Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training

Institutional Review of The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences

1-3 November 2011

Report of Expert Panel

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<td>14 May 2012</td>
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HETAC Institutional Review

Introduction

This is the Report of the Expert Panel, appointed by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), which carried out the Institutional Review of the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) in November 2011.

HETAC is the qualifications awarding body for third-level educational and training institutions outside the university sector in Ireland. All providers offering HETAC awards are subject to external quality assurance review of their institutions. HETAC carries out such reviews as part of its Institutional Review process.

HETAC appointed an expert panel to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Professor David Timms, membership of the expert panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. HETAC wishes to record its thanks to the members of the panel for accepting this task and for their generous and professional commitment to the review.

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences will submit a follow-up report, incorporating the follow up action plan to its recent programmatic review (July 2011), to HETAC not more than 12 months after the publication of this report. Its follow-up report will outline how it has implemented the recommendations, as set out in its response to the Institutional Review, and evaluate the initial impact of such implementation. The follow-up report, including a commentary by the HETAC Executive, will be considered by the Academic Committee of HETAC. The Academic Committee may adopt the College’s follow-up report and may consider further conditions. Following adoption by the Academic Committee of HETAC, the follow-up report will be published on the Council’s website.
Note

HETAC’s Institutional Review process is designed to address only those objectives described in the Terms of Reference included in Appendix A.

The expert panel points out that it cannot make any findings regarding:

1. The financial standing and commercial viability of the institution reviewed
2. The institution’s compliance with its general statutory obligations
   or
3. The general fitness of the institution’s systems and arrangements for the governance and management of financial matters.

The Report of the Expert Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations, express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While HETAC has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader’s own risk, and in no event will HETAC be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from or in connection with the use of the information contained in the Report of the Expert Panel.
Executive Summary — Report of the Expert Panel

This is the Report of the Expert Panel appointed by HETAC to undertake the Institutional Review of The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) in November 2011. The review process was carried out in accordance with the HETAC Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, 2007.

Findings

Overall recommendation to Awards Body, including details of any conditions attached

The following is an Executive Summary of the Expert Panel’s key findings:

- The effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by ICHAS has been assessed and the arrangements have been found to be substantially effective in accordance with the seven elements of Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance 2009, Helsinki, 3rd edition, and the HETAC Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures 2011 (this document is an update to the former HETAC Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education, 2004). The panel recommends that the Quality Assurance Arrangements at ICHAS are subject to further review earlier than the normal five yearly point, at a date to be determined by HETAC following receipt of ICHAS’ response and action plan submitted following this Institutional Review.

- ICHAS has substantially implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression, as determined by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

Commendations and Recommendations

The panel made a total of 11 commendations and 33 recommendations, identified in the body of the report, in relation to the Objectives for Institutional Review to which each corresponds. Most of the recommendations reflect the emergent nature of the new quality assurance processes that are being implemented at ICHAS.

The panel is grateful to ICHAS for the cooperation and assistance provided to the review team and wishes it well in its future work.
Background to the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) (formerly known as the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland) is an independent education provider, specialising in the delivery of third-level programmes, currently focusing on the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. ICHAS is a private college and is registered as an Irish limited company. Its founder and current Chief Executive Officer is the majority shareholder with two other shareholders. The College, established in 1999, was initially called the National Counselling Institute of Ireland (NCII) and offered a small number of College-developed programmes in the field of counselling. In 2005, NCII agreed its quality assurance procedures with the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). The process of quality assurance commenced with HETAC in 2005 and concluded in parallel with the first programme validation in 2006. Since then the College has exclusively provided programmes validated by FETAC and HETAC that are placed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

In 2002, 100 students were registered on programmes with this number rising to a total of 650 registered students in 2010. Currently, 84 students attend the Limerick campus on a full-time basis. The remaining 566 students study on a part-time basis. These students attend the College premises in Limerick as well as at one of a number of off-campus centres around the country. The provision of tuition in off-campus centres commenced in 2006.

In 2009 the College changed the name to the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland (NCPIII) to reflect the expansion of programme provision into the field of psychotherapy. Following an internal review in 2010 and an external consultation that considered the future remit of the College, the appropriateness of its range of academic programmes and future planned expansion into the wider domains of higher education provision, the Governing Authority recommended the adoption of the new name - the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) - in April 2011. The College officially adopted this name on 1 August 2011. ICHAS comprises a number of appropriate ‘Institutes’, one of which is the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute, thereby ensuring continuity and consistency for its current students and key stakeholders. Other institutes being developed within ICHAS are:

• National Institute of Childcare and Humanities
• National Institute of Business and Management
• National Institute of Science and Technology
• Open Learning Institute
The only source of operational funds available to the College is student fees, and the growth and expansion of the College has been funded by profits made from income generated. The College is registered as a for-profit company, however, according to the Executive of ICHAS, profits are reinvested back into the organisation and it effectively operates on a ‘not-for-profit/not-for-loss’ basis with no dividend being paid to the directors.

The College has undertaken a review of its strategic direction and has determined that the next phase of expansion will focus on subject disciplines that extend the current fields of study. The College has commenced a phased move to develop into the provision of new cognate disciplines, notably business studies. The College believes that its new title and structure provide the context for strategic development in the coming five-year period and beyond.

All programmes offered by ICHAS are validated by FETAC or HETAC and lead to qualifications at Levels 5 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Most students who attend ICHAS programmes are part-time (90%) mature\(^1\) (88%) students from the Republic of Ireland. A small number (10%) of students are full-time school leavers. All full-time programmes are offered on the main campus in Limerick. Students at ICHAS are predominantly female (76%) and 57% of students are aged between 30-49 years old. The majority (60%) of students are registered on Level 7 programmes with 35% on Level 8 and 5% on Level 9 programmes.

