MSc in Leadership in Supply Chain Management. In addition to forming part of the MSc, the module will also be eligible for accreditation by the associated awarding body; the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). ISCE indicated that this will bring further advantages in terms of access to learning resources available through ILM that are pertinent to this module.

ISCE has indicated its intention to apply for membership of the Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) in the event of receiving programme validation. In addition to providing an opportunity to collaborate with private education and training providers offering related programmes, this would also enable ISCE to contribute to HECA's PEL Assistance Fund as part of its obligations to protect enrolled learners.

The establishment of any confirmed collaborative arrangements is subject to ISCE achieving validation from QQI of its programme(s).

4.1.4(a)   Criterion
Are all third-party relationships and partnerships compatible with the scope of access sought?

4.1.4(b)   Finding

As the original and subsequent application indicates, this question is moot pending a decision on validation.

4.1.5(a)   Criterion
Are the applicable regulations and legislation complied with in all jurisdictions where it operates?

4.1.5(b)   Finding

As confirmed in the original panel report, ISCE, in making the required statutory declaration, has certified that it is compliant with all relevant legislation and regulatory requirements applicable to the provision of education and training in Ireland, in particular, all employment, health and safety, equality, data protection, and financial regulatory requirements insofar as these are applicable to its operations.

4.1.6(a)   Criterion
Is the applicant in good standing in the qualifications systems and education and training systems in any countries where it operates (or where its parents or subsidiaries operate) or enrols learners, or where it has arrangements with awarding bodies, quality assurance agencies, qualifications authorities, ministries of education and training, professional bodies and regulators.

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4.1.6(b)   Finding

Whilst ISCE has identified, as part of its re-submission, its intention to collaborate with professional bodies and a UK vocational education and training awarding body, via a UK university (detailed in 4.1.3 (b), it does not have operational arrangements with any awarding bodies in Ireland or internationally.

4.2   Resource, Governance and Structural Requirements

> ### 4.2.1(a)   Criterion
> *Does the applicant have a sufficient resource base and is it stable and in good financial standing?*

4.2.1(b)   Finding

The panel articulated concerns in its original report regarding the projected financial and professional resource requirements of ISCE. These concerns primarily related to the sufficiency of projected expenditure on its website, learning resources, facilities, support for learners' dissertations, as well as fees for lecturers, a quality co-ordinator, manager(s) and administrator(s).

In its resubmission, ISCE addressed student supports that will be made available to learners, subject to programme validation. It intends employing the services of Edtap, a developer of mobile apps for the delivery of documents and messages to learners; its product is reported by ISCE to be currently used in a number of higher education institutions in Ireland. ISCE also included its plans to increase learner supports by developing its website; by providing access to the JSTOR digital library for research purposes; and by developing a physical library consisting of recommended text books and other relevant printed materials.

The financial estimates provided by ISCE indicate that it expects to break even in its second year of operation and will be cash positive from thereon in. A revised budget was submitted to address the fees of lecturers and other staff and the costs of dissertation supervision and assessment.

> ### 4.2.2(a)   Criterion
> *Does the applicant have a reasonable business case for sustainable provision?*

4.2.2(b)   Finding

As indicated in the original panel report, the panel agree that there appears to be a market for the proposed programme and that the members of ISCE have a good knowledge and experience of that market. In the light of the improved quality assurance procedures and learner supports, and the meeting with ISCE representatives, the panel is satisfied that ISCE's understanding of learner

expectations and quality assurance requirements at this level has been greatly enhanced and has improved the business case for sustainable provision.

4.2.3(a)   Criterion
Are fit-for-purpose governance, management and decision making structures in place?

4.2.3(b)   Finding

In its original report, the panel identified a large degree of overlap of membership between the Board of Governors, Academic Council and Programme Committee and recommended external input. The resubmission by ISCE has set out more refined committee roles and better divides academic and business decision-making. The role of the external examiner is also being fulfilled by a party external to ISCE.

