Annual Quality Report (IBAT)
Reporting Period 2019-2020

Annual Quality Report (IBAT)
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2019-2020

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

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Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for **IBAT College Dublin** for the reporting period **1 September 2019 – 31 August 2020.**

It is to be submitted by **Friday, 26 March 2021**.

The AQR has been approved by [Academic Council on 23rd March 2021] **and is submitted by** [Dr Finbarr Murphy, Registrar]In June 2018 IBAT College Dublin were formally approved by QQI to reengage as the college quality assurance processes, procedures and governance structure arrangements as articulated in the College Quality Assurance Handbook 2018 and panel visit were deemed acceptable. Since then, IBAT successfully had 2 programmes with 2 embedded exit awards approved. Recruitment on the BA Honours in Business started off slowly following reengagement but we have seen a steady and positive improvement in student numbers. We have highlighted a number of factors contributing to lower intake numbers. One aspect identified was the operation of in-house English language tests by our competitors relative to the list of tests we accept (AP1.3a in the attached Associated Policies document that supplements our Quality Assurance Handbook).

We consider that IBAT's approach to regulatory engagement and engagement with the higher education sector has significantly changed and improved. After a long hiatus and visibility in the sector staff are attending different fora such as the annual QQI Conference, e.g., on 20th November 2018 (Best Practices in Student-Centred Approach in Education & Training) and QQI Workshops on Programme Validation (30.04.2018) and Panel Membership (09/12/2019), QQI is regularly appraised and in a timely manner of any developments in the college, staff changes, delivery arrangements (CoVID 19 Contingency plans) etc. Any requests made by QQI for data are dealt with as a priority and verified prior to sending.

At the June 2019 ICOS AGM IBAT were admitted as members to ICOS. PG24032, BA Honours in Business will be listed in the 2021 CAO Handbook and website. We are currently awaiting the outcome of our application to re-join The Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA). Both the Head of School and Registrar attend the National Academic Integrity Network, National Teaching & Learning Forum events are promoted to staff, lecturers and students were appropriate.

This transparent and engaged approach has been replicated with a positive impact with our university partner, University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). In December 2017, the QAA published its report on their review of UK transnational education (TNE) in the Republic of Ireland. The QAA visited IBAT in October 2017 as they were in a franchised arrangement offering an MBA accredited by UWTSD. IBAT College Dublin was the second largest provider in terms of student numbers for UK-Irish TNE partnerships.

The QAA findings highlighted.

The College, operating within the University's academic framework, is responsible for recruitment and admissions, student induction, student support including resources, student engagement, complaints and producing annual monitoring reports. The University is aware of the local context and has worked with the College to ensure it meets Republic of Ireland requirements for non-Irish providers.

Effective oversight of the partnership is exercised at a number of levels within the University, including through its committee structure and key role holders; the Partnership Team Leader role in particular ensures regular and effective communication between the University and the College. Students spoke positively about their experience of the programme.

p31 of QAA Country Report – Republic of Ireland.
Click here for the full report.

In 2019 the MBA was revalidated successfully and in 2020 the individual taught modules of the MBA were validated as standalone modules that can be used for credit purposes through RPL to achieve a Postgraduate Certificate or Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration. The relationship has evolved and now IBAT is a collaborative partner of UWTSD indicating how trust and competence are evident between both parties.

In addition to its higher education school the college has an English language school and offers professional diplomas in the evening. An IBAT Professional Diploma is a focused, short duration practical course that consolidates, upskills and/or reskills learners in a professional area. They are stand-alone qualifications that do not lead to an award on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

How this AQR developed and was approved is outlined as follows.
- The Head of School and Registrar attended the AQR Briefing provided by QQI on 16th November 2020.
- As this is our first AQR submission the Head of School and Registrar met to discuss / formalise their thoughts prior to presenting to other members of management.
- Thereafter an internal briefing with senior management occurred to impress upon all the need for a college wide response, led by the Registrar.
- Academic Council met on 14th May 2020 and discussed the then AIQR template and the requirements.
- Board of Governors were appraised at their meeting on 9th December 2020. The Governors emphasised the importance of completing this requirement in a thorough, systematic, and inclusive manner.
- The Registrar initially checked QHUB and liaised with QQI to ensure the template was available.
- He then developed a schedule outlining the requirements – data required, by whom and when it was required by.
- A first draft was compiled. Academic Council was convened 23rd March 2021 to consider the Report.
- Members of Academic Council comments were considered and incorporated.
- Final draft circulated to Academic Council and senior management for approval prior to the deadline date, 26th March 2021)

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

The section on the IBAT website that is available to the public outlining our quality assurance framework, processes and procedures is as follows. https://www.ibat.ie/quality-assurance.html The College Quality Assurance Handbook is visible here with a hyperlink. The Associated Policies that accompany the Quality Assurance Handbook have not been made public yet.

Chapter 2 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook discusses how the College is governed, decisions are made (Academic Council being the supreme decision-making body for all quality assurance related decisions in the college), representation of staff, external persons, and learners in the College governance units. Refer to Standard Operating Procedure 2.2 - Nomination Procedure for Staff and Learner Representatives to the Board of Governors.

Since the College re-engaged in 2018 the College Quality Assurance Handbook and its Associated Policies has been updated in 2019 to account for user feedback, regulatory developments, coverage of events (e.g., death of a student, handling of a media enquiry etc.). All changes were approved by Academic Council (18/07/2019) and endorsed our Board of Governors.