ICHAS has a Senior Management team of six post-holders (five of which are permanent), led by the Chief Executive who is also a founding owner of the College. Additionally, ICHAS has eight other full-time staff and two part-time staff. ICHAS employs 62 part-time lecturers drawn from expert practice and are employed on fixed term contracts to deliver specific areas of the curriculum. These lecturers are dispersed across Ireland and teach in off-campus centres and all lecturers are accountable to the ICHAS Director of Academic Affairs.

Additional background on the profile of the College is set out in the Terms of Reference, Appendix A.

\(^1\) Mature students are defined as those aged 23 or over on the 1\(^{st}\) of January in their year of application.
Institutional Review Methodology

The Institutional Review process was carried out in accordance with HETAC’s Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, 2007. The process consisted of the following six phases, with the Report of the Expert Panel coming at the end of phase three.

1. HETAC sets the Terms of Reference following consultation with the College.
2. Self-evaluation carried out by the College, followed by the production of a written Self-Evaluation Report (SER).
4. Institutional response to the panel’s report, including its implementation plan.
6. Follow-up report submitted by the College.

The Terms of Reference for the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) were discussed with HETAC over the period from November 2010 to July 2011. The objectives of the Institutional Review of ICHAS were set by HETAC as follows:

1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made.
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the Institution. With the following special considerations for ICHAS:

1. To assess the relevance, currency and standing of ICHAS qualifications in professional practice

   All NCPII graduates may become members of the Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP). Given the existence of a number of other professional membership bodies in the areas of counselling and psychotherapy, however, the opportunity and/or necessity to broaden the professional recognition open to graduates of NCPII programmes could be reviewed. With statutory regulation of these fields of practice on the horizon, establishing the ‘fit’ of the current suite of programmes is important and the professional recognition context has implications for the ICHAS future planning.

2. When NCII was first founded in 1999, the core team was very small and strategic decision-making power was held by the owner-manager. In order to manage the continuous growth (current and future) of ICHAS,

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2 The Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP) is the only professional body in Ireland representing both counsellors and psychotherapists which requires counselling members to demonstrate educational attainment to Level 7 on the NFQ. The relationship with ICHAS is described on pages 15-17 of this report.
the organisation has been undergoing a transition from an entrepreneur-led model to a wider management base which is formally organised according to function. A number of strategic appointments were made in the period under review:

- 2006: Registrar
- 2008: President
  - Programme Co-coordinator for Level 7 Programmes
- 2009: Dean of Academic Affairs
  - Director of Graduate Studies
  - Director of Undergraduate Studies
  - Head of Finance
  - IT Consultant
  - Legal Consultant
- 2010: Programme Co-ordinator for Level 8 and 9 Programmes
  - IT Manager
  - College Manager (now Head of Quality and Standards)
  - Human Resource Consultant
- 2011: Head of Learning and Innovation (including blended learning implementation)
  - Formal appointment of Governing Authority

In order to support the transition to and planned development of ICHAS, the internal governance and operational structures are currently being reviewed. The majority shareholder now holds the position of Chief Executive Officer, and considerable authority has been vested ‘upwards’ to a Governing Authority and ‘downwards’ to a broad-based management team.

3. To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the College with the following special consideration for ICHAS:

   The Institutional Review should consider the quality assurance arrangements in place for off-campus provision in centres/locations other than the main campus.

4. To confirm the extent to which the College has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression.

6. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the Institution.

(Objective 5 ‘To evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted’, does not apply to ICHAS and is therefore not included in this review.)
For further detail of the College programmes and Terms of Reference see Appendix A.

HETAC appointed a panel of experts to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Professor David Timms, membership of the panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. Panel members were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest prior to their appointment - no conflicts of interest were noted. Panel members received induction training on the conduct of Institutional Reviews in advance of the site visit. The panel membership is outlined in full in Appendix B.

Prior to the panel’s visit, ICHAS engaged in a self-study exercise. This included an extensive self-study that drew on consultations with a broad selection of internal and external stakeholders. Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered specifically for the purposes of the Institutional Review including stakeholder surveys and focus group discussions. Other data was derived from other studies, reviews and documentation from within the College. In September 2010, the College embarked on a programmatic review process of its four undergraduate programmes and this also informed the development of the self-evaluation review. ICHAS also completed a quinquennial review of its further education provision in the early part of 2011. The outcomes of these reviews informed the process and content of the self-evaluation report (SER) submitted to HETAC for the Institutional Review.

The SER presented a detailed account and supporting evidence in seven key areas:

- The approach taken to Institutional Review
- Context and development of the College
- Standards and Public confidence
- Strategic Planning and Governance
- Quality Assurance
- National Framework of Qualifications
- Reflection on development and recommendations for enhancement

A number of other documents were submitted in support of the self-evaluation report including:

- Quality assurance policy documents
- Staff and student handbooks
- Complaints log and risk registers
- Strategic plans
- External Examiner reports
- Student progression data
- Staff curricula vitae
- Faculty profiles
- Committee Terms of Reference and minutes
- Internal review reports including the Programmatic Review 2011

A list of documents submitted in support of the SER is contained in Appendix C. Lists of additional documentation requested by the panel are provided in Appendix D and an index of the ICHAS documentation provided to the panel during the site visit is provided in Appendix E.

**Advance Meeting**

An advance meeting was held between the Review Chairperson, Secretary, HETAC Head of Institutional Review and senior representatives of the College on 5 October, 2011. This meeting covered the following matters:

- A brief overview and update on the inception, growth and evolution of the College. The Chief Executive Officer described the teaching and learning model as instruction supported through class-based teaching time with a move towards blended learning for the first time in 2011. This involves a mixture of classroom teaching and on-line engagement with strong on-line support for students.

