CCT College Dublin

2015

Annual Quality Report CCT College Dublin

Reporting Period 2023-2024

CCT College Dublin
2025

Annual Quality Report CCT College Dublin

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Reporting Period 2023-2024

PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report** forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with higher education institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINNTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports

CONTENTS

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template[1]

Legislation

- Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended)
- Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992 (as amended)
- Technological Universities Act 2018
- Universities Act 1997

QQI Documents

Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

- Core QAG
- Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers
- Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies
- Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology
- Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes
- Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes
- Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning

Other QQI Policy Documents

- QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012
- QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015
- QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015

Other National/International References

- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015)
- IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision
- National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland
- Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019
- HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education
- The Salzburg Principles
- The Salzburg II Recommendations
- SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices
- UN Sustainable Development Goals

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[1] These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	**QQI QAG Core Sub-section No.**	**QAG Core Sub-section Title**	**ESG Standard No.**	**ESG Standard Title**
1.0 – *Internal QA Framework*	**2.1**	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 – *Programme Development and Delivery*	**2.3**	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 – *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*				
8.0 – *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
5.0 – *Staff Recruitment, Development and Support*	**2.4**	Staff Recruitment, Management and Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 – *Teaching, Learning and Assessment*	**2.5**	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 – *Learner Resources and Supports*	**2.7**	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 – *Information and Data Management*	**2.8**	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 – *Public Information and Communication*	**2.9**	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
8.0 – *Monitoring and Periodic Review*	**2.10**	Other Parties Involved in Education and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
9.0 – *Details of Arrangements with Third Parties*			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
2.0 – *Programme Development and Delivery*	**2.11**	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – *Monitoring and Periodic Review*			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 – *QA of Research Activities and Programmes*	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for CCT College Dublin for the reporting period **1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024.**
It is to be submitted by **Friday, 28 February 2025.**

The AQR has been approved by the Academic Council of CCT College Dublin and is submitted by the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Institution Overview

CCT College Dublin is the trading name of CCT Education Limited an independent higher education institution with a city centre campus at 30-34 Westmoreland St., Dublin 2. The College was established in February 2005 and has a proven record in the delivery of further and higher education programmes as well as programmes of professional development. CCT has previously collaborated with a UK University in the delivery of programmes leading to awards of that University but since 2012 all academically accredited programmes of CCT have been awarded by QQI.

In 2018, CCT successfully re-engaged with QQI, securing approval of its QA procedures. As part of the re-engagement process the College outlined the intention to apply for extension of scope of provision up to level 9 taught master's programmes. This intention was realised in March 2019. More recently, during the academic period 2021-22, the College further extended its scope of provision to include blended learning provision. The intention to extend scope to include blended learning was reflected in the QA policies and procedures approved as part of the reengagement process. The current scope of provision therefore comprises of major and non-major awards, from level 6 to level 9 taught Masters, in the discipline areas of business, computing and IT, in full time, part time and blended learning modes. In April 2023, QQI approved CCT's application for 'Devolved Responsibility' in the organisation and facilitation of new programme validations. CCT operates exclusively in Ireland and is not engaged in any collaborative, transnational or joint award programmes.

The College attracts both domestic and international students and also provides access to its undergraduate programmes through the CAO. It is well regarded by employers, many of whom are represented on the CCT Industry Engagement Forum (IEF) which provides for varying degrees of engagement by employers up to and including strategic partnerships.

CCT College Dublin is a member of the Higher Education College's Association (HECA) and is represented on the HECA Board, the HECA Quality Assurance and Enhancement Forum (HAQEF), and the HECA Library Committee. The College is a member of the HECA PEL Scheme, enabling compliance with legal obligations in respect of the protection for enrolled learners.

Fit for purpose management and governance structures are in place to ensure there is no undue influence of commercial matters on academic decision-making. Further detail on management, governance and organisational structure and roles is documented in the QA manual.

Process for Development and Approval of the AQR.

The Dean of Academic Affairs leads the AQR working group comprising the QA Lead and the Head of Student Services. The Working Group ensures the AQR is representative of the wider institution and reflects the input of all relevant stakeholders. The AQR is primarily populated with information and data obtained from quality assurance, enhancement and monitoring activities and reports such as student satisfaction surveys, programme validation, external examiner reports, annual programme and departmental monitoring reports and evaluations of enhancement initiatives.

The AQR working group is required to consider continuity from the previous AQR report and action plan and ensure matters are closed off or extended upon, year on year, as appropriate. Upon completion, the AQR is first considered by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to confirm the accuracy of the content, alignment of action plans with strategic objectives and to obtain commitment to investment and resources associated with any actions as may be required. Upon approval from the ELT, the AQR is submitted to the Academic Council. The Academic Council may make recommendations for edits or the inclusion or removal of material. In such cases ELT must also be notified and may request a subsequent review following the changes. Submission of the AQR to QQI can only take place when the Academic Council has recommended submission, and this is supported by the ELT.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

The following section details the quality assurance policies and framework of CCT College Dublin. The CCT QA Manual 2022 continued to be operational in the current year with a high-level review of QA implementation undertaken throughout the reporting period and working groups convened in several areas.

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

Management and Governance

Full details of the governance and management of the institution, including key points of decision-making, terms of reference and representation of learners and external stakeholders are documented in the QA Manual, Section 2: Governance and Decision-Making.

Quality Assurance System

The CCT QA Manual, including the policy for Quality Assurance (in section 3), documents the quality assurance system of the College. The QA policies and procedures in operation comprise of those approved by QQI through re-engagement in 2018, the amendments and additions approved in March 2019 as part of the extension of scope of provision to include level 9 taught Masters programmes and those further approved following a virtual visit in July 2020 as part of the extension of scope application for blended learning provision.

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

CCT is not currently a linked provider and does not engage in collaborative or transnational provision.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Quality assurance policies and procedures (QAPs) for the development and approval of programmes in CCT College were approved by QQI through the re-engagement process completed in 2018. At the end of the 2018-19 academic year, a review of effectiveness of the QAPs identified changes required to better ensure the fitness for purpose of the QAPs relating to programme development and specifically to better ensure the responsiveness of the College to potential programme development opportunities. These changes were approved by Academic Council.

The review identified that the programme proposal form submitted to secure initial approval for developing a programme was overly prescriptive and required a degree of detail that more reasonably becomes available at a later stage in the development of a programme. It was noted that the documented process was not easily applicable in practice and therefore the revisions were made to more accurately reflect practice. Notwithstanding this, the process continues to require the presentation of a proposal to Academic Council and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) for approval prior to commencement of a programme development, as per the original approved procedure.

Section 4 of the CCT QA Manual includes the policies and procedures for programme development and approval, including programme revalidation and development of blended learning programmes.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Section 6 of the CCT QA Manual deals with Access, Transfer and Progression. The policies in this section are as approved by QQI through re-engagement with the exception of a minor amendment to include the requirement to complete the RPL record for retention on an applicants' file in all instances of RPL applications. This amendment arose from completion of the annual admissions audit which recommended documentary evidence to support RPL admissions decisions should be included in the admissions file. This should include the recommendation from the academic staff member and a copy of records confirming satisfaction of award standard equivalence. A working group was established during the reporting period 2023-24 to review processes and supporting resources underpinning recognition of prior learning and prior experiential learning.

In addition to the above policies, section 11 deals with public information and includes the Policy – CCTP1101 – Public Information which outlines the information that must be made available to learners. Policy – CCTP404 – Blended Learning Policy, further details the additional specific requirements relating to blended learning programmes.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

CCT is not a designated awarding body and therefore does not make awards. Programmes leading to CCT Certification are clearly marketed as not leading to a framework award.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) continues to be a core focus on CCT business. It is addressed at many points of business including faculty and programme meetings, Academic Council, and Executive Leadership Team. As new challenges and initiatives continue to arise, TLA needs to be reflexive and agile, and able to respond to learner needs.

CCT TLA strategy 2024-2027 was developed, and is implemented, by the College Teaching and Learning (CTL) Working Group. The College TLA Strategy Priorities are:

Priority 1
Programme approach to embedding relevant knowledge, skills and competencies and upholding academic integrity

Priority 2
Enhanced physical and blended learning environment ensuring commitment to student participation, access, diversity and inclusion

Priority 3
Cultivating leading edge transversal skills, including a commitment to life-long learning

Priority 4
Students as partners across all aspects of their learning journey

Priority 5
Professional development and evidence based Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

The CTL Working Group is designed to enhance TLA at CCT, in a practical and immediate way to contribute to students' success. The CLT Working Group facilitates continuous reflection on TLA in the College, responding to the needs of each programme as they arise. The work of the Group is informed in many ways, including through:

- Programme annual reports (incl. external examiner, student and lecturer feedback and reflections);
- Academic Council (AC), and AC subcommittees as appropriate;
- Executive Leadership Team (ELT);
- Academic Integrity Working Group;
- International and national evidence based best practice (for example work of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (National Forum); Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), including the work of National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN); National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP), HECA's HAQEF Committee; Irish Conference for Engaging Pedagogy (ICEP); European Network for Academic Integrity (ENAI); International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) and collaboration with Griffith University on Interactive Oral Assessment (IO).