The panel considers that the proposed governance arrangements would benefit from greater clarity regarding permitted and required composition of membership; and could strengthen its references to acceptable quorums by providing direction regarding the presence of appropriate expertise to inform decision-making.

4.2.4(a)   Criterion
Are there arrangements in place for providing required information to QQI?

4.2.4(b)   Finding

The resubmission of ISCE identifies the intended Quality Co-ordinator and his extensive experience and includes revisions to the quality assurance procedures regarding document management and submission to QQI, and the mining of information to contribute to quality improvement. ISCE also articulated in its self-assessment that it intends integrating learner and accounting management information systems into its operation, pending successful validation.

The roles set out in the revised quality assurance procedures have identified in a more detailed manner how the process of monitoring and review of activities will take place and associated information utilised. The ISCE representatives were also clear in their representation to the panel of how the *Internal Quality Audits Procedure* (identified as procedure MS/411.01) would be implemented. The Quality Co-ordinator is responsible for developing an Audit Plan at the beginning of each academic year. He will assign audits to an Audit Team; evaluate the outcomes of audits; and keep the effectiveness of the process under evaluation. It is intended that the outcomes of audits will be reported monthly by the Quality Coordinator to the Director of Academic Administration.

The panel notes and welcomes these developments. It urges ISCE to continue to consider the utilisation of information gathered to shape ongoing quality improvements.

4.3 Programme Development and Provision Requirements

4.3.1(a)   Criterion

Does the applicant have experience and a track record in providing education and training programmes?

4.3.1(b)   Finding

As noted in the original report, the members of ISCE have extensive and relevant experience, as members of the National Institute of Transport and Logistics (NITL), in the development and delivery of programmes specific to the area proposed for programme development. The panel is satisfied that the key individuals behind ISCE have extensive and long-standing contacts within the field and have access to acknowledged subject-matter experts. However, in its original report the panel raised concerns regarding the availability of expertise in developing the quality systems and structures that also constitute a higher education institution. In response, ISCE has strengthened its capacity in this regard by filling the role of Quality Co-ordinator with an individual with extensive experience of higher education systems and structures in both Ireland and abroad; the panel considers this to be a vital addition to the capability of ISCE to implement its quality assurance processes and procedures.

4.3.2(a)   Criterion

Does the applicant have a fit-for-purpose and stable complement of education and training staff?

4.3.2(b)   Finding

The qualifications and experience of the panel of associate lecturers available to ISCE was communicated to the panel. As noted in 4.3.1(b), ISCE has sought to address the concerns of the panel regarding the availability of expertise in academic quality assurance in how it has filled the Quality Co-ordinator role.

As in the original meeting, the panel spent some time discussing the nature of the contracts for service that are proposed by ISCE. During the resubmission meeting ISCE clarified that it has sought business and legal advice and has based its decision to model its employment in this manner on that advice and as a means of reducing risk to the organisation. In response to the panel's previous request, ISCE has revised the Contract for Services to include the requirements for contract staff to participate in the implementation and review of quality assurance processes and procedures.

The panel also revisited the matter of the quality assurance of dissertation support. ISCE anticipates the scale of learners undertaking the dissertation to initially be quite small. It reassured the panel that it has already been in communication with suitable academic dissertation supervisors with experience at master's level and that the work of these supervisors will be subject to the quality assurance oversight that will be implemented through the role of the Quality Co-ordinator and the governance structure.

ISCE is encouraged to consider in its contingency planning how, in the event of lecturer cancellations, it can minimise the impact on learners who will have made work and personal arrangements to assure their attendance.

4.3.3(a)   Criterion
Does the applicant have the capacity to comply with the standard conditions for validation specified in Section 45(3) of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) (the Act)?

4.3.3(b)   Finding

The standard conditions for validation specified in the Act include co-operation with and assistance to QQI in the performances of its functions, including the provision of such information required by QQI, the establishment of procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners and provisions for the protection of enrolled learners.

From the revised documentation submitted and the presentation made by ISCE, the panel considers that its quality assurance system can support the standard conditions for validation.