- The status of the off-campus centres: These were confirmed as temporary centres or venues hired out for delivering lectures and holding seminars. There are no permanent off-campus centres associated with ICHAS due to the small class numbers - on average only 10-12 students at each session. If a student concern is presented to a lecturer during an off-campus centre session the ICHAS policy is to address this within 24 hours.

- Emerging themes were shared with ICHAS staff and discussions included the following areas:
  - The level of change in ICHAS and the constant review and the impact on structures, processes, teaching and learning.
  - Governance and planning for further expansion and how this would be managed.
  - Feedback surveys (in the SER appendices) raised a number of concerns from stakeholders; the panel would need to understand and explore the themes presented.
  - It was noted that the Quality Assurance System has been subject to major recent development, which would be the subject of scrutiny for the review to understand the developments and to support any judgements relating to quality assurance in the Institutional Review.
  - Communication between staff, students and other ICHAS personnel off-campus and between the main campus and dispersed locations would be afforded particular
consideration given the complexity of this provision and the survey findings presented in the SER.

- The objectives of the review were discussed and in particular the nature of the special considerations identified in the terms of reference.
- It was noted that there are some unique and potentially commendable aspects of practice and it was agreed that additional material and demonstrations would be available during the site visit to apprise the panel of key elements, notably those located within the student electronic portal.

- The meeting also gave an opportunity to finalise practical arrangements for the site visit and the likely requirements of the panel. It was agreed that additional documentation would be made available during the site visit. Lists of additional documentation requested by the panel are provided in Appendix D. An index of the ICHAS documentation provided to the panel during the site visit is provided in Appendix E.

- Issues raised by ICHAS were discussed. These included;
  - The SER coincided with an updating of QA procedures and since the documentation was submitted there were further matters to update. It was agreed that written updates would be available and there would be an opportunity to clarify developments during on-site meetings.
  - ICHAS advised that €250,000 is provided for bursaries, staff, upholding standards for HETAC and FETAC. The College was keen to ensure that such good practice was taken into account during the review process.
  - ICHAS noted that many of its structures and processes are still evolving and welcomed the opportunity provided by the review to reflect on these developments following the review report.

- It was noted that all contact with the Review Chair, Review Secretary and all other panel members would be through the HETAC Institutional Review Team before, during and after the site visit up to the publication of the final report on the HETAC website.

- Draft agenda and on-site arrangements for the visit were agreed.

The Site Visit

The site visit took place on 2-3 November 2011 at the ICHAS campus in the National Technology Park, Castletroy, Limerick. The full panel met with members of the College, students and other stakeholders according to an agenda drawn up by the panel in consultation with ICHAS. The agenda for the site visit is set out in Appendix F. Lists of persons with whom the panel met are provided in Appendix G.
The members of the panel were satisfied that they received full cooperation from ICHAS and that they had the necessary documentation and discussions to reach their conclusions and produce their report. The staff at the College made every effort to participate effectively in the process and it was clear to the panel that ICHAS welcomes external review and takes time to ensure that the preparations for the review are of the highest order. The panel was impressed with the open and frank discussions and the way in which College staff provided information rapidly in ways that supported the deliberations of the review team. The panel recognised the considerable effort made by staff, students and external colleagues who had travelled considerable distances and taken time out of work activity to participate in the review.
Findings in relation to objectives of Institutional Review

Objective 1 — Public Confidence

To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made

This overarching objective covers all areas of the College’s activity. The quality of the Institutional Review process is a critical part of this, as is the publication of the Self-Evaluation Report; the Report of the Expert Panel; and the College’s own response and action plan. The information provided by the College to the public is part of this objective.

Self-Evaluation report

1.1 The self-evaluation report (SER) formed the starting point for the panel’s enquiries and was used to establish initial impressions and lines of enquiry by the panel. The SER gave an overview of the profile and development of ICHAS and its founding role as the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland. The SER also provided a full account of the College’s approach to Institutional Review and details of its academic portfolio, agenda for expansion and the nature of its emergent committees and procedures that support governance, strategic planning and the management of quality assurance and enhancement.

1.2 The SER gave particular attention to the Terms of Reference for the review and commented directly on the objectives of the HETAC review process referring appropriately to academic infrastructure including the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance 2009 and the HETAC Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training 2007. Additionally, the external environment informed the SER including the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (more commonly known as The Hunt Report).

1.3 The structure of the SER followed HETAC guidance and included a number of themes that ICHAS considered to be of significance in its history and development. These included the role of professional recognition in the development of the academic portfolio, changes arising from the programmatic review in July 2011, the role of the off-campus centres in linking theory to practice-led teaching and the development of the ICHAS Portal. ICHAS describes the portal as a technology platform for the delivery of its programmes, and as a medium for communication with students and faculty at off-campus centres serving as a vehicle for the enhanced inclusion of students, graduates and lecturers (Terms of Reference, page 6; SER, page 17).
1.4 The self-study incorporated broad consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the College, especially students. The findings of these consultations were presented clearly and enabled the panel to identify particular areas of enquiry, particularly those relating to the concerns expressed by staff, student and external stakeholders around key themes presented by ICHAS during the consultation process. As such, the panel came to the view that the SER was an honest evaluation of institutional strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the panel found the self-evaluation accessible and supported by documentation in the appendices that clarified and evidenced the review commentary. It was recognised that the quality assurance system and the management of learning resources were less well represented in the SER partly because of the developmental nature of many of the quality assurance processes at the time of the review. Nevertheless, the panel welcomed the approach taken in the SER and confirmed its utility in the review process.

**Information provided by ICHAS to the Public**

1.5 ICHAS provides information to the public directly through its website, prospectus and other published reports. The College also provides information indirectly through the development of networks and links, such as the network of the Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP).