CTL Working Group work is advanced through the CTL Framework, which includes, but is not restricted to:

- CTL Working Group Meetings (min. two per semester), with sub working groups as necessary. Much of the work in these meetings will be guided by the action points from annual programme reports, programme committee meetings and external examiner reports;
- CCT Conversation Series (incl. GenAI and Moodle playground sessions and Communities of Practice (CoP) as informed by the CTL working group is a focused form of CCT professional development driven by the needs of CCT students and lecturers;
- Professional Development opportunities, both internally and externally (for example peer observation of teaching, annual engaging pedagogy showcase event, UDL badge, ICEP Conference, and engagement with scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) through research papers, peer consultation etc)

Figure 2: CTL Framework
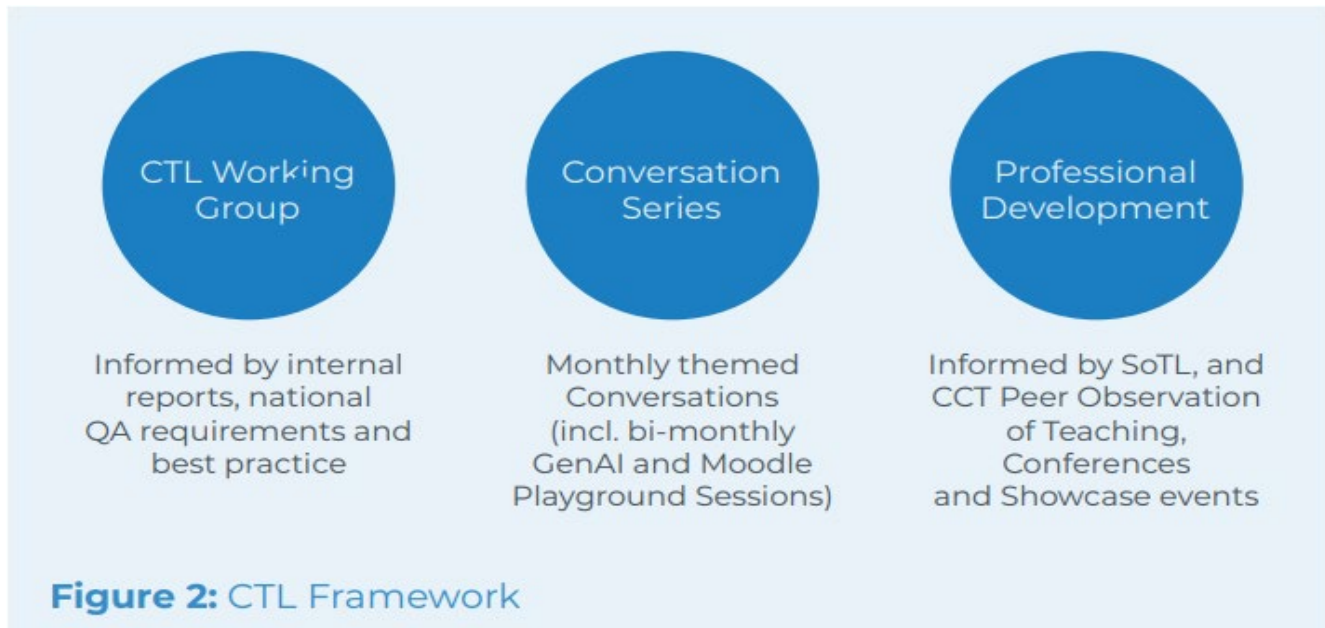
The CTL Framework activities and initiatives are loosely aligned to the National Professional Development Framework in the following way:

Type of Activity	Description	Examples
Unstructured, non-accredited	These activities are independently led by the lecturer themselves.	Reading articles, following social media, self-study, watching video tutorials, keeping a reflective journal, scholarly publications (incl. AQR Case Studies).
Collaborative, non-accredited	Learning from these activities comes from their collaborative nature	The CTL Working Group, conversations with colleagues, peer observation sessions, peer networking, online blogs/discussion forums.
Structured, non-accredited	Organised activities by CCT with defined objectives.	Conversation series, playground sessions, showcase events (e.g. ICEP), professional development badges e.g. UDL badge.

Accredited	Accredited programmes of study with ECTS credits attached to them.	Professional qualification in teaching and learning, and/or policy in education.

CTL membership is inclusive and welcomes contributions from all CCT College stakeholders. Essential CTL Working Group membership includes:

- Dean of Teaching and Learning (Chair)
- Dean of Faculty
- CCT Programme Leaders
- Head of Student Services
- Librarian
- Quality Assurance Lead
- Student Representative(s)
- Dean of Academic Affairs

Contributions from other CCT stakeholders is encouraged, in particular from:

- College President
- Lecturing Team
- EDI Officer
- Careers Officer

Using the CTL Working Group in this manner ensures CCT TLA strategy and associated activities remain agile and flexible in order to efficiently and effectively respond to lecturer, student and programme needs.

Section 5 of the CCT QA Manual accommodates the policies pertaining to teaching, learning and assessment. These are considered in conjunction with policies in section 4 which relate to programme development. Section 5 includes the new Posthumous Award Policy and the revised Feedback to Learners policy.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

CCT College Dublin has approximately 32,000 square feet of campus space at its city centre site, 30-34 Westmoreland St., Dublin 2. It is fully Fire Safety Certified, has Disability Access Certification on the whole building and induction hearing loops for use with hearing aids fitted throughout the building. The campus building itself is owned by CCT College Dublin with a Starbucks Coffee House operating as a tenant within part of the Ground and Mezzanine floors of the premises.

The campus teaching spaces consist of a combination of lecture rooms and interactive learning rooms each with Audio Visual display resources, including state of the art smart TVs and lectern pods, projection displays, and touch screen devices for lecturing purposes. In addition, the College has two fully soundproof state-of-the-art recording studios for live online lectures or recording of asynchronous content. There are 8 group-study and research areas and 3,000 square feet of library space and quiet study area. The library also includes an extensive online library catalogue of books and journals. Student printing facilities are available on campus, accessed through secure student login and a laptop loan scheme is also operated from the library. Dedicated, fully accessible, office accommodation and lecture preparation areas are located throughout the building to facilitate lecturers being on campus and available to students outside of class times. Two student lounges, kitchen and eating areas are available along with a games room and vending machines.

Student Services are located in the Main Office Hub and are accessible to students by appointment or walk-in, by email, virtual meeting, and telephone. Supports include general guidance and information services, accommodation information supports, international learner supports including matters relating to visas, social supports, clubs and societies. The College also provides access to mental health supports and counselling services, available in multiple languages and paid for by the College, along with free access to skills-based executive education provided by the CCT Summer School. Student success classes are provided through the Essentials initiative on campus and online through the Library Service either upon request or by referral. The College also operates a Student Mentoring Academy, an initiative of the Centre for Teaching and Learning which promotes student development through peer mentoring of small groups of students or on a one-to-one basis. A campus building refurbishment programme has been ongoing with a number of notable advancements serving to enhance the student experience at the College.

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion office is located on the second floor and offers a wide range of educational support including exam support, in class support, assistive technology access, and one to one support. Quiet spaces are available throughout the building including quiet pods, a sensory room, recreational quiet lounge and meeting spaces. CCT College Dublin was recognised as an Autism Friendly HEI by Ireland's national autism charity - AsIAm and committed to a further three-year Action plan to build and implement an institution-wide approach to Autism understanding and accessibility.