4.3.4(a)   Criterion
Does the applicant have the fit-for-purpose premises, facilities and resources to meet the requirements of the provision proposed in place?

4.3.4(b)   Finding

As discussed in section 4.2.1(b) above, ISCE has taken steps to strengthen the provision of learner supports. The acquisition of these supports remains dependent on the successful achievement of programme validation.

The use of facilities in hotels and other venues remains the premises model for ISCE. There is a comprehensive procedure for vetting, selecting and monitoring suitable venues. ISCE has also identified offices which it will secure to run the organisation from, pending successful validation.

4.3.5(a)   Criterion
Are there access, transfer and progression arrangements that meet QQI's criteria for approval in place?

4.3.5(b)   Finding

ISCE has developed procedures for *Student Access, Transfer and Progression* (AP/407.05) and *Student Admissions Process* (AP/407.12).

Access

- There are documented procedures and forms to support student enrolment/admissions. These address entry criteria, exceptional entry, recognition of prior learning, international applicants.

- The admissions procedure has been revised and contextualised. ISCE has indicated that it wishes to recruit learners who are resident in Ireland. It is not targeting non-resident international visa-required students. It also indicated that it is not pursuing European exchange arrangements via Erasmus+ or otherwise.

- The panel noted the specific admission criteria established by ISCE and the intention of the institution to prioritise individuals with significant industry experience. In doing so, the programme can benefit from the availability of high-quality industry experiences and mentors to contribute to the dual industry and academic approach to the dissertation process. The panel understood this rationale and the intention of ISCE not to dilute this approach.

Learner Information

- As noted in the original report, it is understandable that ISCE has not yet developed programme information for its website as the programme remains subject to QQI validation. However, it will be necessary to implement processes to ensure that all the relevant learner information about the programme and related services is made available and that the effectiveness of this information is reviewed. The increased budget for the website and the assurances of the representatives suggest that evolving learner information and services will be made available online.

Recognition of Prior Learning

- As part of its *Student Access, Transfer and Progression* procedure, ISCE facilitates applicants for the programme who do not meet the stated entry criteria on an exceptional basis. The associated process involves review of the application by the Director of Academic Administration and Student Affairs and a potential interview with the student. An Exceptional Entry Forum is subsequently completed and submitted to the Academic Council for consideration and decision.

- The RPL procedure allows for on-line applications and payment which the documentation indicates ISCE intends making available via its website.

4.3.6(a)   Criterion
Are structures and resources to underpin fair and consistent assessment of learners in place?

4.3.6(b)   Finding

ISCE submitted revised procedures for fair and consistent assessment based on the panel's recommendations arising from the original evaluation. These set out in some detail the relevant principles as well as the roles and responsibilities of the Assessors (associate lecturers), Exam Board, External Examiner, Director of Academic Administration etc. The panel sought clarification and assurances from the ISCE documentation and representatives on the following assessment related matters:

- o ISCE clarified that an external examiner has been secured from outside of the institution to assure externality and independence. The *Contract for Services – External Examiner* (MS/403.07) indicates that appointments are made for a maximum period of four years; reappointments will only be considered on an exceptional basis and after a five-year period has elapsed
- o The budget for the implementation of the assessment process has been increased in revised financial projections; including the costs of academic supervision of the dissertation which accounts for 40% of the overall master's degree
- o ISCE confirmed that its learners will be experienced professionals with at least 10 years' experience. Candidates without this profile will be admitted on an exceptional basis only. ISCE is clear that the cohort will not determine the programme, rather, the programme will determine the cohort. From an assessment design perspective, the experience of the learner cohort is obviously an important contributory factor
- o The weighting of credits within the programme between the modules and the dissertation and how the Master's is successfully attained requires attention by the ISCE in the design of its programme for submission to QQI
- o ISCE explained that it does not envisage employing second-marking on a systematic basis but rather on an exceptional basis. The panel encourages ISCE to give the merits of more routine second-marking due consideration.