1.6 College staff participate in professional activities and many of the part-time lecturers are professional practitioners. This enables information about programmes to permeate through professional networks and strengthens awareness of the role and function of ICHAS.

1.7 The first HETAC graduates received their awards in 2010. ICHAS undertakes a destination survey to identify the career routes of its graduates. The panel recognised that only one survey was available to date and noted that 70% of the first cohort were employed in fields related to psychotherapy and counselling. Students who met the panel confirmed that their qualifications were welcomed by employers and clients and gave anecdotal information about the opportunities made available directly as a result of their qualifications.

1.8 As part of the review and monitoring of awards ICHAS values highly the credentials provided by HETAC and FETAC. The feedback from the awarding bodies is used to inform internal reviews including programme monitoring, programmatic review and the internal and external assessment process. While the panel is of the view that these processes may need further enhancement, as illustrated in its recommendations below, the panel is confident in the commitment of ICHAS to

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3The APCP is one of the professional bodies in Ireland representing counsellors and psychotherapists.
self-evaluate and support improvement based on feedback and the transparency of its review processes.

1.9 The panel took time to examine the information made available to the public. This included programme information, website information and other publicity. Additionally external stakeholders, graduates and current students discussed the publicly available information with the panel. Public information is considered by them to be confusing and limited. The panel concluded that potential students are not made aware of the detail of programmes and the potential burden of study. Also, some students who met the panel were unclear about the status of their professional qualifications and how they might use their awards to inform clinical career development.

1.10 External stakeholders and graduates were in agreement that the reputation and standing of ICHAS is understated in the public domain. The public information provided does not clearly indicate the nature and contribution of the ICHAS provision within the professional landscape.

1.11 Information provided to the public is verified by the senior administration at ICHAS. This includes approval of prospectus content and other publicity materials. Most of the scrutiny is undertaken in an informal way. The panel came to the view that while scrutiny is undertaken, the lack of a systematic approach, including periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of published information, may undermine the key role of these materials in informing the public about ICHAS’ provision and especially its key role in professional education in the specialist fields of counselling and psychotherapy.

1.12 The panel came to the view that there is much that could be improved to strengthen public information which appears to be confusing to some students and limited and ineffective in making clear the standing and reputation of ICHAS. Additionally, in the absence of a system of evaluation, ICHAS does not have systems in place to assess how effective its current publicity is in relation to fitness-for-purpose.

**Professional Recognition**

1.13 Professional Recognition is an important part of the contribution that ICHAS makes in relation to professional standards in counselling and psychotherapy in Ireland. The professional context is currently unregulated in Ireland and there are a number of professional bodies associated with various elements of registration and professional oversight. The professional bodies largely
operate within the umbrella group of the Psychological Therapies Forum (PTF). The external
stakeholders met by the panel included a number of professional representatives. They gave a
compelling account of the robust scrutiny of ICHAS programmes and their link with the
Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP) and confirmed the view
that ICHAS makes a significant contribution to the safety of practice and the development of
standards in these disciplines. The list of stakeholders met by the panel is attached in Appendix
G.

1.14 The APCP is one of the largest member organisations in Ireland and is playing a key part in the
development of professional standards for practice. The stakeholders met by the panel confirmed
that any emerging agreed educational standards for practice regulation that are likely to be
developed are well within the purview of the programmes offered by ICHAS. The stakeholders
commented that ICHAS is the one of the leading educational organisation in this field and its
programmes are well above any level being suggested for current practice. The professional body
representatives advised that ICHAS has pioneered new programmes that move education in
these fields up to the postgraduate level and retains close links with practice. This, they
considered, was important in reassuring the public of the credibility of professional qualifications
secured through ICHAS’ higher education programmes, albeit in an unregulated professional
domain.

1.15 Professional recognition of counselling and psychotherapy in Ireland is diverse. The Irish
Council for Psychotherapy (ICP) acts as an awarding body on behalf of the European
Association for Psychotherapy, conferring the European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP) in
Ireland. The criteria for the ICP award forms the minimum training requirements and entry
criteria for all modalities of psychotherapy. Programmes approved by APCP (i.e. ICHAS
programmes) are not yet recognised by ICP but APCP has applied for accreditation with ICP and
is awaiting information on the next stage of the process of securing recognition.

1.16 The panel formed the view that professional regulation of counselling and psychotherapy
remains complex and diverse in the absence of statutory registration. Professionals who met the
panel confirmed that the establishment of regulation is a common objective within the
professions although there are a range of competing organisations seeking to establish the lead
role in any potential regulatory function. The senior management team at ICHAS fully
understands the challenges presented in the current professional scenario and are well positioned

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4 The Psychological Therapies Forum (PTF) is a grouping of Irish professional counselling and psychotherapy
organisations representing over 5000 professionals who jointly developed recommendations to government
regarding statutory regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists. The APCP is a member of the PTF.
to play a leading role in the future. Some students are confused, not surprisingly, about the utility and mobility of their qualifications in relation to professional practice and the panel came to the view that ICHAS could provide more effective information on the changing nature of professional qualifications.

Commendations — Public Confidence

In considering its findings the panel commends ICHAS on the following:

1. The core mission of ICHAS, in delivering opportunities to those who would otherwise not be enabled to participate in higher education – this informs the way in which ICHAS seeks to recruit its students and informs them of the programmes of study that are available.

2. The role that ICHAS plays in the continued enhancement of the counselling and psychotherapy professions is significant in developing safe and effective clinical practice and contributes to practitioner effectiveness.

3. The commitment to professional practice is reflected in the clinical experience and expertise of teaching staff appointed, especially those who are part-time and teach in off-campus centres.