Risk Management is a constant process. In the College, our ongoing response to the current uncertainty around the CoVID 19 emergency risk management is particularly active. Associated Policy 1.1 articulates the College policy on Risk Management. The Audit Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Governors advises the Board of Governors on issues of academic risk, ensures audits are conducted and that policies and procedures are in place to manage risk. Operationally senior management meet weekly, every Thursday. In addition, a group was formed to ensure the safe return of students and staffs to our two campuses in accordance with government safety guidelines.

Governance units as articulated in the College have not changed. There has been a change in personnel. All changes were communicated to QQI. The most notable changes are.

- Departure of Shane Ormsby, former College Director, November 2019
- Appointment of Joe Gorey, College Principal, June 2020
- Departure of Dr Eileen Buckley-Dhoot, Academic Director, August 2020
- Promotion of Dr Brid Lane from Head of School to Interim Academic Director.

IBAT College Dublin's management organisation structure is provided in the chart below. It accounts for the changes in personnel and further clarifies the distinction between the academic and commercial arms of the college.
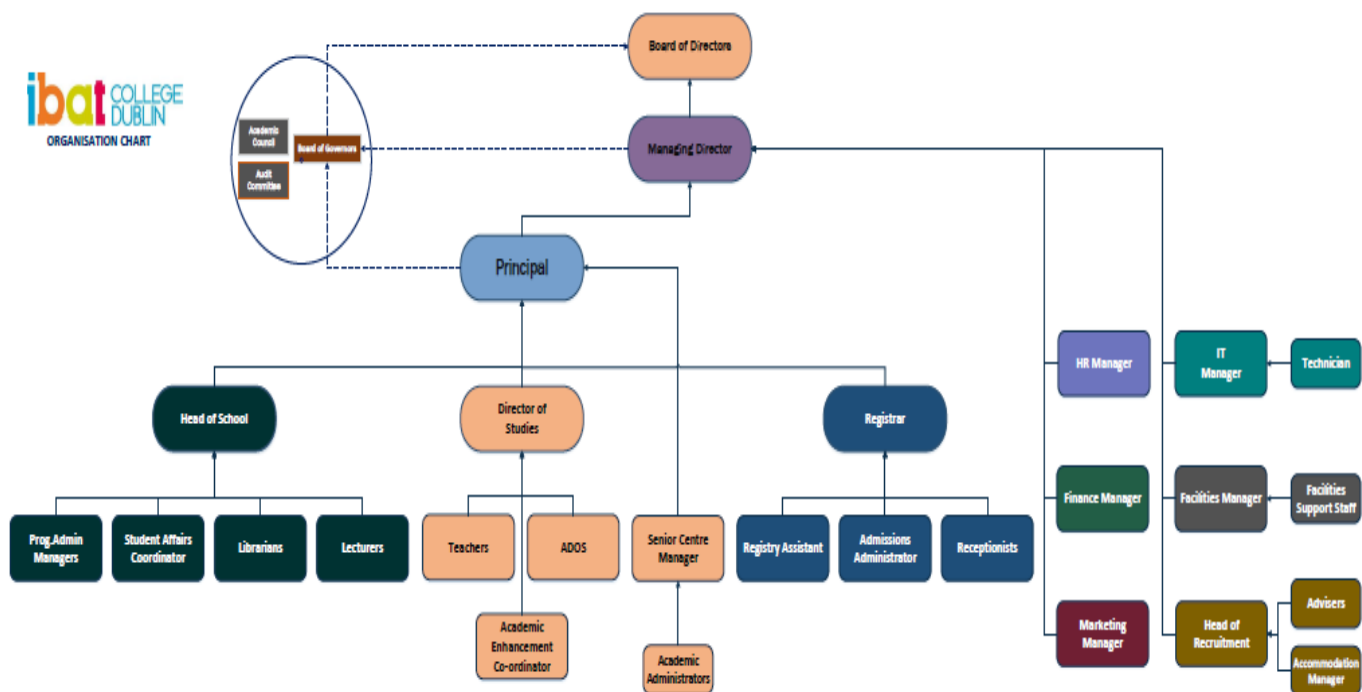
1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

Chapter 9 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook presents how the college engages in Collaborative Arrangements and Other Parties involved in Education and Training.

Regarding QQI Accredited programmes we have no collaborative or transnational arrangements in place. Currently we have the following programmes approved by QQI;

Principal Programme	PG24032	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business
Embedded Programme	PG24033	Certificate in Arts in Business
Principal Programme	PG24379	Bachelor of Business in Business
Embedded Programme	PG24384	Higher Certificate in Business

We are engaged in collaborative provision with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) in delivering a FHEQ Level 7 Masters in Business Administration. In 2019 the programme was revalidated. In 2020 we validated the exit awards subject to UWTSD Recognition of Prior Learning regulations.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Chapter 3 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook outlines the processes in the college to develop and approve programmes. Significant internal and external stakeholder engagement is employed as evident in our recent programme validation for the approval of PG24379, Bachelor of Business in Business.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Chapter 5 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook presents how the college addresses matters relating to admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Chapter 2, Section 2.3 describes the role the Admissions Committee serves. It meets 3 times per year and considers all matters relating to admitting a learner. In April 2021 an independent and external audit of all admissions to the BA Honours in Business is being conducted by Stephen McManus, Higher Education Consultant and former Registrar of Dundalk IT. The audit assesses compliance according to admission criteria.

At Academic Council and at Programme Boards we are informed of best practice and the College is committed to implementing inclusive teaching and learning strategies and providing material to all learners, including information on policies and procedures, in accessible formats. Further supports are provided as required under the College's Policy for Reasonable Accommodations. Refer to sections 7.13.2 - Disability Support Services, and 8.8 - Reasonable Accommodation Policy of the College Quality Assurance Handbook.