The panel discussed with ISCE the relationship between the modules and the programme. ISCE, in the context of its intention to submit programmes for validation, must develop a procedure for the development and review of programmes. This will incorporate the requirement to refer to the relevant descriptors of the NFQ in shaping its programme learning outcomes; the assessment methods adopted will need to enable the learner to demonstrate its acquisition of the programme learning outcomes. In its submitted quality assurance procedures ISCE identifies that its Programme Committee will "ensure that programme design is underpinned by a learning outcome approach that flows from the National Framework of Qualifications to the programme learning outcomes to the module learning outcomes" (*The Programme Committee,* AP/407.03 (a)).

ISCE provided clarification in its quality assurance procedures that the Programme Committee will maintain oversight of the module assessments to ensure that they are aligned and collectively contribute to the demonstration of the programme learning outcomes. It will also review assignments and monitor and review marks awarded and feedback provided (*The Programme Committee,* AP/407.03 (7.3.1)).

4.3.7(a)   Criterion
Are arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners to meet the statuary obligations in place (where applicable)?

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4.3.7(b)   Finding

ISCE is aware of the need to have PEL arrangements in place before making an application for programme validation. It has progressed discussions with the insurance broker O'Driscoll O'Neill regarding refund arrangements and intends approaching the Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) to seek membership to have access to alternative providers and to contribute to its learner protection fund.

4.4   Evaluation of capacity to provide the proposed education and training provision

Overall finding:

> The panel remains confident in the provider's business case and its ability to deliver the MSc in Leadership in Supply Chain Management. Based on the manner in which the panel's recommendations have been addressed in its quality assurance procedures and arrangements, and the articulation of same by representatives of ISCE, the panel is satisfied that ISCE, subject to addressing conditions articulated in Part 5, has sufficient capacity in the areas of academic quality assurance and information provision/management to deem it ready to move to Stage II of the process for Initial Access to Validation.

Part 5   Evaluation of draft QA procedures submitted by The Institute for Supply Chain Excellence

5.1(a)   Criterion
The provider-owned quality assurance policies and procedures are established and maintained in accordance with the following:
- *Learning* Outcomes principles
- Implementation principles
- Externality principles
- ESG *and IHEQN principles*

5.1(b)   Finding

ISCE has established a comprehensive range of QA procedures. The revisions made based on the panel's recommendations have the potential to provide an effective system to manage the administrative and academic quality assurance processes associated with the delivery of Master's level qualifications. However, as indicated in the overall evaluation of capacity in Part 4, further development of the quality assurance procedures presented by ISCE is required. The deficits / matters to address identified by the panel relate to:

- The requirement to thoroughly apprise itself of the *Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training (2016)* and to address any gaps in its quality assurance procedures arising. These include *inter alia* the requirement to develop:
  - o Quality assurance procedures regarding programme development and use of the appropriate NFQ award-type descriptor as a reference point to map programme outcomes
  - o Quality assurance procedures regarding systematic and strategic-level programmatic review
- Addressing certain inconsistencies in the documentation regarding the duties and responsibilities of individuals and roles of committees and to confirm that these have been aligned. Examples of the inconsistencies identified by the panel include:
  - o The role of the external examiner vis-à-vis setting and marking of assignments and the duties described for associate lecturers
  - o The descriptions of attendance at governance committees being permitted rather than specified as required and some inconsistencies within the governance structure and reporting lines
  - o The scheduling of examination boards (the documentation states the end of each semester but the programme doesn't appear to run on a semesterised basis).

5.2(a)	Criterion
	The Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures are designed to evolve continually. The boundaries, mechanisms and controls governing this evolution are built into the policy and procedures.

5.2(b)   Finding

ISCE has identified a part-time Quality Coordinator who has experience of quality assurance system design, documentation, delivery and auditing. The implementation of the revised quality assurance procedures concerning audit and review of practice, and the fulfilment of the additional requirements to develop programme development and review procedures, will strengthen the evolutionary nature of the quality assurance system.

5.3(a)	Criterion
	A policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards is established, formally agreed and publicly available

5.3(b)   Finding

ISCE is formally committed to agreeing and publishing all its policies and quality assurance procedures as part of its website development.