For more detailed information on these advancements, please refer to Part B Section 1.1 for a list of Campus Enhancements. Section 9 of the CCT QA Manual addresses learning resources and student support. These remain without material change from those approved by QQI through the re-engagement process.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

CCT recognises the value of engagement in and with research for a higher education provider and therefore encourages and actively promotes research activity, although it is not defined as a research institution and does not provide research master's programmes within its scope of provision. This is a more recent strategic development in CCT and is therefore in early development. The CCT Research Strategy provides the context for research activity and ambitions within the College. Further to this, policy CCTP514 – Ethical Practice in Research, and policy CCTP805 - Scholarship, Professional Development, Innovation and Research, in the QA manual sections 5 and 8 respectively, outline quality assurance practice in relation to research.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

Full details of the QQI approved policies relating to staff recruitment, development and support are contained within section 8 of the CCT QA manual – Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff and Human Resources. Staff recruitment in CCT is in accordance with policy CCTP801 – Recruitment Selection and Probation which outlines the minimum requirements in respect of qualifications and experience as well as the selection procedures for specific types of roles. The original policy was approved by QQI through the 2018 re-engagement process but has subsequently been amended to allow for the appointment of academic faculty to teach on master's programmes in instances where specific specialist expertise was deemed an acceptable alternative to a master's qualification. In such cases, the approval of Academic Council must be obtained. The rationale for the change arose from the validation of the Master of Science in Applied Software Development when CCT had the opportunity to secure faculty who were leading experts nationally and internationally in areas of ICT but did not have a Masters qualification, which had initially been identified as a prerequisite to teach on Masters programmes. The individuals in question had highest level specialist industry endorsements and were published experts in their field. To require a master's qualification would have been detrimental to the programme and the learners, potentially losing out on this specialist expertise. It was therefore proposed that the requirement to hold a master's qualification would be deemed desirable, and that Academic Council could approve proposed alternative evidence of equivalence.

All new staff are inducted into the College, as outlined in policy CCTP802 – Staff Induction, and are actively encouraged to engage in professional development as per policy – CCTP805 Scholarship, Professional Development, Innovation and Research. The College takes a proactive approach to professional development, circulating a monthly professional development bulletin of national and international events of interest, retaining a professional development register, providing time and financial support for staff wanting to complete additional qualifications or attend conferences and events, and arranging in-house development events to facilitate ease of engagement. Promoting and supporting staff development is a strategic priority of the College and policy CCTP804 – Performance Management Appraisal plays a role in the implementation of this priority.

6.0 Information and Data Management

QA Manual, section 10 - Information Management includes the policies which outline CCT's practice and procedures in respect of information management and data protection.

Information Systems and Processes

The College utilises externally hosted and managed information systems which include Google and Moodle for learner records, having previously used an internally designed and managed platform. A risk assessment undertaken by the College previously identified the risk of potential loss of essential knowledge and expertise, in the event of key personnel leaving, if this model was to continue. A decision was therefore taken to migrate to an externally hosted and managed platform. Fuller information on the information systems used and how data is used to inform decision-making is included in policy CCTP1005 – Information Management Policy.

Data Protection

Section 10 of the QA manual also includes the policies which address CCT's obligations in respect of data protection. These policies were approved by QQI through reengagement in 2018 but, as indicated in the 2018-19 AQR, as the GDPR was not finalised prior to completion of CCT's self-evaluation for re-engagement, the need to review the effectiveness and completeness of these was identified by the College. This was undertaken in the 2018-19 academic year, in conjunction with the College's legal team. No material revisions have been made subsequent to this. However, in 2021 the college records retention schedule was added to this section for increased transparency.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

Section 11 of the QA Manual hosts the CCT policy on public information. This is further supplemented by information included in section 7 - policy CCTP701- Protection of Enrolled Learners – Public Information and policy. These policies address requirements in relation to validated programmes as well as validation and external quality assurance reports and awards data, all of which are available via the CCT Website.

CCT has notably increased and enhanced the information it makes publicly available since these policies were approved. This has largely stemmed from the natural maturing of the College but also as a direct result of strategic intentions. The acquisition of an institutional repository and the establishment of the Centre for Teaching and Learning has resulted in increased transparency relating to academic outputs of CCT staff, faculty and students.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

CCT QA Manual, Section 12: Ongoing Monitoring and Review includes policy CCTP1201 – Self-Evaluation Monitoring and Review and policy CCTP1202 – External Review.

A range of self-evaluation monitoring and review activities take place at scheduled times throughout an academic year or a specific stage within a cycle, as documented within the policy. This includes annual monitoring of programmes, departments and support units. These are completed as standard and are considered through the governance framework and inform the ongoing enhancement and strategic development of the College. Actions are identified and monitored through the Quality Improvement Plan.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Not currently applicable in CCT College Dublin.

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Not currently applicable in CCT College Dublin.

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Not currently applicable in CCT College Dublin.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	0
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	0

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines collaborative provision as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'joint award' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'linked provider' as a provider that is not a designated awarding body but enters into an arrangement with a designated awarding body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the designated awarding body.

Type of arrangement	Total Number
Joint research degrees	0
Joint/double/multiple awards	0
Collaborative programmes	0
Franchise programmes	0
Linked providers (DABs only)	0

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an articulation agreement may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advance standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	0

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PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT

Reporting Period 2023-2024

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

Improvements Arising from Implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan

The objectives documented within the 2024 AQR Quality Improvement Plan have been at the focus of enhancement activities throughout the year under review. A full update on the progression of each objective is documented in section 1.2 with some documented in greater detail in section 2.0 and 2.1. This section focuses on strategic updates, including:

- College Validation Activity
- Campus Enhancements- Development of a Neuro-diverse friendly campus
- College strategies
- Blended Learning Action Plan
- Further QA Developments

College Validation Activity

The CCT Strategic Plan (2021- 2023) outlines the following objectives:

> *Develop new programmes within the areas of Computing and Business from levels 6 to 9 on the Irish NFQ which include interactive, real-world, industry informed, work-based and collaborative learning.*

> *Prioritise Blended learning and micro credential modes, together with credit accumulation towards full awards, where appropriate for new curriculum development with a greater emphasis on practical application and closer alignment to industry needs and career development opportunities*

Building on these objectives, the academic year 2023/2024 was noteworthy revalidation of the College's suite of Computing Diplomas:

- Diploma in Advanced Software Development (Level 7)
- Diploma in Data Analytics for Business (Level 7)
- Diploma in Networking and Systems Security (Level 7)
- Diploma in Artificial Intelligence and Working into the Future (Level 7)

These programmes were validated by one panel which met over two days. This validation panel took place in May 2024 and all four programmes were recommended for approval by the panel. The validation panel for these programmes noted the following commendations across all programmes:

1. The excellent linkages and input from industry especially the Industry Engagement Forum.
2. The quality of the preparation and engagements undertaken by CCT in advance of the submission.
3. CCT for the self-evaluation and reflection undertaken by the team at CCT in preparation for the programme review.
4. CCT staff for their active participation and engagement with the panel during the review panel at the validation event.
5. CCT for its strong emphasis on inclusion and access throughout all areas of programme activity.
6. CCT's policy on scholarship, professional development, innovation and research and their engagement with national initiatives such as the National Academic Integrity Network.
7. CCT's policy on its structures for the management of the programmes.

Campus Enhancements- Development of a Neuro-diverse friendly campus

Campus enhancement is another area where CCT's continuous improvement mindset is evidenced. Prioritising the strategic commitment to student centredness and student success, the college continually reviews facilities, technical infrastructure and the virtual campus. Each year planned programme of development is agreed and implemented.

Continuing on from the significant programme of development of the physical and virtual campuses that has taken place since 2019, the College has undertaken notable refurbishment, driven by the ambition to further promote inclusion, particularly to become a neuro-diverse friendly campus, and to increase capacity for blended and technology enhanced teaching, learning, assessment, and learner support. CCT is halfway through a 3-year journey to become the fourth Irish HEI to achieve Autism Friendly status after DCU, NCI and ATU Sligo. We hope to receive this award in 2024 after we evidence, we have achieved 10% of our new Action Plan, which sets out our planned strategic activity under the nine principles required to become Autism Friendly has just been submitted.

Our Facilities and Resources Enhancement Action Plan is updated at least annually, and often two to three times per year as it is monitored and consulted on an ongoing basis with meetings of the Facilities team held on average monthly. Some pertinent updates over the reporting period are as follows:

- Works are almost complete to transform an old plant room on the top floor (floor 4) into a new multi-purpose flexi meeting and training room called 'The Loft', with planned renovations for the landing and staircore enhancements as well as fourth floor atrium level renovations
- A new lighting design and structure to be planned and worked upon in late 2024 within the Atrium to connect all visible levels of the atrium at the heart / core of our campus
- A new on-campus universally accessible wayfinding system will be planned for in terms of design and put out to tender over 2024
- CCT is reviewing to replace its on-campus phone system with Zoom phone or an alternate system over 2024
- A new Cybersecurity computing lab and lecture room is almost fully completed within our Boole room at basement level
- Refurbishment of a space at basement level has been completed to produce a new student, quiet recreational and study lounge with fitted kitchen called 'The Pump Room'
- Works have also completed on our new 'Retreat room' at basement level. This is bookable room with passcode access for all students and staff, a private space to help manage stress, process, regulate, escape. The room is equipped with tech and space for movement, relaxation, along with very comfortable furniture, beanbag, weighted blankets, ear defenders, stress toys etc.
- Number of enhancements invested into for our online delivery.
- Work has completed on V1 of our new 'CCT Student Hub', which is an online 'one stop / single sign-on' access to all critical info and resources at the College from Academic Year 2023/24. Students have easy and ready access through this new hub portal system to Moodle, their student email, a new Library website and all online library resources including EBSCO, along with careers info, student services info, academic integrity info, latest news and practical information regarding their assessment schedules, timetables etc.
- We have a new Moodle service provider called 'Catalyst' which has proven to be less transactional and more intuitive than our previous Moodle service provider. Catalyst is focussed on enhancing and

maximising the investment and resource that is Moodle which CCT employs as it's VLE and as an information system.