Please also refer to Associated Policies:

- 1.2 refers to IBAT College Dublin Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy and Guidelines.
- 1.3a refer to IBAT College Dublin English Language Recognised Equivalence
- 1.3b UWTSD English Language Recognised Equivalence
- 1.11 IBAT College Dublin Access, Transfer and Progression Requirements

&

Standard Operating Procedure:

- SOP 2.1 Evaluating an Application for Entry to an Academic Programme
- SOP 3.1 Procedures for Registration to a Programme at IBAT College

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

IBAT College Dublin submit grades for any recipients of QQI awards through QQI's online certification portal, QBS. IBAT enter grades on the online portal MyTSD to submit grades to Academic Registry in UWTSD. Academic Registry then run their awards engine and notify IBAT at Exam Boards on the classification and award for a recipient. All grades and awards are in respect of both accreditors are reflected on IBAT's LMS.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Chapter 6 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook describes the College's educational philosophy, explains our academic framework and how we assure quality through support and engagement with staff and learners. Associated Policy 1.6, the IBAT College Dublin Teaching and Learning Strategy further illustrates this. Chapter 8 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook considers the people, policies, and procedures in place in the assessment of learners. It addresses matters such as academic integrity, external examining, and many other issues.

Dr Gerry Grenham, former Dean, Institute of Banking in Ireland, an externally recognized College of UCD was the External Examiner in 2019/20 for the BA Honours in Business. In his annual report he states.

> *"a range of innovative assessment methodologies had to be put in place due to COVID. This was done coherently and with no discernible effects on programme standards. "*

Further guidance and assistance for staff and learners is found in Associated Policies.

- 1.5 IBAT College Dublin Assessment Strategy
- 1.5b Assessment Workload Guidelines
- 1.12 Guidelines on Assessing Group Work

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Chapter 7 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook provides details of the resources, infrastructure and supports provided to learners. To ensure a safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment a standard of conduct is necessary on the part of students and staff. Associated Policy 1.4 presents the IBAT College Dublin Policy on Student Code of Conduct

As part of our CoVID Contingency arrangements lectures moved online quickly. Investment was made in terms of hardware, training (staff & lecturers) and supporting students (e.g., granted remote access to PCs in the college if internet connection was poor or they did not have access to a PC or lap top).

Staff lecturers and students are positively disposed to online/blended delivery. The College has drafted a policy on online/ blended delivery as part of its intention to seek extension of scope in terms of delivery of its programmes validated by QQI. .

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

Currently this is not applicable to IBAT College Dublin.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

Chapter 10 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook provides details about staff recruitment, appraisal, development, and support. Also refer to Associated Policy 1.8 Human Resource Policy for Staff Recruitment, Management and Development.

6.0 Information and Data Management

Chapter 11 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook provides detail on how information and data is gathered, presented, stored, and managed. In addition, refer to Associated Policy 1.9 College Data Protection and Record Management Policy and Associated Policy 1.10 College Data Retention Policy

Reports such as the Progression and Retention Report, first destination surveys or trends in award classifications are used as key performance indicators to facilitate self-evaluation and benchmarking within the sector or similar providers where such information is available.

The College has identified colleges with which to benchmark performance, but no procedures are in place yet to ensure such comparisons are valid and meaningful. The College is committed to establishing relationships within the sector to share information and contribute to research that will benefit the College's enhancement agenda, as evidenced by our involvement in the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), National Teaching & Learning Forum. For example, IBAT responded to the QQI call on their Green Paper, Assessment of Learners & Learning (December 2018)

7.0 Public Information and Communication

Chapter 11 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook provides details on how the college provides information meeting the requirement to furnish clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date and easily accessible information to prospective and enrolled learners.

Chapter 5 sections 5.2 & 5.3 outlines the responsibility of Marketing in the recruitment of prospective learners. via social media, open days etc.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

Chapter 4 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook outlines the activities and processes the College undergoes to self-evaluate, monitor, and review programmes to ensure quality and standards are maintained and enhanced. It also addresses the college approach to cyclical external quality assurance reviews.

9.0   Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1   Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	
Awarding bodies	Two*
QA bodies	One*

1. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	Awarding body & QA body*
Name of body:	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business (PG24032) + Certificate in Arts in Business (PG24033) Bachelor of Business in Business (PG24379) + Higher Certificate in Business (PG24384)
Date of accreditation or last review	Remote Panel discussion on 20th September 2020 to consider our application for validation of Bachelor of Business in Business (PG24379)
Date of next review	Ongoing monitoring on the implementation of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business (PG24032)

2. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	Awarding body
Name of body:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters in Business Administration (Full and Part-Time) https://www.ibat.ie/courses/mba-masters-degree-course-dublin.html
Date of accreditation or last review	2019
Date of next review	2024

9.2   Collaborative Provision

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

1. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters in Business Administration (Full and Part-Time) https://www.ibat.ie/courses/mba-masters-degree-course-dublin.html
Date of last review	2019
Date of next review	2024

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Articulation agreements - Total number	5

1. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business (PG24032) + Certificate in Arts in Business (PG24033) Bachelor of Business in Business (PG24379) + Higher Certificate in Business (PG24384)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Various dates (see below)
Date of next review	June 2023, 5 years after reengagement.
Detail of the agreement	Formally re-engaged PAEC Decision June 2018 Programme Validation - Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business (PG24032) – PAEC decision 20/12/2008, First intake March 2019, last intake Feb 2024 Programme Validation – Bachelor of Business in Business (PG24379) - PAEC decision 03/12/2020, first intake Sept 2021, last intake August 2026

2. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Digital Marketing Institute
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma in Digital Marketing https://www.ibat.ie/courses/professional-diploma-in-digital-marketing.html
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	31st May 2018
Date of next review	31st May 2023
Detail of the agreement	Licence Agreement IBAT is a recognised education provider of DMI content. It prepares learners for DMI certification.

3. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Project Management Institute
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma in Project Management https://www.ibat.ie/courses/project-management-diploma-courses.html
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Expired 31.12.2020, Now an Approved Training Provider status (ATP) in accordance with the new regime in place from 2021 as PMI have developed into a member based professional organisation.

Date of next review	Upon successful application it annual renewal.
Detail of the agreement	Licence Agreement IBAT is a recognised education provider of PMI content. It prepares learners for PMI certification.

4. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters in Business Administration (Full and Part-Time) https://www.ibat.ie/courses/mba-masters-degree-course-dublin.html
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	25th September 2013
Date of next review	Addendums as at; 4th April 2020, 24th July 2017, 1st July 2016 and 1st September 2015.
Detail of the agreement	Memorandum of Agreement -The nature of the relationship has evolved to one of Collaborative partner having been under a franchise arrangement.

5. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Arden University
Programme titles and links to publications	3 BA Hon Degree programmes, validated by Arden University
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	Lapsed
Date of next review	Lapsed
Detail of the agreement	Collaborative partnership Allowing us to recruit students and deliver their programmes in Ireland, adhering to their QA procedures. QAA are the regulatory body responsible in the UK for such an arrangement

[IBAT College Dublin]
2021

Annual Quality Report (IBAT)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2019-2020

PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1   Strategic QA Updates

At the Board of Governors meeting on 9th December 2020 a 5-year Strategic Plan for the college was agreed. This was a culmination of implementing all changes advised from QQI, market developments, internal organizational changes and to provide a structured plan to direct operations of the college.

The vision and strategic objectives were reviewed and updated and will replace those contained in the existing Quality Assurance Handbook 2019 V4.4. They will also be available on the IBAT website for all.

In it the vision is as follows.

 IBAT College will be known for

- Integration of business and technology programmes.
- Its work-integrated learning and its learning-integrated work-based programmes.
- Its articulate, resourceful, resilient graduates who are work ready.

The Strategic Objectives that will guide the development; work in the College until 2025 is as follows.

1. Engage with Influential employers in business and technology.

This has led to a reconceptualization of the former Business Advisory Group to become the Expert Advisory Group, led by Joe Gorey, College Principal and informed by Breege O'Donoghue, Governor and former Director of the Primark Group. The Expert Advisory Committee has a wider scope in its terms of reference, it will meet more frequently, and membership has been extended. Specifically, the Committee provides the following:

- Advice: assess, review and comment on specific areas of existing programmes, and new programme development.

- Inform: sharing developments in the sectors represented by members.

- Develop: and nurture working relations based on mutually beneficial outcomes with a variety of businesses through regular interactions.

- Facilitate: students and graduates in accessing workplace opportunities, work-based learning, and work-based assessment

- Support: Committee members provide opportunities to promote and market the Ibat College programmes that they have influenced, enhancing the brand visibility of the College.

    ;

A Corporate Relations Manager / B2B Manager is a future role that will be recruited for to ensure the industry voice is central in all matters relating to programme monitoring, development, assessment, and opportunities for students in their companies, during their studies and employment upon graduation.

A new Careers Portal powered by JobTeaser was released in May 2020, https://ibat.jobteaser.com/. It is a platform that has various resources, webinars, company profiles, event listing and more importantly job and intern listing.

This platform was integrated into the Student's Moodle accounts.

2. Deliver a 5-year expansion plan.

- Seek appropriate HEIs to collaborate with on several potential activities - recruitment, programme provision etc.,

- Integrate Expert Advisory Committee learnings into business plans.
  Previously there was a disconnect from this advisory group informing the commercial arm of the College. As the College Principal is now leading this new initiative this disconnect will cease.

- Broaden the portfolio of programmes offered in the higher education school.

- Align our current professional diplomas to the NFQ.
  Currently they are focused, short duration practical courses that consolidate, upskill and/or reskill learners in a professional area. We have 38 such courses. They are stand-alone qualifications that do not lead to an award on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

- Identifying appropriate courses available through our partners that will add to our programme portfolio.
  An example of this is our collaboration with another GUS institution INT in developing the Professional Diploma in Software QA, which is 10 months in duration. It complements many of our existing Computing and ICT short duration courses.

- Create an English language teacher training course.
  A proposal was developed from the Academic Enhancement Coordinator to provide a postgraduate level Teaching Qualification. TESOL were the accrediting body. The programme structure allowed for teaching practice which other offerings do not incorporate. Having an English Language School IBAT are uniquely placed to facilitate teaching practice. It was discussed and the New Programme Development Team favored a QQI accredited offering. The new English Language award standards are currently being reviewed.

- Seek extension of scope from QQI for level 9 programme prvision and for online and blended delivery.
  Initially this involves IBAT drafting its own Blended and Online Policy (being drafted and will be completed in 2020/21 academic year) in accordance with QQI Statutory QA and specific Blended & Online guidelines. Blended and online delivery may be requested on existing programmes validated with QQI and will form part of subsequent new programme validations.
  In accordance with guidance from QQI a level 9 programme validation with be accompanied with a request for extension of scope.

- Create a dedicated student focused team.
  The process to ensure enhanced coordination between support services, Student Affairs, IT, Library, Reception, Counsellor, Academic Team and Registry is underway.
  A new ticketing system to handle student queries within 24 hours is working well to resolve matters quickly or acknowledge requests and outline the timeline required to provide assistance or answers.