Recommendations — Public Confidence

In relation to Objective 1 (Public Confidence), the panel recommends the following:

1. ICHAS should establish mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of the public information provided by it to potential students and the general public and ensure that the information provided meets the minimum requirements of the NQAI Policies, actions and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners, 2003.

2. A mechanism for securing the views of key stakeholders on publicity and public information should be developed by ICHAS that secures the views of the community served in a way that can be used to develop further its information systems.

3. Clear and updated information should be made available to students regularly through their programme to ensure that they are clear about the status of their academic award in relation to professional practice and professional body membership.
Objective 2 — Strategic Planning and Governance

*To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the College*

The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning.

**Strategic Planning**

2.1 ICHAS has undergone significant development in its ten years of operation. This includes a significant increase in student numbers; an expansion in the number of higher education programmes and considerable development of its academic systems and structures. The development of the strategic plan is led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who seeks to ensure input from internal and external stakeholders.

2.2 The current strategic plan (2009-2012) is currently under review and the panel had sight of the drafts of the forward plan which is intended to operate until 2013. ICHAS made a decision to prepare a shorter-term strategic plan to accommodate the considerable change within the education sector and the professional regulation of counselling and psychotherapy that is currently causing some turbulence in the external environment. Additionally, it is the intention of the ICHAS management that the new strategic plan will make more explicit objectives about outcomes and timeframes than that presented in the current plan.

2.3 Greater focus is being placed on the vision and mission of ICHAS within the emerging strategic plan, notably in relation to emphasis on the quality of academic development and the commitment to embed the new systems that are currently described as ‘work-in-progress’.

2.4 ICHAS intends to establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for all strategic priorities that are measurable, specific and have clearly assigned responsible officers to measure implementation. This commitment is underpinned by a recognition of the importance of institutional self-knowledge and the need to develop further the management information systems and processes of regular scrutiny that assure academic oversight at the senior level.

2.5 The vision for the College is one of excellence, significant contribution and distinctiveness. Part of the mission statement summarises this vision as:

*The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences will become a national and international centre of excellence in the fields of higher education, further education and continuing professional development.*

*……..It proposes to develop and deliver programmes using a blended learning approach, utilising the*
In delivering this mission over the next three years, the strategic direction of the College focuses on six overarching objectives:

- Achieve a more diverse student community and growth in student numbers
- Develop a suite of relevant academic programmes and career focussed lifelong learning
- Enrich teaching and learning experience for all students and staff
- Employ innovative approaches to programme support and delivery
- Strengthen external engagement and public confidence in the College
- Advance the governance infrastructure and systems within the College

One of the key elements of the strategic plan is the development of new programmes in new discipline areas. Some of these are areas that draw on existing expertise in counselling, psychology and psychotherapy. Other programmes are intended to be provided in cognate disciplines new to the College, such as business studies. The rationale for such a move was not entirely clear to the panel. The panel learned from members of the senior management team that this plan was intended to support the expansion of student numbers and draw on some expertise within the teaching team. The senior management team also felt that demand was such that business studies programmes could command fees that would support programme developments and enable expansion in areas such as social regeneration.

Senior management confirmed to the panel that these new ventures would be the subject of considerable investment to secure appropriate teaching staff and underpinning library and computing resources for a new field of study. The panel was concerned that in the light of other resource pressures on library access and IT resources (discussed under Objective 3 - Quality Assurance), the market intelligence on which the decision to migrate to new areas may be incomplete and expose the College to academic risk if not carefully thought through with regard to the overall investment plan. In particular the panel was concerned to note the development of new subject areas, such as business studies, are being planned and will require new expertise and resources within ICHAS. The panel was of the view that these subject areas are well served through the considerable provision of business studies programmes in Ireland and further afield. ICHAS may wish to consider what strategic risks may be exposed if the investment is not matched by recruitment to new subjects.
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2.9 Senior Professional Body members who met the panel confirmed the unique nature of the niche role undertaken by ICHAS. In discussion with the panel, the professional body members commented on further opportunities to develop in specialist areas, such as child and adolescent psychology and family therapy.

Governance

2.10 The College has invested considerable effort in establishing three new structures for governance and the academic oversight of ICHAS operations to support the new strategic imperative:

- The Governing Authority
- The Executive Management Team
- The Academic Council

2.11 The Governing Authority was formally appointed in April 2011 having undertaken an advisory role since September 2010. This body has agreed terms of reference and signals a transfer of overall authority to the Governing Authority and away from the sole authority of the owners of the company. This gives a significant role to members of the Governing Authority who bring significant strength and experience in senior management. The move to the Governing Authority signals an important development in terms of strategic planning, developing a broader vision for the longer term development of the College, increasing the intellectual capital of ICHAS and developing the understanding of risk. The Governing Authority takes a keen interest in matters concerning academic affairs and is in the process of establishing a regular reporting arrangement to maintain information and oversight of the core role of ICHAS.

2.12 The panel met the Chair and another member of the Governing Authority. The panel was impressed with the clarity of purpose and focus of the Governing Authority. In particular, there is a deep understanding of the educational environment and the external context in which ICHAS operates. Minutes of the Governing Authority confirmed robust and relevant discussions on key matters and the oversight of the academic endeavour.

2.13 The panel learned that the strategic plan and character of the College is of importance to the Governing Authority which ‘signs off’ the final plan and takes responsibility for the character of ICHAS.

Executive and deliberative structures

2.14 Academic Council is newly formed following a review of internal quality assurance management. This replaced the former academic board and is the overarching decision-making body for the operation of all academic matters including programme design and organisation; teaching,
learning and assessment; student progression and achievement and the management of quality assurance and enhancement. Academic Council has an agreed membership including senior academic managers; programme leaders (lecturers); registrar; and a student representative. Academic Council is also responsible for academic planning and development; monitoring, evaluation and review; and the implementation of the regulatory framework.