College Strategies

Strategic activities in the College are underpinned by three complementary strategies:

- Institutional Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy- September 2021 to September 2024
- CCT College Dublin Strategic Plan 2021-2023
- Research Strategy- CCT College 2019-2024

Significant activity has occurred in line with each of these strategies. Planning commenced in the reporting period for new strategic development processes to revitalise each of these strategies, in consultation with stakeholders, during the academic year 2023-24. These are anticipated to be published during the next reporting cycle 2024-2025.

Blended Learning Action Plan

In October 2023 QQI published new statutory QA Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Learning. Having already been approved for blended learning, CCT College Dublin was required to carry out the following steps to maintain its QA approval for blended learning:

- Conduct a gap analysis against the new guidelines using the self-evaluation tool provided.
- Develop an action plan to address any issues identified in relation to infrastructure, tutor / trainer CPD, academic integrity, learner engagement and supports, QA procedures, etc.
- Submit the action plan to QQI by the end of August 2024.
- Implement the action plan by the end of June 2025.
- Bring the original self-evaluation and action plan reports through academic governance.
- The governance committee to send a short report on the completed action plan to QQI by the end of August 2025.
- This report will be brought to the Programme and Awards Executive Committee (PAEC) for noting.

The Gap Analysis Process involved the following steps:

1. The QA Lead developed a Blended Learning Gap Analysis Tool & Action-plan in April 2024. This document contains the best practice statements for each organisational context, programme management and learning experience.
2. The QA Lead coordinated and led mapping of evidence (e.g. policies and sample CCT activities) to the various benchmarking statements.
3. The Dean of Academic Affairs provisionally assigned the maturity ratings of best practice statements (ranging from emerging to mature, or a gap is highlighted in the absence of evidence to support a statement). As CCT obtained QA approval for blended learning in 2020, the assumption of the report is that the maturity of blended learning practice is generally at a level of emerging and developing maturity.
4. Producing and circulating a report for the Executive Leadership Team and Academic Council containing the recommended action plan that was subsequently approved and submitted to QQI 26th August 2024.

Further QA Developments

Improvements and enhancements arising from QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR are detailed in Section 1.2 of Part B. Specific changes to the QA system (policies and procedures) during the reporting period are outlined in Part A and described in more detail in section 2.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	Strategic Priorities	Relevant Objectives	Update
1.	Strengthening Student Engagement, Partnership and Inclusion	• Developing the College's capacity in equity, diversity and inclusion remains a significant priority. This priority will be further strengthened as part of the College's strategy development processes	• This remained at the foundation of institutional strategy preparation during this reporting period. Ongoing work includes improving processes for students engaging with EDI services and strengthening existing networks with DAWN and the AsIAm HEI Network, continued collaborations with other HEI's on the Autism Friendly Festival and DivergentMinds project.
		• Learning Analytics Policy- A Learning Analytics working group was established by the CTL forum in 2022-23 with an aim of developing a Learning Analytics Policy for CCT College. This working group will continue in 2023-24.	• This objective was deprioritised and replaced by a broader quality assurance policy and procedure review remit in 2024, developing a Learning Analytics Policy remains a College policy development objective.
		• Widening participation- A review of RPL and widening participation process will be undertaken by the Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs.	• A working group was established during the reporting period 2023-24 to review processes and supporting resources underpinning recognition of prior learning and prior experiential learning. A new procedure and supporting resources were developed and piloted.
2.	Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Assessment	• Teaching learning and assessment processes will be reviewed at programme level as part of planned revalidation activities for relevant programmes.	• Teaching learning and assessment processes were reviewed at programme level as part of planned revalidation activities for relevant programmes.
		• The development of a new Teaching and Learning strategy, will explore TLA at the strategic enhancement level in the College.	• Preparation of a new T&L Strategy drafted, including extensive research and consultation, occurred during the reporting period. It is anticipated that this strategy will be published early in the next reporting period.
3.	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	• Strategic activities, under the leadership of the Dean of Academic Affairs and the QA Lead, will include review of internal quality assurance processes and document management systems.	• Several internal quality review processes were progressed during this reporting period including a review of priority areas in the QA manual, a review of assessment and Board of Examiners workflows, and central administrative structures.
4.	Global Connectivity, Brand Awareness and Reach of CCT	• The College intends to engage with the process of applying for authorisation to use the International Education Mark (IEM) in 2025, with preparation commencing in 2024. The application and self-evaluation will be	• Preparation commenced for this process during the academic year 2023-24 and continues into the next reporting period with the IEM application scheduled to occur throughout 2024-25.

		collaboratively led by the ELT.	
5.	Development of our Staff and our College Community	• Developing our staff and college community will remain a priority in 2023-24, with new objectives and actions developed as part of the College's strategy development processes.	• Developing our staff and college community was a central tenant in strategy development for both institutional and TLA strategies that was underway during this period, for completion during the following reporting period.
6.	CCT Institutional Strategic Plan 2021-2023, Research and TLA Strategies The College is eager to update and align the overarching CCT College Dublin Strategic Plan, Research Strategy, and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy from 2024.	• The TLA Strategic consultation and development will be led by the Dean of Teaching and Learning.	• As updated in objective 2.
		• The Institutional and Research Strategic consultation and development processes respectively will be led by the Dean of Development.	• This objective carries forward to the next reporting period under the remit of the Dean of Faculty.
7.	Validation Activity	• There will be a large volume of programme review and revalidation activity in the academic year 2023-24. This activity will be centrally supported and facilitated by the QA Office and Dean of Faculty, with extensive engagement and collaboration with the wider College community.	• Validation activity occurred as detailed in sections "1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews" and "1.1 Strategic QA Updates". • •
8.	Facilities and Resources Focus	• Facilities enhancement and building improvements are scheduled annually to ensure ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the College's physical site. This reporting period's developments will include sensory enhancements arising from the Sensory Review conducted by AsIAm.	• Facilities enhancement and building improvements progressed as usual (in accordance with our refurbishment programme which is part of our Facilities & Resources Action Plan), with a more detailed summary provided in section 1.1 Campus Enhancements-Development of a Neuro-diverse friendly campus.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
College Board	22nd September 2023 5th January 2024 28th June 2024
Audit, Review and Strategy Committee	22nd September 2023
Executive Leadership Team	27th September 2023 12th December 2023 5th March 2024 11th June 2024
Academic Council	21st September 2023 28th November 2023 13th November 2024 21st May 2024

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

The College Board was expanded in summer 2023, with the appointment of two new independent non-executive members acting in an advisory capacity.

Leadership and Management Changes

During the academic year, changes in personnel prompted a review of roles and opportunities for enhancement of college structures, recognising the maturity of the College and its personnel. A summary of role changes is as follows:

- The role of Dean of Academic Affairs was undertaken by a new role-holder in September 2023. A new role - Dean of Teaching and Learning was created with a new role-holder in place from October 2023. Complementing the Dean of Faculty role, this position holds executive responsibility for academic development and the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment within the College fostering innovative education informed by best practice across higher education. This new role manages the Centre for Teaching and Learning and will lead on design and development of CCT's next Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy'
- A new part-time Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer commenced in February 2024 with an expanded remit reflecting the College's commitment to development in this area.
- A new QA Lead commenced January 2024.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Unit of review for which report has been published during reporting period	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
Diploma in Advanced Software Development, 60 ECTS	Scheduled programme review and revalidation with revalidation confirmed at PAEC meeting July 2024	Panel report is available here
Diploma in Data Analytics for Business, 60 ECTS	Scheduled programme review and revalidation with revalidation confirmed at PAEC meeting July 2024	Panel report is available here
Diploma in Networking and Systems Security, 60 ECTS	Scheduled programme review and revalidation with revalidation confirmed at PAEC meeting July 2024	Panel report is available here
Diploma in Artificial Intelligence and Working into the Future, 60 ECTS	Scheduled programme review and revalidation with revalidation confirmed at PAEC meeting July 2024	Panel report is available here

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels2 involved in IQA

(i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	4					4	
of those:							
On-site processes							
Desk reviews							
Virtual processes	4						
Average panel size for each process type*	8					8	

* Excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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2 QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	1	1			1		1				1
Secretary	1	1				1				1	
Academic/Discipline Specific	4	3	1		1	3	1				4
Student Representative	1		1			1					1
QA											
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission	1		1			1					1

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

A number of key developments and enhancements have occurred during the reporting period. Some of these include:

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Enhancements to QA Policies and Procedures
- Careers
- Online Student Induction
- Library Updates to Promote Student Engagement and Success
- Staff Professional Development
- Sectoral Engagements related to Quality Assurance

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Office formalised its registration processes for students engaging with the EDI Office, implementing new forms and a structured tracking system. This process was refined in consultation with Student Services and the Dean of Academic Affairs, resulting in tools such as the Declaration of Need and Reasonable Accommodation Form, the Code of Practice for Supporting Students with Diverse Needs, the EDI Approved Student Accommodations List, and updates to Personal Mitigating Circumstances process to reflect EDI registrations and accessing Approved Accommodations with fewer barriers . These measures enhanced transparency, accessibility, and efficiency in providing tailored support to students.

