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Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Report of the Programme Evaluation Panel

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

Membership of the Programme Evaluation Panel:

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

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1. Profile of provider:

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

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

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

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

2. Planning:

Programme development since agreement of QA procedures / the last review

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

2.1. Purpose of the award

Does the proposed programme address a clear market demand? Yes✓ No

Comment: None

2.2. Avoidance of duplication

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

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

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2.3. Stakeholder consultation

Was the level of stakeholder engagement satisfactory? Yes✓ No

Comment: None

Support for the programme (industry/business/community) Yes✓ No

Comment: None

2.4. Efficient and effective use of resources

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

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

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

Specific Comments:

Staff: Comment: None

Accommodation: Comment: None

Information technology: Comment: None

Library: Administration: Comment: None

Publicity/public information: Comment: None

2.6. Planned development over the coming 5 years?

Have the QQI award standards been explicitly referred to in the programme and does the programme meet those standards at the specified level?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

Has the Provider complied with Protection for Enrolled Learner requirements?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

2.7. Access

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

Yes No✓

The RPEL arrangements need to be clarified in the documentation.



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

Yes

No✓

The RPEL arrangements need to be clarified in the documentation.



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3. Quality Assurance

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

Were the agreed quality assurance procedures for programme development followed?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

Are programme management arrangements adequate and coherent?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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4. Programme structure and content

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

4.1. Programme learning outcomes

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

Are module descriptions adequate and relevant?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

Are modules relevant and current?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

4.2. Learning Modes

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

4.3. Assessment strategies

Are assessment processes and methods adequately described?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

Are these strategies appropriate to this type of award, in terms of type, frequency and volume?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

Is assessment explicitly linked with intended learning outcomes?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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Does the assessment strategy underpin the achievement of the relevant standard of knowledge, skill and competence?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

4.4. Duration

What is the intended duration of the Programme?

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

What is the lifespan of the programme (e.g. single cohort intake to satisfy limited local demand; multiple intakes over the following 5 years etc.?)

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

Does the Panel believe this to be realistic?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

Are there flexible modes of participation?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

4.5. Credits

Is credit allocation in accordance with national and international guidelines?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

Considering the level, outcomes and volume of each module, is the number of credits attached to each appropriate?

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

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

Yes✓ No

Comment: None

4.6. NFQ Level

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

Yes✓ No

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



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4.7. Programme titles and award

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

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

4.8. Transfer and Progression

Has the Programme Development Team identified realistic transfer and progression opportunities/possibilities that learners may avail of following achievement of this award?

Comment: None

Yes✓

No

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5. Module Titles, Content and Assessment Strategy

Module Title: Introduction to Professional Practice for Employability Services

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

Comment: None

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

LO5 should be amended.

Yes No✓

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

Comment: None

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

Comment: None

Yes✓ No

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

The latest edition of the Leahy text should be used.

Yes No✓

Module Title: Engaging With & Supporting Clients

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

Comment: None

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

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

Yes No✓

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

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

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

The 'psychological states' assignment is inappropriate.

Yes No✓

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

Comment: None

Yes✓ No

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Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann**Module Title: Engaging With & Supporting Employers/Enterprise**

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

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

Yes✓ No

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

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

Yes✓ No

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

Yes✓ No

Module Title: Leadership in Employment Support Services

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

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

Yes✓ No

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

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

Yes No✓

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

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

The Leahy text lacks detailed bibliography information. Yes No✓

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6. Specific Issues to be addressed by the provider

6.1. Conditions of Approval:

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

6.2. Recommendations:

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

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7. Overall Result of Evaluation Panel Review:

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

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

Panel Chairperson:

Date:

30th June 2016.

Dr. Clare Power

Signed _ Date _

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Appendix 1: Staff

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