5.4(a)	Criterion
	There is a strategy and implementation plan for the continuous enhancement of quality in The Institute for Supply Chain Excellence

5.4(b)   Finding

The panel is satisfied that the significant time, effort and resources put by ISCE into the development and revision of its quality assurance procedures and supporting infrastructure is part of its strategy to develop and oversee the quality delivery of programmes of education and training. The formal review processes described for the *Monitoring of Academic Quality Support Systems* (AP/407.14) and *Internal Audit Procedures* (AP/411.01) illustrate the roles of the Quality Co-ordinator, Director of Academic Administration and the layer of oversight of quality improvement processes provided by the organs of the ISCE governance structure. The panel urges ISCE to continue to consider the utilisation of information gathered to shape ongoing quality improvements.

5.5(a)   Criterion
Clear information is available to learners (Protection of Enrolled Learners: Protocols for the Implementation of Part 6 of the 2012 Act), including the details of the arrangements for PEL that ISCE has in place, in accordance with Section 65(4) of the 2012 Act

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5.5(b)   Finding

As described in section 4.3.7 (b), ISCE has taken steps to satisfy legislative requirements regarding protection for enrolled learners. These will be confirmed if the programme is successfully validated by QQI.

5.6(a)   Criterion
Formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes and awards have been established and are credible

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5.6(b)   Finding

The revised ISCE quality assurance procedures illustrate through the roles and responsibilities of individuals and via the governance structure, how programmes will be monitored on an on-going basis.

As indicated above, the panel requires ISCE to develop procedures for the development of its programmes for validation and for the systematic and strategic review of validated programmes.

5.7(a)   Criterion
There are established procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners

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5.7(b)   Finding

ISCE has revised its procedures for the fair and consistent assessment of learners in line with the panel's recommendations. An independent external examiner has now been identified. The

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organisation's anticipated resourcing and investment in the processes around dissertation have also been increased to a more realistic level.

5.8(a)	Criterion
	There are ways of ISCE satisfying itself that staff involved with the provision of its programmes are qualified and competent to do so.

5.8(b)   Finding

ISCE has procedures to select and appraise associate lecturers and other staff involved in programme provision. Its revised quality assurance procedures provide further information regarding the criteria and mechanisms underpinning the selection of these individuals and the establishment of their appropriateness to these roles (*Recruitment, Selection and Appointment of Staff* (SA/406.07)). The responsibilities and required interaction by these individuals with the quality assurance system has also been articulated in more detail (*Contract for Service – Associated Lecturers* MS/403.03 (7.5)).

5.9(a)	Criterion
	The resources available for the support of student learning are adequate and appropriate for each programme offered.

5.9(b)   Finding

ISCE has increased its identification and planning for the attainment of resources such as learning materials, databases, journals etc. which supplement and underpin the learning delivered and facilitated by lecturers.

5.10(a)	Criterion
	The means to collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of its programmes and other activities is in place

5.10(b)   Finding

ICSE has reviewed and improved its approach to applying the feedback it is committed to gathering, to support the management and quality improvement of its programmes. The use of feedback to contribute to the strategic review of programmes should also be strengthened in the development by ISCE of its procedures for strategic and systematic review of its programmes.

5.11(a)	Criterion
	Appropriate procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners have been established.

5.11(b)   Finding

ISCE has procedures for access, transfer and progression (see section 4.3.5 (b) above. The adequacy of these can be more effectively evaluated at programme validation, when applied to the specifics of a programme.

5.12(a)   Criterion
ISCE is committed to regularly publish up to date, impartial and objective information, both quantitative and qualitative, about the programmes and awards it is offering

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5.12(b)   Finding

ISCE is committed to publishing the required information on its website pending the validation by QQI of its proposed Master's programme.

5.13(a)   Criterion
The presentation to the panel demonstrates a full ownership and understanding of the quality system by ISCE management

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5.13(b)   Finding

During the resubmission meeting, the senior management of ISCE demonstrated a full ownership and detailed understanding of the quality system that it has presented.