The EDI team placed a strong emphasis on promoting visibility and accessibility for EDI services, regularly updating resources, events, and supports on the Moodle Homepage and Student Hub. A central aspect of these efforts was the creation of "CCT4All," an inclusive digital space within the Student Hub that provided students with resources, updates, and avenues for ongoing support.

The College's accreditation process with AsIAm continued as CCT worked towards becoming an official Autism Friendly Higher Education Institution, reflecting national standards for inclusivity and accessibility. A primary focus for the year was enhancing promotional efforts for EDI services, which aimed to increase student awareness and encourage disclosures to the College.

CCT further promoted the use of AHEAD's AT HIVE platform, granting students access to a range of assistive technology resources, in alignment with the College's Disability Access Certification, achieved in June 2024. The AT HIVE platform equipped students with essential tools that supported their academic success and independence.

Strengthening relationships with DAWN and the AsIAm HEI Network remained a key priority, alongside collaboration with other higher education institutions on initiatives such as the Autism Friendly Festival.

Enhancements to QA Policies and Procedures

In 2022-23 the College completed its annual review of quality assurance policies and procedures. While the College commits to reviewing QA policies within a 5 year period, practice reflects the implementation of an annual review process which considers the application of the policies and procedures in the year to date, any issues concerns or challenges experienced in implementing them, feedback from stakeholders regarding the suitability of the policies and procedures and any recommendations for improvement that may arise from that, and any sectoral developments nationally and internationally which may impact on the policies and procedures as documented.

The review conducted in 2023-24 involved the Academic Affairs and QA Office liaising with departments of the College to secure recommendations in respect of the QA policy areas which are proposed for revision or enhancement or proposals for new or alternative policies and procedures. Proposals are required to be evidence-based, either drawing on evidence of the effectiveness of a policy when implemented, or benchmarking against sectoral practice. Initial proposals for review are presented to the Academic Council for agreement in principle and then each departmental area secures stakeholder input and undertakes research to inform revisions. The draft documents are then submitted to the Academic Affairs and QA Office for a desk review. The desk review can result in referral back to the drafting department for further clarification, rejection of the proposed changes, normally due to absence of evidential basis for the proposed change, or a recommendation for consideration by Academic Council. Academic Council is informed of the proposed changes that are rejected / referred back to the drafting department and provided with the draft revisions with a view to approving the changes.

As indicated in section 1, this engagement focused on creating a global review plan during the reporting period.

Careers

The first half of 2024 saw an increase in student engagement with Career Services compared to the same period in 2023. Evidence suggests that this improvement is largely due to internal referrals, peer recommendations, and consistent promotion efforts. Weekly updates on the Moodle homepage have been instrumental in raising awareness, with regular postings of CCT Jobs News, Events Listings, and Career Services contact information contributing to heightened visibility and interest.

The Essentials resource courses drop-in service also saw increased engagement, particularly in online sessions. The implementation of a formal registration system on the library website has encouraged student attendance. Promotion of these sessions, as well as scheduled classes, were supported by regular postings on the Moodle homepage, which helped drive student involvement. A new lecture booking system was introduced for employability and support classes, enabling the Careers Officer to bring services directly to the classroom. There has been a return of industry representatives to scheduled campus events, with notable visits from Gaga Muller, Dun and Bradstreet, and AWS. Career services also hosted an online STEM Women event, witha view to preparing for the Dublin STEM Women Careers Event.

Online Student Induction

The Online Student Induction was updated for the Sept 2024 intake with updates that were suggested in the Induction Feedback Survey and to incorporate tutorials.

Working off the mini modules that had been incorporated in the previous year, the modules were updated to mirror the journey of a CCT Student, starting with living and studying in Ireland before progressing to the information they would need as a CCT student.

- Welcome Webinar
- Living and Studying in Ireland
- Studying at CCT
- Life at CCT
- CCT for All
- Digital at CCT
- Quality at CCT
- Feedback Survey

Resources that remained included live welcome webinars delivered to each individual cohort and tutorials on the use of technology (e.g., Moodle, Zoom, Email). These were recorded for students to refer back to as needed throughout the term.

The Student Handbook was updated and converted from a PDF document to a dedicated website, providing easier navigation and the ability to embed documents and videos.   The handbook has been updated to incorporate elements of Universal Design, enhancing accessibility and inclusivity for all users. Other enhancements included a how to document for using the Quality Assurance manual, enhanced academic integrity materials, and video introductions of new staff members.

Library Updates to Promote Student Engagement and Success
The CCT library launched additional resources promoting academic integrity. A new referencing guide that outlines the guidelines for citing AI resources designed and approved by the Academic Council was created and centralised on the library website.

In conjunction with OpenAIRE 4.0 (2024) requirements, and to ensure inclusion in the NAIN Open Access dashboard, CCT's repository metadata structure was significantly updated allowing CCT to share its research contributions both nationally and internationally.
The entry requirement for the repository was adjusted from 1.1 to 1.2 to align with industry standards.

A new 'assistive technology' section has been added to the Library Website for students who require additional learning support. This section details the technologies available and provides tutorials in print and video form.

Following consultations with the Dean of Teaching and Learning, revisions have been made to both the structure and content of the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) section on the library website to improve content and accessibility. Additionally, training information for staff is available via the CTL page.

As a result of high demand and informal student feedback, the library has obtained upgraded laptops for the loan program. It's worth noting that these machines enabled some students to tackle a specific assignment that they could not otherwise complete on their laptops due to software compatibility issues on Mac systems.

In response to student feedback the library opening hours have been extended during the academic year and mobile printing is now available.

Staff Professional Development

CCT College values its staff greatly which it sees as its key asset and resource. It recognises that professional development of its staff is crucial to the overall success of the College and critical to achieving its mission. The College's strategic plan 2021-2023 specifies the following goals for the development of staff:

- Continue to promote and invest in ongoing development of staff, with a sustained commitment to the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment, including maintaining our policy to fully support faculty undertaking L9 and L10 qualifications.
- Maintain and enhance our Professional Development Register
- Improve on delivery of periodical staff performance appraisals, and feedback for staff
- Review for enhancement, staff recruitment, induction, and integration policies, procedures, and practices
- Continue to promote and provide capacity for staff to engage and participate in sector networking and wider learning opportunities
- Build digital capacity of staff to facilitate the fulfilment of strategic priorities

CCT College recognises that an important aspect of professional development of staff and Faculty is to engage with external sectoral and disciplinary organisations. CCT staff represent the College on organisations such as National Academic Integrity Network, National Forum for Teaching and Learning, HECA as well as participating QQI working groups and validations.

CCT maintains a register of all scholarly activity undertaken by staff to inform institutional research support. The register currently has more than 900 entries. A Professional Profile for each staff member is also maintained. A number of Faculty are also pursuing master's and doctoral degrees with financial and other support from CCT College.

QQI and Other National Bodies

- The College is a member of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and have attended four NAIN meetings in 2024.
- Attended an online ENQA meeting
- More details on academic integrity are provided in section 2.1.
- The College has two staff associate members in the National Forum.
- QQI VPL Biennale - May 2024. Two members of staff attended.
- Other QQI events - Rethinking Assessment of Learning Outcomes in HE; Quality in HE: Sectoral Findings & Enhancement Showcase 2024.