2.15 Programme Boards, Quality Review Committees, Assessment and Appeals Committees, Exam Boards and other academic management committees report into the Academic Council. The main functions of Academic Council are as follows:

- Ensure academic policies match the mission and strategy of ICHAS
- Ensure compliance with academic regulations
- Review and approve new programmes under development
- Approve academic appointments
- Monitor the quality and progress of programmes
- Oversee quality assurance procedures
- Consider reports/referrals from other committees
- Hear unresolved complaints and appeals

(SER Appendix 15: Academic Council Terms of Reference)

2.16 Staff who met the panel considered that Academic Council was the most important committee in managing the oversight of quality assurance of programmes. Off-campus lecturing staff, however, had little idea of the role and function of Academic Council and its terms of reference appeared to be rudimentary. Teaching staff were unsure about the mechanism for raising agenda items at Academic Council and had little notion of how this committee might impact on their daily lives as lecturers. The panel came to the view that these structures are developing and much work was needed to embed the key functions of central committees such as the Academic Council.

2.17 The Executive Management Team is responsible for all matters in institutional management on a day-to-day basis. The Director of Academic Affairs and the Director of Corporate Affairs are members of the Management Team as is the Director of Finance and the CEO. This team makes the overarching financial decisions and resource management planning as agreed within the strategic plan of ICHAS. This team is well established and has been the major decision-making body for the College since its foundation. The Executive Management Team understands fully the mission and vision of the College and is enthusiastic, committed and responsive to the needs of students and staff as well as other stakeholders. The Executive Management Team has
sought to strengthen oversight by establishing stronger mechanisms for governance and academic decision making. It was clear to the panel that there is a sense of purpose that matches the founding vision of the CEO to enhance opportunities and improve participation from excluded stakeholders.

**Commendations — Strategic Planning and Governance**

The panel took note of the commitment to establish new structures that formalised the oversight of the strategy and operational management at ICHAS and particularly commends:

4. The demonstrable capacity and commitment to improve in general terms as evidenced by the responsive and proactive approach of the senior management of ICHAS.

5. The contribution to the governance and insight into the development of the College demonstrated by the Chair and members of the Governing Authority.

**Recommendations — Strategic Planning and Governance**

In light of the unique focus and niche role of ICHAS and its Management Team and Governing Authority, the panel recommends that:

4. The Governing Authority should review the strategy and market intelligence underpinning the decision to move into new cognate disciplines. This is strongly recommended given the currently unmet resource demands of existing programmes, particularly in relation to library access and IT resources described under Objective 3 - Quality Assurance, and the potential areas for growth in contiguous areas of counselling and psychotherapy.

5. Senior management and Governors should strengthen the mechanisms by which key feedback is fed into the strategic planning process in ways that are systematic and robust. More specifically, the mechanisms for considering the consequences of different strategies should be enhanced to model the potential outcomes and performance measures of key objectives.

6. The Executive Management Team should give further consideration as to how the strategic planning process more effectively takes account of the views of internal and external stakeholders. This may be achieved through a more formal advisory group that operate in the way that an industry advisory board functions in supporting strategic development.

7. Senior management should develop mechanisms to provide more effective communication, especially those off-campus, to ensure that the role and functions of College committees are clear and that staff and students understand the decisions made by these governing structures.
Objective 3 — Quality Assurance

*To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the College*

This is based on Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* (QA)\(^5\). By including this in the Institutional Review process, the statutory requirement for the review of QA is met. How the College reviews the effectiveness of its quality assurance for the *seven elements* of the *European Standards and Guidelines* (ESG) should be explicitly addressed by the review process.

**Introduction**

3.1 The seven areas covered by the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* (ESG for QA) are:

1. Policy and procedures for quality assurance
2. Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
3. Assessment of students
4. Quality assurance of teaching staff
5. Learning resources and support
6. Information systems
7. Public information

3.2 The process of quality assurance (QA) at ICHAS was driven through the first HETAC programme validations in 2005. The QA framework used was derived from the ESG guidelines and served to provide a starting point for the development of academic oversight of taught higher education programmes at ICHAS. In 2009 it was recognised that a more reflective, deliberative approach might be of value and the Director of Academic Affairs instigated a self-study process shortly after taking up that post. Systems have been reviewed and developed further since 2009 and much of the quality assurance infrastructure at ICHAS is either emergent or a ‘work-in-progress’. The panel considered documentation available on the new systems and explored a variety of issues with staff and managers on how the new systems might work. It became apparent to the panel that making judgements about QA systems at this stage would be tentative given the implementation processes still underway. Hence the panel undertook scrutiny of systems in place at this time but came to the view that a further review of the effectiveness of the systems would be required once quality assurance processes were more substantially embedded. This was not to suggest that there is no academic oversight of programmes at ICHAS but reflected the period of transition currently underway.