3. Leverage GUS Global footprint to expand the range of programmes offered by IBAT.

- Access GUS Global Network, their online content, potential collaborative partnerships
  IBAT has entered talks with a number of GUS Institutions in an exploratory nature.
    - o InterCollege (Amsterdam)
    - o London Academy of Trading (LAT)
    - o University of Creative Arts (UCA)

- Increase International student numbers through cross college student exchange.
  Planning phase to commence in second quarter of 2021.

- Leverage academic experts.
  With GUS Institutions lecturers and subject matter experts can guest lecture to complement and augment the efforts of the lecturer. Talks have commenced at an Academic Director level between institutions on programmes of common interest.

The setting of these objectives will necessitate a review and update of the actions contained in the Quality Enhancement Plan (Associated Policy 1.7)

1.2   Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

This is the first AQR completed by the College.

In 2018 the panel that recommended IBAT College Dublin for reengagement also identified several advised changes to the quality assurance procedures of IBAT which were addressed in the 2019/20 update of the college's Quality Assurance Handbook,

The Panel advised the following changes to the QA procedures of IBAT:

1. That more precise language is used in the written descriptions of the roles of the Academic Director and the Registrar, to clarify responsibilities around setting and implementing quality standards (QAH, pp.18-19, and p. 64).
- The 2019 QAH update addressed this. QQI were informed after the QAH had been approved by Academic Council on 18th July 2019.

2. The Audit Sub-Committee has an evolving remit. This remit should be monitored and further clarified over time in its terms of reference and in its operating practices.
- An audit of all admissions on the BA Honours in Business is scheduled to be conducted after CoVID lockdown restrictions, currently scheduled for the week commencing April 5th, 2021. The audit will be conducted by Stephen McManus (retired Registrar DkIT)

3. It is advised that the benefits of student and staff representation on the Board of Governors of IBAT is considered.
- SoP 2.2 Nomination Procedure for Staff and Learner Representatives to the Board of Governors (contained in the Associated Policies that complement the QAH)

4. The process for determining not to run an advertised programme due to lack of demand or for other reasons, and the timing of the communication of this decision to students, should be documented and published.
- In section 5.3 of the QAH it now states.

    Where a programme fails to recruit sufficient numbers then applicants holding confirmed/ unconditional offers are notified not less than 3 weeks prior to the commencement date of that programme.

5. The process that IBAT is currently operating to sign-off on minor changes to programmes should be documented to avoid any unintended impact of amendments to related programmes.
- F4.4   Minor Changes to Programme Approval Form is now incorporated in the QAH in the Forms & Templates section. These forms are completed and considered at Programme Board meeting.

6. It is advised that what is currently referred to as Self-Evaluation (QAH, p.69) is given a title that better reflects its role in compiling and synthesizing the outcomes of quality processes that have taken place throughout the academic year, rather than being a de novo self-evaluation.
- Now in Section 4.3.3 of the College QAH the Annual Self-Assessment Report (ASAR) is now linked to this AQR. The Academic Director is responsible for preparing the College's Annual Self-Assessment Report (ASAR). The report is compiled from the various self and external evaluation activities, benchmarking, data analysis and other relevant reports. The ASAR includes findings and recommendations for improvement with an improvement or action plan detailing how and when the

provider will address the recommendations made in the self-assessment report, and who will have responsibility for doing so. Academic Council endorses enhancement themes then on an annual basis.

7. It is advised that IBAT requires that internal audits are carried out by someone, internally or externally, who is independent of the function being audited.
- As stated above under point 2, an audit of all admissions is being conducted by Stephen McManus (retired Registrar DkIT) on all BA Honours in Business students in April 2021.
- The Health & Safety Manager for the parent company GUS conducted an audit of both of IBAT's campuses in February 2020. The Facilities Manager is addressing any actions that required attention, e.g., training provided for fire wardens etc.

8. It is advised that the arrangements the College has in place for student health services are included in its learner support documentation.
- This are now included in the QAH, Chapter and in the Student Handbook.

9. The manner that it is intended the Student Disciplinary Committee (QAH, p.150) and the Appeals Board (p.153) are appointed should be corrected in the corresponding procedures.
- In the 2019 QAH update these corrections were made. In addition, a Code of Conduct has been added in Student handbooks.

Specifically, the Review Panel had comments on the following themes:

1. Governance

The Panel saw significant improvements in the description and consistency of governance and staff roles in the resubmitted documentation that it reviewed. Notwithstanding the importance of collaboration between the Academic Director and the Registrar, the Panel has advised some changes in their role descriptions to further demarcate their respective responsibilities.

The Panel considered that IBAT has given significant attention to addressing its governance structure. The role of the Academic Council has been confirmed as the most important organ of academic governance. The terms of reference of the sub-units of governance are inter-connected and consistent.

The Panel was also informed that the Audit Sub-Committee will develop an audit schedule and will receive audit reports on certain matters. This schedule has yet to compiled, but audit activity has commenced.

2. Assessment

The Panel was satisfied that its concerns regarding the assessment procedures of IBAT had been addressed by the College in its resubmitted QA Handbook. On a point of detail, the College was directed to clarify with QQI the current regulations pertaining to the gap required before an individual acting as External Examiner can return to this role.

The role of the External Examiner and their term of office has been clarified now in the QAH in section 8.14. For the BA Honours in Business we have two External examiners. Dr Gerry Grenham, former Dean of the Institute of Banking, an externally recognized college of UCD was the first External Examiner appointed in October 2019. Dr Grenham provided the college with his first External Examiners Annual Report on F8.as per QAH Forms and Templates.