Other

- The College hosted a national conference "Enhancing Academic Integrity: From ideas to action"
- The College is a member of HECA and contributes to outputs and consultation responses submitted as part of this group.
- The College participates in HECA's Academic Quality Enhancement Forum.
- The College president was a member of the NStEP National Advisory Group during this period.
- HECA Healthy Campus
- HECA Library

Feedback was provided to the following consultations during in this reporting period:

- QQI - Europass Diploma Supplement Survey 2024
- Review of the NFETL Student Success Framework – Questionnaire
- QQI: Consultation on draft Integrated Broad Award Standards for Business at NFQ Levels 5-9
- Academic Integrity White Paper (April 2024)

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

CCT uses the structure of the NAIN Academic Integrity Guidelines to inform developments within the College. In that regard, developments are categorised under one of the four areas:

- Upholding Academic Integrity
- Preventing Academic Misconduct/ Protecting Academic Integrity
- Detecting Academic Misconduct
- Managing and Sanctioning Academic Misconduct

Each year the College seeks to introduce or promote projects, resources, strategies or policies and procedures that continue to strengthen work to date in these areas. The following provides a summary of the developments that took place during 2023-24, acknowledging that more detail on some of these developments may have already been provided in earlier sections.

CCT has continued to be an active member of NAIN. Matters arising from NAIN meetings and QQI updates are disseminated to all staff as part of the monthly professional development bulletin and core developments are discussed in detail with plans for implementation proposed by the Academic Integrity Committee. These proposals are subsequently referred to the Academic Council and, in some cases, the Executive Leadership Team.

Developments of note in 2023-24 which have arisen from participation in NAIN, from review of NAIN publications or participation in QQI / NAIN professional development workshops include:

- Continuation of the Academic Integrity Week project as a joint initiative between staff and students with a programme of activities taking place across the college.
- Continuous review of the College's implementation of the Academic Misconduct Policy and Academic Integrity Policy to ensure it is in line with emerging best practices.
- Awareness raising of academic integrity during student induction and national academic integrity week in October.
- Initial review of the Terms of Reference for the Academic Integrity Committee
- Preparation for a national Academic Integrity Conference designed, led and funded by CCT in September 2024.
- The arrival of generative artificial intelligence in early 2023 introduced new challenges for academic integrity. The College keeps this area under continuous review and implements support measures on an ongoing basis including the publication of an AI etiquette document for the College community in February 2024. Furthermore, the college lecturing staff come to a monthly Assessment Community of Practice where AI is core to all conversations.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	Relevant objectives	Planned actions and indicators
1	Strengthening Student Engagement, Partnership and Inclusion	• To be recognised as an Autism Friendly HEI, by Ireland's national autism charity – AsIAm. • Integrate student engagement, partnership and inclusion priorities in next institutional and TLA strategies. This is led by the College President.
2	Enhancing Teaching, Learning and Assessment	• The development of new Teaching, Learning and Assessment (led by the Dean of Teaching and Learning) and Research (led by the interim Dean of Academic Affairs) strategies respectively will explore TLA at the strategic enhancement level in the College.
3	CCT Institutional Strategic Plan	• A new Institutional Strategic Plan will be led to completion by the College president during this reporting period.
4	Programme Re-Validation activity	• Validation activity occurred as detailed in sections "3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period" This process is led from the Academic Affairs and QA Office under the remit of the Dean of Academic Affairs.
5	Blended Learning Action Plan	• Conduct and submit report on related action plan for gap analysis on QQI new statutory QA Guidelines for Blended and Fully Online Learning (2023) by the end of August 2024.
6	TrustEd Ireland is a new statutory quality mark and part of a suite of legislative measures designed to protect international learners	• The College intends to engage with the process of applying for authorisation to use the International Education Mark (IEM) in 2025, with preparation throughout 2024-25. The application and self-evaluation will be collaboratively led by the ELT.
7	CINNTE	• The College intends to engage with the process of institutional review, CINNTE, in 2026 with preparation ongoing through 2023-2025. This process is led from the Academic Affairs and QA Office under the remit of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

The following activities are scheduled for review during the 2024-25 review period:

- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business (PG23756)
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing and Information Technology (PG24244)
- Bachelor of Science in Computing and Information Technology (PG24245)
- Higher Certificate in Science in Computing and Information Technology (PG24246)
- Submissions of application to obtain the TrustEd Mark (International Education Mark)
- Submit follow up report on Blended Learning Action Plan submitted to QQI in August 2024.

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

Information on all reviews scheduled beyond the next reporting period is available on QHub. The following review activity is planned during the 2025-2025 and will therefore be considered for review in the next reporting period:

- Engagement with CINNTE
- Master of Science in Data Analytics (PG24480)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Data Analytics (PG24482)
- Higher Diploma in Science in Data Analytics for Business (PG24349)
- Higher Diploma in Science in Artificial Intelligence Applications (PG24350)

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

CCT College Dublin case studies included in the 2025 AQR submission include:

- Case Study 1: Enhancing Academic Integrity through a Whole-of-Institution Approach: The CCT Swiss Cheese Model
- Case Study 2: Teaching, Learning and Assessment at CCT: A Collaborative Approach
- Case Study 3: CCT AsIAm Autism Friendly Campus
- Case Study 4: Embracing Diversity in Continuous Assessment to Address Challenges of Generative AI Tools.

Case Study 1: Enhancing Academic Integrity through a Whole-of-Institution Approach: The CCT Swiss Cheese Model

Introduction

Anecdotally, with the advent of gen-AI in the sector, dialogue has naturally focused on upholding academic integrity and security of assessment mechanisms. This can sometimes be a singular focus on preventing cheating. However, no single action or approach will guarantee academic integrity or the prevention of academic misconduct. Multiple layered actions reduce overall academic integrity vulnerabilities across programmes and gives us the opportunity to build competency in academic integrity. A holistic approach to academic integrity takes a whole-college commitment, with shared actions across the College community including both academic and administrative staff. We developed this model to communicate a holistic approach within CCT and how the cumulative impact of layered actions contributes to our culture of academic integrity across the student lifecycle.

Aims of Model

The aim of this model is to:

- Illustrate a whole-of-institution approach to enhancing academic integrity
- Convey the multiple layers, stakeholders and activities involved in cultivating academic integrity
- Avoid a singular focus on preventing cheating in assessment
- Provide an engaging communication tool for discussing academic integrity and managing risk.

Implementation

The "CCT Swiss Cheese Academic Integrity Model" is an adaptation of Rundle and colleagues' (2020) Swiss Cheese Model of assessment design for academic integrity. Traditionally a health model of infection control and disease prevention, the Swiss Cheese Model represents the reduced risk of a problem occurring when multiple layers of safeguards are in place. All safeguards have flaws or 'holes' represented by holes in Swiss cheese. Problems occur when holes line up across layers, the efficacy of each layer is important.

The layers of action in the adapted CCT Swiss Cheese Model are:

- **Environment & Student Support**: creating a learning environment where students see examples of good practice and the culture promotes good conduct across all areas of college life.
- **Teaching, Learning and Assessment Design**: designing robust, diverse and authentic assessments that reduce the likelihood of misconduct.
- **Education & Training**: ensuring staff and students have a shared understanding of what constitutes both academic good practice and academic misconduct, including College regulations.
- **Quality Assurance**: Reviewing and implementing Quality Assurance policies and procedures and using various tools to support detection.

Our approach is a work in progress, emphasising that maintaining academic integrity is a whole-of-institution responsibility, extending beyond the classroom. As a whole-of-institution approach the model captures different areas and activities in College life that contribute to a culture of academic integrity, this is in the acknowledgement that internal stakeholders across all departments contribute to, and impact upon, academic integrity (Glendinning, 2022). Read more about our approach in recent conference slide proceedings: 1. Enhancing Academic Integrity through a Whole-of-Institution Approach_ The CCT Swiss Cheese Model.pdf

Key Outcomes and Next Steps

As a conceptual model developed to articulate CCT practice in relation to Academic Integrity, it has not yet been evaluated. It has, however, been a useful tool for framing this work for internal and external audiences. There are six key messages underpinning this approach:

- Some students are more vulnerable to academic misconduct than others. When student vulnerability is matched with systemic academic integrity vulnerabilities, academic misconduct is most likely to occur.
- No single action or approach will guarantee academic integrity or the prevention of academic misconduct.
- Multiple layered actions reduce overall academic integrity vulnerabilities across programmes.
- An holistic approach to academic integrity takes a whole-college commitment, with shared actions across the College community including both academic and administrative staff.
- Authentic and robust assessment design is within our control and can both promote academic integrity and reduce academic misconduct significantly.
- We need to educate our students and staff on what academic integrity and academic misconduct are to ensure there is a shared understanding across the College of what these terms actually means.

Future plans are in development. This model is currently used informally as a means of capturing and articulating College practice in relation to academic integrity. As it develops, it will feed into staff and student training and can be used as a framework for developing and monitoring academic integrity related activity via the College's Academic Integrity Committee.