In relation to the seven objectives, the panel made the following findings:

Element 1 — Policy and procedures for quality assurance

3.3 In early 2011, the Director of Academic Affairs led a ‘root-and-branch’ review of the quality assurance framework and made recommendations to the Management Board and Academic Council to re-develop QA policies and procedures to reflect, more appropriately, the seven elements of the ESG framework. Prior to this, many policies and processes were relatively informal given the small and close-knit nature of the ICHAS operation. As the College expanded, particularly in the light of the off-campus centres, more formalised systems were developed. It is recognised by ICHAS that there is a need for further written policy, procedures and guidelines. The College were, at the time of the site visit, considering further development of the following quality assurance procedures:

- Policy and Procedures on access, transfer and progression
- Policy and procedures on information systems
- Policies related to flexible, distance and blended learning
- Quality assurance processes pertaining to off-campus provision
- Recruitment and engagement of external, independent experts and the formation of expert panels
- Recognition of prior learning policy
- Equality policy
- Quality and support of non-teaching staff

(SER, page 33)

3.4 There are a range of existing policies in the areas identified above but most are undergoing development. The intention of ICHAS is to reflect the College’s new approach which is to ensure that QA systems become more formal in order to enhance transparency and support evaluation. This is reflected specifically as a priority in the draft strategic plan which is nearing its final approval by the Governing Authority. A quality assurance manual will be developed that will incorporate the new processes, procedures and approaches to quality assurance. It will be subject to external review. At the time of the review, the panel was advised that the new QA manual is nearing completion and will be issued to staff following final consultation and approval by the Academic Council.

3.5 The approach to the review of the QA systems has been to undertake desk-based studies of existing processes and hold focus group meetings with staff. The recommendations of the QA review were finalised by Academic Council. The 2009 internal review determined that ICHAS
procedures for QA were only partially effective. The 2011 review was carried out over a period of time to address these earlier deficiencies in a way that is subject to external comment and is fully supported at all levels in the organisation.

3.6 The panel recognised that a number of reviews had been undertaken including a whole system review of quality assurance. The panel considers that it is now a matter of some urgency to implement the findings of the review and ensure that the new procedures are implemented as expeditiously as possible. In particular it is essential that ICHAS ensures that the overarching quality statement and quality framework approved by the Academic Council is in operation. Without this QA framework, policy and procedures will develop within a vacuum. This may result in some areas of quality management being ineffective. Staff need to be clear about the protocols and procedures and implementation is, therefore, a matter of some urgency.

3.7 In discussion with staff responsible for quality assurance it became clear that there is a need to develop stronger internal points of reference. The panel considers that internal points of reference are preferable to an over-reliance on HETAC or the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance, in particular, for effective operational management on a day-to-day basis. Many of the current systems are fragile in the absence of a robust systematic approach to quality assurance and many staff are unaware of how ICHAS oversees the standards and quality of its educational provision.

3.8 In its strong focus on HETAC guidelines, ICHAS has limited experience of working with similar higher education organisations. It was noted that the early points of reference for ICHAS were larger Institutes of Technology which have considerable differences from ICHAS in the management of quality, not least the disparate educational mission and differences of scale and focus. ICHAS may find it beneficial to develop strategic relationships with other higher education institutions (HEIs) providing similar programmes to its own. Engagement with other HEIs may establish new collaborations and support cross-organisational reflection and development.

3.9 The views of students are taken seriously by the College and the panel heard from students that staff are very responsive to issues raised by them. Although there is a student representative on the Academic Council, the panel was surprised that there is limited student involvement in formal committees. There are no student representatives on the Governing Authority, Programme Boards or the Quality and Standards Committee. Given the commitment of ICHAS to including students in decision-making there is clearly an opportunity for greater inclusion of students in key decision making processes.
3.10 In meetings with staff there was limited evidence of staff or students having a voice in relation to the development of quality assurance policies, despite the use of focus groups and other discussion forums. The staff meeting days seem to provide an important opportunity for discussion on ICHAS processes and procedures in general, however these meetings lie outside of the formal decision-making committees. A flow of information into and out of key committees is essential to ensure that senior staff at ICHAS are aware of what is happening and in retaining such academic oversight are in a position to oversee and assure the quality of all programmes. Too many of the systems and procedures in place are informal, ad-hoc and described as a ‘work-in-progress’. The panel concluded that systematic approaches to staff development underpinned by systems to support staff in delivering programmes need to be addressed as a priority for the quality assurance of existing, as well as future, programmes. In particular the panel considered that mechanisms to ensure academic oversight of programmes should include scrutiny of the way in which information flows to off-campus staff to ensure these information processes are effective and efficient.

**Element 2: Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes**

3.11 ICHAS has experience of programme validation and approval and programmatic review and has instigated both review and processes for the development of new programmes. The panel was able to scrutinise the programmatic review process that had recently been completed by ICHAS. The process reflected the procedures required by HETAC and the internal protocols of ICHAS.

3.12 Approval of new programmes is undertaken through a process that follows HETAC guidelines. While the processes for the approval of new programmes are substantially implemented there remains a need to ensure that the way in which processes are implemented (sequences and time frames) are clearly understood by all staff and followed accurately. The panel affirms the College view that these processes need further refinement and recognise the improvements that are underway. This is particularly important in the light of the strategic intention to approve programmes in new discipline areas, such as business studies. ICHAS must ensure that new faculty members, external examiners and external advisers fully understand their obligations described in the procedures that are currently being developed.

3.13 Programmatic review has been subject to development at ICHAS and consists of a five yearly process that is undertaken by peer review, with external involvement. The purpose of the programmatic review is to assess the effectiveness and relevance of academic programmes and to make recommendations that ensure consistency in standards across the suite of programmes provided by ICHAS. Additionally, the objectives of the programmatic review are to review...
programmes in the light of the needs of employers, industry and professional bodies as well as consideration of the wider political and economic landscape in Ireland. All aspects of programmes are considered including *inter alia* responses from students; resource evaluation; feedback from employers and former graduates; evaluation of industry links; and consideration of the views of staff and other participants in relation to the programmes being evaluated.