Dr Pio Fenton, Head of Marketing and International Business Department, Munster Technological University (formerly Cork IT) was appointed in September 2020.

An even distribution of modules to consider has been allocated to each with Dr Grenham concentrating on the ICT, quantitative and numerate orientated modules. Dr Fenton considers the business and management modules along with legal and regulatory modules. Both will consider the capstone module when learners are at award stage.

3. Information & Data Management

The Registrar is responsible for information and data management issues in IBAT. Since reengagement, the College successfully prepared for convergence with the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in May 2018. In March 2019, a new operating system was implemented to create efficiencies and meet regulatory expectations on an appropriate system for the scale of operations in our language school. The Panel commented on the scope and extent of this work and noted that additional resources may be required to support information and data management issues in the future. To ensure the safety of data new servers are now being installed.

Associated Policy 1.7 that accompaniers the College Quality Assurance Handbook presents the college Quality Enhancement Plan. The following commentary considers the progress made and highlights where more attention is required.

Activity	Update
1. Teaching and Learning Strategy Aim: to produce a comprehensive and effective Teaching and Learning Strategy aligned to IBAT's Strategic Plan and designed to support the IBAT mission to produce graduates who are industry focused, socially responsible, and globally relevant. Themes • Further development of Teaching and Learning Strategy/ educational philosophy. • Skills for employment (employability audit on new programmes) • Business Advisory Group to inform programme design and development of graduate attributes. • Blended learning- technology enhanced teaching -where it adds value.	The Business Advisory Group was reconceptualized and its terms of reference expanded. It is now called the Expert Advisory Committee championed by one of the Governors a lady with significant industry experience, a former director of the Primark Group. IBAT College Policy for Blended and Online Learning (Associated Policy 1.15).
2. Better Quality Student Engagement Aim: to enhance the quality of learner engagement with the College in all aspects of College life. Themes: • Class Representatives training introduced. • Learners involved in deeper, more comprehensive consultation on policy and process. This will be measured, in the first instance, by improved attendance by learner representatives at Boards and Committees and quality of feedback from consultation exercises.	After each intake September & February each year a class representative is elected from the student body and receives training on the role. Thereafter they attend various Boards and Committees of the College. In addition, they meet regularly with the Programme Administration Manager and Head of School. Engagement with alumni is an area for development. Interactions are limited. Apart from alumni completing the first destination survey at graduation a notable interaction is the college communication of its updated Careers Portal, powered by JobTeaser back in May 2020.

• Alumni engagement – first destination survey introduced in Dec 2017.	An Alumni Proposition is planned to be developed in the 2020/21 academic year. Desk-based research has been conducted. This is an area that needs to be addressed.
3. Benchmarking Performance Aim: To ensure through effective process, reporting and analysis that IBAT College Dublin identifies areas of good practice and areas for improvement. Benchmarking against similar providers, nationally and internationally to be undertaken, and the production and use of key performance indicators (KPIs) for internal improvement. Current benchmarking exercises include: • Student Staff Ratio • Retention, Progression, Completion and Awards	IBAT is regularly benchmarked against its peers with the parent company, Global University Systems. The Student Recruitment and Marketing Manager regularly benchmark against competitors in terms of pricing and how similar providers nationally market similar programmes. The Academic Team review similar programmes to consider content, assessment and staff involved. The Registrar provides the Academic Team with appropriate data for exam boards and programme boards to consider matters such as retention, progression, completion, and award recipients. Whilst recruitment figures are improving the student staff ratio remains low relative to our peers. This is a cause of concern for the College, QQI and impacts on the student experience both positively and negatively. Positively they receive more personalized tuition. Negatively, a diverse student cohort creates a vibrant learning environment and maintains the sustainability of provision. Being part of the National Academic Integrity Network, we now can benchmark our students in terms of integrity. We completed the 2017/18 and 2018/19 survey and were comparable to other private providers in terns of cases and the penalties we applied.
4. Academic Staff Development Aim: To ensure IBAT learners learn in a research informed environment and have access to effective teaching and learning methodologies. • Improve Staff qualifications in T&L • Improve the College engagement with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education • Enhance and demonstrate staff engagement with Scholarship.	The Acting Academic Director notifies all academic staff of National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education events and encourages them to attend. IBAT attends as many events as possible. In December 2018, the College provided their response to the QQI call for on their Green Paper on Assessment of Learners and Learning. The Academic Director, Registrar and Head of School provided their opinion after researching the matter. Any staff undertaking a teaching or learning qualification, e.g. train-the-trainer PMI had this taken into consideration when scheduling their classes.

• Support Continuous Professional Development initiatives undertaken by academic staff	All academic staff were provided with training and support when the college moved on-line as a result of CoVID 19. All academic staff can attend any programme offered in the college, either free of charge or had a heavily discounted fee, depending on their employment status.
5. Enhancing the Learning Environment Aim: to ensure IBAT College Dublin learners are learning in a high-quality learning environment with effective learning resources. This project will commence with an evaluation of the effectiveness of IBAT facilities for the delivery of all programmes of Higher Education and Training • Ensure facilities are appropriate, maintained and provide a conducive learning environment. • Improve Library provision and ensure library resources are available for day, evening and weekend learners. • Information Technology – ensure support is available to encourage uptake of technology enhanced learning supporting the Teaching and Learning Strategy.	In 2019/20 there was an investment of 25 new PCs for one of the 3 computer labs. Maintenance in the Wellington Quay campus involved the painting of a number of lecture rooms. Software licenses were updated to the latest version for a number of programmes we offer on our professional diploma suite of programmes. Academic integrity software was updated, further evidencing our commitment to the important work of NAIN. The latest version of Moodle, our student LMS was implemented. Initially moving to online delivery as a consequence of CoVID 19 was a daunting prospect for both staff and students. Training was provided to staff initially on the process adopted and on how to use the various open-source tools, Classroom, Meets, Google Docs in addition to Moodle. Remote computers were set-up for students experiencing problems. We found that attendance improved as many students preferred this mode of delivery. How the student is supported was reviewed during this period. With the addition of the Student Affairs Coordinator (SAC) we were able to provide a personalized and professional service to our student base. This involved the SAC being the primary point of contact and engaging with relevant personnel, IT, Academic, recruitment, registry, accommodation etc. to resolve or clarify matters.