References

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Case Study 2: Teaching, Learning and Assessment at CCT: A Collaborative Approach

Introduction

'Teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) takes place in CCT College Dublin in the context of higher education. We place students at the centre of all our endeavours and strive to continuously enhance the TLA environment and practices. National and international best practice informs our TLA strategy. We are centrally engaged and committed to national and international agencies and stakeholders, thus contributing to, and learning from colleagues and stakeholders' (CCT College, 2025, p..3).

This case study provides an overview of CCT's approach to supporting Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) across the college. The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Working Group informed both TLA practice in CCT over 2023-24, and development of new TLA strategy. The TLA strategy was redesigned in 2024 and was published and launched in February 2025. The five TLA Strategic Priorities are:

Priority 1	**Priority 2**	**Priority 3**	**Priority 4**	**Priority 5**
Programme approach to embedding relevant knowledge, skills and competencies and upholding academic integrity	Enhanced physical and blended learning environment ensuring commitment to student participation, access, diversity and inclusion	Cultivating leading edge transversal skills, including a commitment to life-long learning	Students as partners across all aspects of their learning journey	Professional development and evidence based Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Overview of CTL Working Group

The CTL Working Group was established in October 2024 to support and guide TLA practice and new TLA strategy development. In this endeavour the CTL Working Group:

- Supports implementation of engaging and interactive teaching and learning strategies;
- Engages in ongoing assessment review to ensure leading edge, authentic assessment strategies are being used in a scaffolded manner, which allow students every opportunity to showcase their learning (with a particular focus on programme assessment strategies);
- Designs teaching, learning and assessment strategies that promote academic and professional integrity (incl. use of GenAI);
- Allows feedback from internal quality assurance processes (e.g., external examiner reports, lecturer and student feedback, programme annual reports etc) and external quality assurance processes (e.g. validation panel feedback and reports, institutional review etc) to continuously inform teaching, learning and assessment practice across each programme;
- Supports best evidence based pedagogical practice;

- Maintains the CCT Lecturer Handbook ensuring that all initiatives emanating from the CTL Working Group and TLA strategy are clearly signposted and shared through the handbook; and
- Monitors implementation and revision of College TLA Strategy.

Implementation of enhanced teaching, learning and assessment approaches to emerge from the CTL Working Group are reported to Academic Council, in the annual CTL QEC report, and inform updates or revisions in the College TLA Strategy.

The CLT Working Group facilitates continuous reflection on teaching, learning and assessment in the College, responding to the needs of each programme as they arise. Their work is informed in many ways, including through:

- Programme annual reports (incl. external examiner, student and lecturer feedback and reflections);
- Academic Council (AC), and AC subcommittees as appropriate;
- Executive Leadership Team (ELT);
- Academic Integrity Working Group;
- International and national evidence based best practice.

Implementation

As mentioned, implementation of TLA practice and strategy in the College is through the CTL Working Group. The CTL membership is inclusive and welcomes contributions from all CCT College stakeholders. Essential CTL Working Group membership includes:

- Dean of Teaching and Learning (Chair)
- Dean of Faculty
- Dean of Academic Affairs
- Programme Leads x 7
- Head of Student Services
- Librarian
- Quality Assurance Lead
- Student Representative(s) x 2

Where appropriate contributions from other CCT stakeholders is welcomed, in particular from:

- College President
- Lecturing Team
- Careers Officer
- EDI Officer

Implementation of the CTL Working Group is advanced through the CTL Framework (figure 1), which includes, but is not restricted to:

- CTL Working Group Meetings (min. two per semester), with sub working groups as necessary. Much of the work in these meetings will be guided by the action points from annual programme reports, programme committee meetings and external examiner reports;
- CCT Conversation Series (incl. GenAI and Moodle playground sessions and Communities of Practice (CoP)) as informed by the CTL working group is a focused form of CCT professional development driven by the needs of CCT students and lecturers;
- Professional Development opportunities, both internally and externally (for example Peer Observation of TLA, National Forum badges, ICEP Conference, and engagement with scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) through research papers, peer consultation etc).

Figure 1: CTL Framework
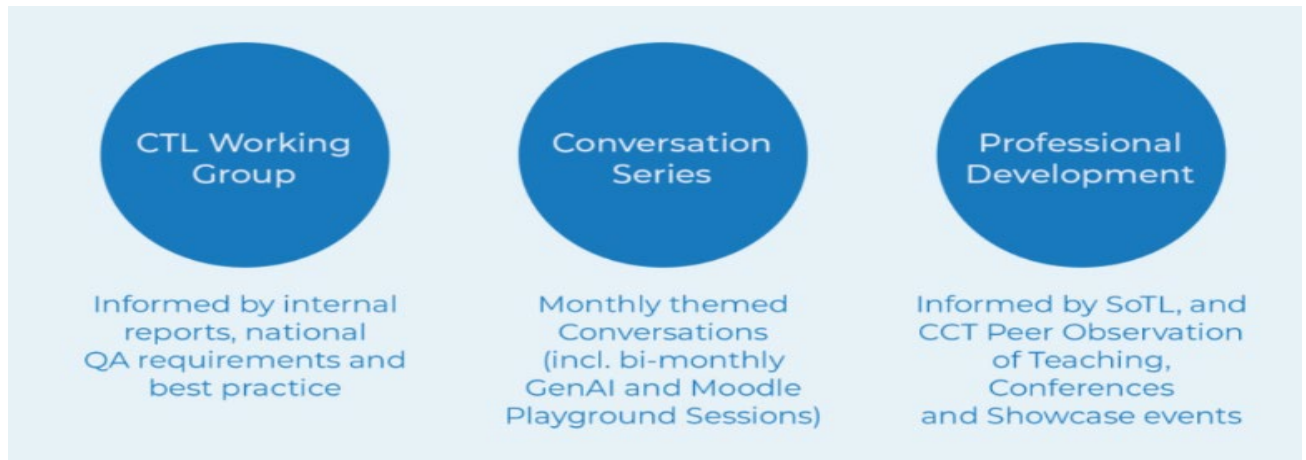
The CTL Framework activities and initiatives can be loosely aligned to the National Professional Development Framework, see table 1. This type of alignment will facilitate future CTL initiatives being identified and mapped to the National framework.

Table 1: CCT Typology of CTL Support for Lecturers

Type of Activity	Description	Examples
Unstructured, non-accredited	These activities are independently led by the lecturer themselves.	Reading articles, following social media, self-study, watching video tutorials, keeping a reflective journal, scholarly publications (incl. AQR Case Studies).
Collaborative, non-accredited	Learning from these activities comes from their collaborative nature	The CTL Working Group, conversations with colleagues, peer observation sessions, peer networking, online blogs/discussion forums.
Structured, non-accredited	Organised activities by CCT with defined objectives.	Conversation series, playground sessions, showcase events (e.g. ICEP), professional development badges.
Accredited	Accredited programmes of study with ECTS credits attached to them.	Professional qualification in teaching and learning, and/or policy in education.

Informed by National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in HE - Typology of Professional Development Activities. National Forum, 2016. 'National Professional Development Framework for All Staff Who Teach in Higher Education'.

Key Outcomes and Next Steps

The CTL Working Group has informed the complete range of TLA support and resources for academic staff during 2023-24. This includes:

- Planning and facilitating the CCT College Conversation Series for 2023-2024 (incl. Artificial Intelligence Playground, and Assessment Community of Practice);
- Informing and facilitating new programme design and review processes (incl. producing Module Design Handbook);
- Peer Observation of Teaching;
- Hosted ICEP Conference 8th December 2023; and
- Development of new CCT College TLA Strategy.

The CTL Working Group is more experienced, thus facilitating a stronger collective voice to inform ongoing TLA practice in CCT College. The Group is more proactive this academic year than when we started in 2023-24. Input from our student representatives is a valuable aspect of the group's work. TLA initiatives for 2024-25 include:

- Continuing CCT College Conversation Series 2024-25 (incl. Artificial Intelligence Playground, and Assessment Community of Practice);
- Updating Peer Observation of Teaching, to Peer Observation of TLA (incl. Moodle);
- Designing CCT Lecturers Handbook which is a one stop space for lecturers to source necessary supports, policy, and relevant documentation;
- Planning and organising an international conference 'Enhancing Academic Integrity: From Ideas to Action';
- Publishing Enhancing Academic Integrity: From Ideas to Action conference proceedings (expected publication date March 2025);
- Updating CCT Graduate Attributes to reflect Priority 3 in the new TLA strategy; and
- Launching CCT College TLA Strategy 2024-2027 (CCT College, 2025).

The CTL Working Group will continue to inform best TLA practice in the College. The group will review its work annually and make adjustments accordingly. These changes will be approved by Academic Council on an ongoing basis.