Evaluation of draft Quality Assurance Procedures - overall finding

In evaluating the original submission of ISCE the panel was confident in the ability, experience and expertise of the Institute members in respect of delivering Masters' level programmes in supply chain management; its reservations concerned the sufficiency of the effectiveness of the quality management system for an NFQ Level 9 Master's award in its draft quality assurance procedures. The panel's recommendations clearly identified areas for improvement should ISCE wish to make a resubmission.

Having reviewed the re-submitted materials and met again with the representatives of ISCE, the panel is satisfied, subject to the meeting of specified conditions, that ISCE demonstrates a sufficiently effective quality management system fit for the purposes of education and training programmes leading to an NFQ Level 9 Masters award.

The conditions to be met by ISCE for the panel to recommend to the Approval and Reviews Committee that it approve its quality assurance procedures are as follows:

- ISCE must thoroughly apprise itself of the *Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training (2016)* and address any gaps in its quality assurance procedures arising. These include *inter alia* the requirement to develop:
  o Quality assurance procedures regarding programme development and use of the appropriate NFQ award-type descriptor as a reference point to map programme outcomes
  o Quality assurance procedures regarding systematic and strategic-level programmatic review
- ISCE must review all of its documentation to ensure consistency between the duties and responsibilities of individuals and the roles of committees. Examples of the inconsistencies identified by the panel include:
  o The role of the external examiner vis-à-vis setting and marking of assignments and the duties described for associate lecturers
  o The descriptions of attendance at governance committees being permitted and elsewhere specified as required and some inconsistencies within the governance structure and reporting lines
  o The scheduling of examination boards (the documentation states the end of each semester but the programme doesn't appear to run on a semesterised basis).

## Part 6   Recommendation to QQI

It is the recommendation of this Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel that QQI should approve the draft quality assurance procedures of the Institute for Supply Chain Excellence pending confirmation from the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel that the identified conditions have been satisfied by ISCE in advance of the Approval and Reviews Committee's determination.

Part 7   Approval by Chair of the Panel

This report of the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel is approved and submitted to QQI for its decision on the recommendation to approve the draft Quality Assurance Procedures of ISCE, pending confirmation from the Quality and Capacity Evaluation Panel that the identified conditions have been satisfied by ISCE in advance of the Approval and Reviews Committee's determination.
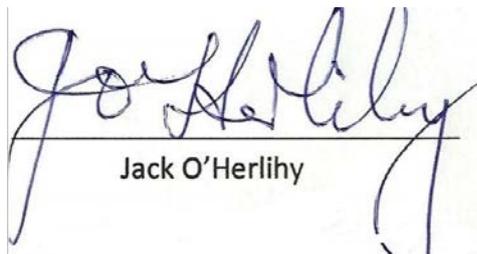
Jack O'Herlihy

Chair

Date: 13 January 2017

Addendum – Confirmation from panel Chair that panel's conditions have now been met

From: Jack O'Herlihy [mailto:oherlihyj@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday 13 January 2017 12:10
To: Walter Balfe <wbalfe@qqi.ie>
Cc: longai@tcd.ie; brumfittk@hotmail.com; Kevin.Monks@westpharma.com; Trish O'Brien <tobrien@obriengd.ie>
Subject: Re: FW: FW: ISCE submission for validation of programme Stage I

Walter
Having read through the documentation and on behalf of the panel, I am satisfied that ISCE's application can proceed to the next phase

Regards

Jack

Annex 1: Documentation provided to the Panel during the Evaluation

- Applicants completed resubmission form, including the statutory declaration and supporting documentation.
- Applicant's self-assessment against the criteria for access to initial validation.
- Provider revised QA procedures and supporting documentation.

Annex 2: ISCE staff who met the panel during the course of the Evaluation

Name	Role/Position
Gerard Glynn	Director and Dean of Graduate Studies
Michael Cashin	Financial Controller
Kevin Byrne	Quality Assurance Co-ordinator
Blanca Suarez	Marketing & PR

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