1.3 Governance and Management
1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Senior Management Meetings	Every Thursday at 10.00 am
Board of Governors	08.10.2019, 05.12.19, 06.02.2020, 15.04.2020, 10.06.2020, 26.08.2020
Academic Council	22.11.19, 03.04.2020*, 14.05.2020, 02.07.2020* * By circulation The Teaching & Learning Committee was subsumed under AC and only met once in February 2019
Audit & Risk Committee	22.11.19, 31.01.2020, 12.05.2020, 24.08.2020
Exam Boards	06.03.2020, 17.07.2020, 28.08.2020
Programme Boards	29.11.2019
Admissions Committee	20.11.2019, 20.02.2020, 15.04.2020, 11.05.2020
Academic Misconduct Hearing	29.11.2019, 19.02.2020, 14.07.2020
Expert Advisory Committee (formerly the Business Advisory Group)	No meetings
Student Disciplinary	No meetings

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

In the period 2019/2020 A College Principal was appointed. Also, in the period the Academic Director, resigned. The Head of School assumed the position of Acting Academic Director. Some of the Academic Director duties were re-assigned to the Registrar (Secretariat of the Audit & Risk Committee and lead on preparation of the AQR).

As a consequence of these appointments a new management structure was agreed to further clarify the distinction between the academic and commercial arms of the College. Refer to PART A, organisation chart in section 1.1.

From a student support perspective from September 2019 a dedicated Student Affairs Coordinator is now in place to augment the team supporting students (Academic and Registry Teams).

Operationally facilities management is outsourced to a professional building contractor with two facilities managers on-site in each campus.

1.4   Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

The following annual monitoring and review activities took place during the 2019/20 academic year:

• Internal admissions audit of students on BA Honours in Business and MBA, completed by the Student Recruitment Manager, considered at the meetings of Admissions Committee on 20.11.2019 and 11.05.2020

Reviews conducted on:
- Library and Library Services
- Students Services and Careers – leading to the introduction of JobTeaser powering the IBAT CareersCentre and the appointment of a Student Affairs Coordinator

As part of the annual planning process there was the annual programme review of the level 8, BA Hons in Business considered at the Programme Board.

There was an unsuccessful new programme validation for a level 7, Bachelor in Business programme in 2019/2020 (subsequently validated in 2020/21).

There were no programme reviews and revalidations during the 2019/20 academic year.

In addition to quality assurance reviews, there was an annual financial audit conducted and a number of surveys with students to inform the college on the transition to online provision. These considered facilities, resources, the learning environment and student experience. These were conducted in April & July 2020.

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels[1] involved in IQA

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

The chart below refers to the expert review teams that conducted an on-site review of a QQI new programme validation application on 26.06.2019 and the PMI (Project Management Institute) review of IBAT College Dublin to award us Approved Training Provider status.

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	2	1	1	n/a	No	n/a	
of those:							
On-site processes	1	1			No	n/a	
Desk reviews			1			1	
Virtual processes							
Average panel size for each process type*		5	unknown				

* excluding secretary if not a full panel member

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[1] 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

The below chart refers to the validation panel constituted by QQI conducted a site visit on 26.06.2019 to review the Bachelor of Business new programme validation application.

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					IoT
Secretary			1			1					University
Academic/Discipline Specific			2			2					University & IoT
Student Representative		1				1					Private HEI institution
QA											
Teaching & Learning											
External Industry /Third Mission		1				1					

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

The appointment of Joe Gorey as College Principal and the revised organisation chart provides clarity for internal and external stakeholders in terms of the distinction between academic and commercial decision making in the college.

Prior to joining IBAT, Joe held the position as Programme Director at Griffith College Dublin. Joe also created 'Achieve Online Learning', an e-learning development and management solution for academic institutions and businesses. In addition to this, Joe has also held the position as CEO of Setanta College, Tipperary, which specialises in sports programmes. Setanta successfully partnered with Limerick Institute of Technology. Before his venture into the higher education sector, Joe worked as a Senior HR Consultant at Intel Ireland, an electronics manufacturer, for over 15 years.

Staff recruitment in accordance with the processes as outlined in chapter 10 of the College Quality Assurance Handbook has resulted in better outcomes in the recruitment process. Online and blended delivery competence is now part of the criteria to assess applicants.

The College IT Manager commenced a significant project to overhaul how the college website performed and presented information to the public. A more uniform format is now applied across the range of programmes.

During this period, the review activities as outlined in section 1.4.1 provided an opportunity to reflect on how the college provided certain services and modifications were made. For example, support for learners is now more streamlined as described previously in this report with the appointment of a Student affairs Coordinator.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

IBAT College has been represented in the National Academic Integrity Network since its inception. Initially the Academic Director attended meeting with the Registrar as her alternate. Now both the Registrar and Head of School attend meeting to be informed of international best practice and our obligations in ensuring Ireland, the sector and our College's reputation is not compromised from such practices.