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Case Study 3: CCT AsIAm Autism Friendly Campus

Introduction

CCT College Dublin was delighted and honoured to be recognised as an Autism Friendly HEI, by Ireland's national autism charity – AsIAm on 1st October 2024 from Adam Harris, Founder & CEO of AsIAm. This award is a milestone development in a never-ending journey for CCT to enhance the student experience and the College's universal accessibility. This case study outlines CCT's journey towards achieving this status.

Overview of AsIAm Autism Friendly Campus Application Process

Since the establishment of the College there has been continuous investment in the College's physical and digital infrastructure to provide a learning environment which includes everyone. CCT engaged in a learning journey with AsIAm over a three-year period to help enhance how the College in all its functions could become more universally accessible.   The College's aim is to continuously work towards creating a college environment where neurodivergent students are accepted, understood, and celebrated. We believe that all further and higher education providers need to do what they can to improve their learning environments to enable greater accessibility, accommodation, inclusion, diversity and provide the same chance for autistic students.

Implementation

Since 2018 many changes have been made and implemented with neurodiversity in mind in CCT. As far back as 2018, CCT had been discussing learning more and improving on how the College could facilitate the needs of our neurodiverse learners. Despite not being in receipt of state subvention the importance of reinvesting in the student experience was recognised. CCT engaged in a research review with inputs from students including students with autism, advocacy groups, teachers with autism and a literature review. The purpose was to identify good existing practice and to assess how we could improve our learning environment.

The main activities involved in the AsIAm application process included:

- Identifying good practice through stakeholder engagement (advocacy groups, students and teachers with autism) and literature review.
- Investment of €850K+ to refurbish much of the campus building with neurodiversity and EDI considerations underpinning the redesign consulting global-leading research such as the Autism Friendly Design Guide by Dr. Magda Mostafa (2021)
- Securing ownership of our campus building in 2019, further underlining our commitment to our mission and community.
- Shared experience around neurodiversity with organisations from our Industry Engagement Forum such as Specialisterne, along with our strategic partnership with Microsoft Ireland.
- Enhancements related to our delivery of flexible online and blended teaching, learning and assessment and related support services.
- Staff development and resource enhancement including UDL Training, peer mentoring, new library website and Student Hub with a dedicated space for EDI information.

- Free access to mental health counselling with registered counselling psychologists available to students and staff online or face to face.
- CCT subsidised free access to summer bootcamp (July provision) live online CCT certified training programmes of 33 contact hour duration.
- The creation of an internal informational student hub providing a one stop resource for students to access all important data and info for registered students, such as: CCT student email, Moodle (our virtual learning environment), Library resources, EDI Office resources (CCT 4 All section), Library site, QA information and more. The collation of these resources in one central location has introduced clarity and ease of access for autistic learners.
- A new library website has also been constructed with a single search box providing search functionality across the library's databases, eBooks and the library catalogue via a single search box. This too has provided increased clarity and reduced distractions for autistic learners accessing information
- One-to-one peer mentoring sessions have been introduced to the CCT Student Mentoring Academy, for students registered within the same cohort and year of study A new EDI Office and a dedicated EDI Officer - Anne Hannan. Face-to-face and online (one-to-one) needs assessments are also available
- The CCT Careers Officer has introduced vacancies for autistic students into a weekly jobs vacancies bulletin which is disseminated to all students

Key Outcomes and Next Steps

This journey is never-ending, and we are currently working through a three-year Action Plan with AsIAm to build and implement an institution-wide approach to Autism understanding and accessibility through the Principle Framework. Since CCT received this award on 1st October 2024 further renovation work continues to enhance the learning environment for all learners. Key next steps for advancing work in this area include:

- Continue to work with our 3-year Action Plan which has a summary of objectives, actions, and KPIs we are setting out to achieve mainly over 2024 and 2025.
- We approach this application as one organisation with our whole staff prepared to make every effort to ensure all of what we propose in our Action Plan is practiced and implemented.
- This summer we aim to develop a certified summer transitionary programme targeted at autistic students who are interested or planning to progress to third level.
- As part of this commitment CCT have engaged with Autism&Uni a research initiative funded by the European Union and continued by Leeds Beckett University, under the leadership of Dr Marc Fabri. The toolkit was developed to work with young people on the autism spectrum to help them navigate the transition from school into Higher Education (HE). The goal of the toolkit is to alleviate anxiety and provide clear guidance on various aspects of college life. Students and potential students can use it in their own time, do research about issues concerning them, and come back to it when particular difficulties arise.
- Campus wide neurodiversity training is also prioritised annually since September 2024 and will continue to be expanded.

Case Study 4: Embracing Diversity in Continuous Assessment to Address Challenges of Generative AI Tools

Muhammad Iqbal, ICT Faculty, CCT College Dublin

Introduction

To improve student engagement and comprehension, educators in the field of information technology/ computing employ a range of diverse teaching and learning strategies tailored to different NFQ levels in Ireland. These strategies include problem-based learning, experiential learning, collaborative learning, self-directed inquiry, gamified approaches, theoretical education, and practical lab sessions. Combining these strategies allows mentors to accommodate distinct learning styles, foster critical thinking, and provide students with a theoretical knowledge and real-world problem-solving skills required to succeed in the ever-changing IT industry. The level of learning has been checked by using various methods of assessments like class quizzes, continuous assessments, practical tests, oral presentations, peer reviews, case studies, project-based evaluations, self-assessments, group discussions, and real-world simulations [1, 2].

Overview

In this case study, we share an educational experience based on the combination of methods we employed to undergraduate classes at CCT College Dublin, within a single module to enhance level of learning by incorporating supervised class test and continuous authentic assessments to foster deeper engagement, understanding and satisfaction. Continuous assessment plays a crucial role in enhancing student learning in higher education because the students get sufficient time to do research in a library and online resources. However, incorporating a unique real-world scenario, such as "*using blockchain to enhance supply chain transparency by securely tracking shipments and verifying authenticity*", often results in a quasi-similar version of solutions in the assignment responses with similar references. This is because students often rely on online search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.), generative AI tools (ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.), and library resources for research, resulting in recurrently paraphrased yet partially identical responses at conceptual level. Consequently, this approach hampers the major skill of critical thinking and ultimately diminishes students' creativity and intellectual knowledge breadth.

Implementation

To overcome this challenge, we present a method that can enhance the level of learning by providing a set of 3 to 5 different scenarios in a single piece of authentic assessment where the students can demonstrate their skills based on the specific chosen topic. These topics will be allocated to the class randomly and the outcome of this methodology has been recognised as very productive from the last few years at undergraduate level at CCT College. We observed an enhanced level of student satisfaction by providing opportunities to work in diverse areas, which further facilitated classroom discussions and enabled them to broaden and deepen their understanding [3, 4] through this approach. Second, we structure the continuous assessments to cover all module learning outcomes properly into four distinct parts, such as

- **Supervised Class Test:** A timed assessment designed to evaluate students' conceptual understanding and practical problem-solving skills.
- **Real-World Authentic Assessment:** Students conduct research, analyse the problem, break it down into small discrete parts, design a poster, and present their findings through a video demonstration.
- **Comprehensive Authentic Assessment:** A report based on motivation, methodology, comparative analysis, evaluation, and practical deployment, supported by citations, references, illustrations, and data tables.

- **Formative assessments:** They are an essential component of excellent teaching and learning because they allow educators to figure out shortcomings in understanding and alter their teaching approaches throughout the semester. It is based on small tasks and collaborative work.

The percentage for each assessment part depends on the nature and contents of the module. If the module involved substantial programming, then the class test percentage can be increased; otherwise, we used (20%, 40% and 40%) split for two modules, such as Distributed Digital Transactions and Storage Solutions for Big Data for third year BSc students. They develop and demonstrate their skills in the form of academic writing, poster presentation along with video recording and supervised class test to solve real world problems in a specified time frame.

Key Outcomes

In conclusion, this diverse assessment strategy can be effective if feedback is provided in a timely manner, allowing students to improve in the next continuous assessment [5]. We also employed an authentic assessment approach grounded in real-world scenarios to cultivate problem-solving, critical thinking, innovation, and analytical skills while ensuring academic integrity by using plagiarism detection software, like Copyleaks. The life cycle for these three assessments spans 13 weeks, including the reading week, and this strategy has proven to be effective in addressing the challenges arising from the use of GenAI tools. It has been observed that the deep learning in higher education is extremely important as compared to surface learning especially in the presence of Generative AI tools [6]. Desired outcomes for subject-based deep learning can be achieved through diverse strategy of continuous assessments, along with formative learning facilitated by collaborative group tasks in the classroom.

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