In July 2020 the Registrar submitted its first Registrars' Questionnaire to the National Academic Integrity Network for the academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

In the QAH update version 4.5 in Section 8.16 we will classify any alleged academic impropriety in accordance with the definitions of the network to facilitate annual reporting

SimCheck anti-plagiarism software was procured and integrated in the student portal. Students and lecturers have been informed of this new development and provided with guidance on how to use and interpret its output.

Academic Integrity and the supports available to students are contained in Student Handbooks and discussed at induction. Prior to the first submission of an assignment in semester one all students are requested to attend a meeting prior to their lecture where they are reminded on what they need to do to ensure the originality of their work, if assistance is required and the process and penalties involved (Section 8.16 QAH) if an alleged academic misconduct is substantiated.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

This is the first AQR for IBAT College Dublin. The QA Improvement and QE Plans for 2020/21 are as follows.

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation. If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).
1	Seek membership of the CAO and get relevant programmes listed on the CAO	The Registrar is responsible for the CAO application and being the correspondent thereafter. The Registrar will ensure the programme is listed correctly in the CAO Handbook and on the CAO Website. The Registrar will attend CAO Operation Group Meetings and represent the College at the CAO Annual Conference with Career Guidance Counsellors. The College IT Manager is responsible for ensuring the college IT infrastructure is ready to accept applicants who applied through the CAO. Being visible on CAO will attract Irish applicants. It will create a more diverse student population and reduce risk and dependency on international student recruitment.
2	Align definitions of Academic Integrity as per National Academic Integrity Network with definitions contained in the college QAH and considered at Academic Misconduct Hearings.	Registrar responsible for QAH update. Due March 2021. Assist in regulatory reporting and benchmarking against peers.
3	Nominate IBAT representative for board position in Irish Council for International Students (ICOS)	Proposed Registrar for consideration at ICOS AGM in 2020. Unfortunately he was not elected.

| 4 | Develop Alumni Proposition | Registry and Marketing will manage this project. It commenced in February 2021. Desk-based research on best-practice has been conducted. Creating ambassadors, mentors and alumni facilitating introducing in their organizations or with their network will benefit the college. Alumni benefits are access to careers services, CPD opportunities, assisting the next generation etc. |

3.2   Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1   Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
Align definitions of Academic Integrity as per National Academic Integrity Network with definitions contained in the college QAH and considered at Academic Misconduct Hearings.	February 2021	n/a
Submission of special purpose awards to meet the Springboard+ call from providers	March 2021	n/a
Draft a College Blended and Online Policy	March 2021	n/a
An external review of college admissions to the BA Hons in Business	April 2021	n/a
Curriculum Review - New curriculum currently being written for all levels in the English Language school	June 2021	n/a

3.2.2   Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

The college intends to seek approval for extension of scope to deliver programmes up to level 9 and to provide blended / online delivery of existing and new programmes.

To assist students in completing assessment work it is the intention of the college to establish an Ethical Approval Committee.

4.0   Additional Themes and Case Studies

Case Study 1.

IBAT Response to CoVID 19 Pandemic

The onset of CoVID 19 created uncertainty and despair necessitating organisations and its people to change their business model, practices, and processes significantly. How people engaged, worked, interacted socially changed overnight. Considering government guidance, the senior management team in IBAT commenced planning and risk assessments on March 13th 2020. Survival, minimal disruption to our students and staff were the guiding principles of the IBAT response. Maintaining effective and regular contact with all stakeholders was managed centrally by the senior management team.

The move to ensure sustainable delivery of programmes meant online delivery. The criteria considered were:

- Accessibility and ease-of-use for any tools used.
- Training staff/ lecturers & students on the tools and processes.
- Investing in the software and hardware required, e.g. cameras and sound
- Communicating our plans to regulators and all concerned.

This was completed under very tight timelines so students could resume their studies. BA and MBA students were online by Monday 30th March.

Processes have been refined to account for government guidance, staff, student, and regulatory feedback.

Now the "emergency" has resulted in an opportunity to reflect on how we deliver programmes, how the staff work and how the college operates as a whole. The College will be seeking extension of scope to deliver blended and online learning as the college has demonstrated in the year it has been delivering online provision to all its students. Exam performance, attendance and engagement have not been diminished.

We have found in our professional suite of programmes that by being online we are more accessible to people beyond commutable distances to Dublin. Providing access and choice for people, ensuring quality provision and a supportive learning environment is how IBAT has responded to this unprecedented event.

Case Study 2.

Academic Integrity (AI)

We are proud of being a member of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN). We take all matters of AI very seriously. We are reflective too on this matter as we need to consider if we have equipped our students to adequately address this matter. Raising awareness, assisting students to counter it and in the odd case addressing infringements is the process adopted in the college.

Now Academic Impropriety is a central component of the induction process. It is addressed from multiple perspectives – Registry - Rules / penalties, Library & Academic Team – Supports available.

We also provide guidance in the Student Handbook specific to the programme the student is studying.

Lecturers and students have been given guidance on the plagiarism software used by the college, the latest version of SimCheck. Guidance on how to read the report. In addition, AI is part of the discussion in the recruitment of lecturing staff in the case of new lecturers. For existing lecturers, the Head of School and Programme Administration Manager provided training on the new software.

To ensure no anomaly in regulatory reporting the college is adopting the NAIN definitions.

The NAIN provided an update of different essay mills and IT has ensured that all PCs in the College IT labs have blocked access to these sites.

All students that have an alleged academic misconduct are invited to attend an Academic Misconduct hearing (ref 8.16 QAH) and if the allegations are found to be true must attend an academic impropriety workshop to assist on information literacy and academic writing. The Academic Team arrange this with our library colleagues.