3.14 The programmatic review was undertaken in March 2011 by a panel of four external experts including one international expert from the University of Applied Science, Utrecht. The programmatic review process recognised the newness of the current management and governance structures at ICHAS and recommended further review of these structures after a period of twelve months once they were embedded. The programmatic review report provided limited information on the ways in which monitoring processes were used to inform the ongoing development of programmes. The focus was largely on the content of programmes and learner assessment and other academic matters pertaining to awards. It also made a number of recommendations and commendations. Many of the recommendations should be addressed by ICHAS in a post-review action plan. It is particularly important that responses to the recommendations relating to assessment, public information and the evaluation of communication strategies are addressed urgently and the panel was of the view that the response to the programmatic review should be included in the ICHAS response and action plan relating to this Institutional Review report.

3.15 Monitoring reports are submitted monthly by lecturing staff. The reports use a standard template and confirm arrangements for the delivery of the module and a commentary on the operation of the programme. These reports enable the administrative team to identify issues and ensure that arrangements are working appropriately. The panel were of the view that there is no formal annual monitoring system that evaluates the outcomes of each programme in a systematic way that supports the functions of academic oversight. Senior staff responsible for quality assurance who met the panel confirmed that programme boards have yet to operate fully and that information flows were emerging. These were considered by the panel and the ICHAS Executive to be a priority for the next phase of implementing the new quality assurance system.

3.16 The contribution of students to quality assurance is recognised as important and students have a representative system that is discussed below (in Element 5- Learning resources on page 35). A major source of information that informs programme monitoring is student evaluation and each student completes an evaluation at the end of each year. Evaluation forms are summarised by the programme administrator who draws up a summary report for distribution to programme leaders and Directors of Studies. The development of programme boards is one mechanism whereby
evaluation feedback could be fed more systematically into the quality assurance system to support the Academic Council in its role of monitoring and reviewing programmes.

**Element 3 — Assessment of students**

3.17 Students are drawn from a diverse population, many of whom are returning to study after a number of years. Students who met the panel commented that programme information does not make explicit the burden of work which is often extremely demanding; in particular, the demands of the applied practice as well as the academic workload. Taking account of the student views the panel came to the conclusion that there is room to improve programme information and student support. Programme information should ensure that students are aware of the total student contribution in terms of the demands of the programme they are entering. ICHAS should offer support to students as they adjust to a return to higher level study and prepare for assessment.

3.18 Assessment of students is undertaken in a systematic way within a set of regulations and procedures revised through the adoption of the HETAC *Assessment and Standards, 2009*. The assessment schedule, including the setting of examination papers is overseen by the Director of Academic Affairs in partnership with the Director of Undergraduate Programmes where relevant. Academic staff have the opportunity to contribute to the setting of assessment tasks and question papers. All academics delivering a programme are asked to submit assessment tasks and questions for exam papers, from the arising ‘bank’ of questions or assessment tasks, the senior academic administration selects final assessment tasks or papers and finalises the assessment briefs or exam papers. The conduct of the assessment processes is managed by the programme coordinators. Academic staff who met the panel believed that their contributions were welcomed but the process is not managed by the academics who deliver the programme.

3.19 Assessment tools are approved by the external examiner and staff have copies of the examination papers and assessment requirements. Marking is undertaken by subject-specialist academic staff according to marking criteria established by the Director of Academic Affairs within a standardised marking scheme. There is a process of internal moderation by which staff act as second markers for one another. Procedures include the secure storage of examination papers and specific arrangements to ensure effective operation of written examinations. All written examinations are conducted on the main campus in Limerick.

3.20 External examiners are appointed by the Academic Council. Currently, two external examiners are appointed for all programmes. External examiners undertake approval of continuous assessment, written and other tasks; sampling of all student assessment work; offer internal moderation; attendance at progression and award boards; decision making on examination
referrals and deferrals; and reporting on the effectiveness of the assessment process. The panel was of the view that two external examiners may be insufficient to cover such a large volume and range of duties for more than 500 students studying across at least four programme disciplines. External examiner reports are received by the Registrar and reviewed by the Director of Academic Affairs. The external examiner reports are circulated to the Programme Leaders. Staff do not have direct access to external examiner reports although they may have copies on request. The panel was of the view that external examiner reports constitute a major source of feedback on student performance and the management of standards. As such, it would seem to be essential that all academic staff have full access to the external examiner reports for their programmes.

3.21 Decisions on assessment are made at the examination board meetings. All members of faculty (teaching staff and administrative staff associated with the programmes) comprise the membership of examination boards. Senior management consider that all academic staff are required to attend examination board meetings to contribute to assessment decisions. Staff who met the panel were of the view that attendance is optional, as colleagues are invited to meetings which suggests that attendance is not a requirement. The contract of employment for fixed-term staff does not indicate an attendance requirement at Committees and Boards, but where these are attended there is a mechanism to pay for travel expenses. Where ICHAS directs or requires that a member of staff attends a meeting then there is also a mechanism for payment for the time involved.

3.22 Students have a handbook that includes all assessment requirements and details of submission and assessment dates. The majority of students seemed to be clear about the requirements of their assessment schedule, although some students, notably in the post-graduate programmes, were less clear about assignment submission dates and assessment criteria.

3.23 Some students were highly critical of the timeliness of assessment results and feedback. This was supported by criticisms in the surveys undertaken by ICHAS when preparing the SER. Students reported that feedback was rarely available before the next assessment point and was therefore of little formative value. Students found that feedback was often perfunctory and generalised and some students received no personal feedback on their assessment work. This was a matter of concern that had been raised but as yet the experience of many students in this area is unsatisfactory. Staff who met the panel confirmed that practice is highly variable, often because of full-time practice commitments that run alongside part-time lecturing responsibility.

Element 4: Quality assurance of teaching staff – findings
3.24 As the number of students has expanded, ICHAS has increased the number of teaching staff. The College employs 14 full-time staff who maintain a continuum of academic oversight and administration. Six of these posts are permanent and eight are fixed term. The most senior academic post is that of the Director of Academic Affairs. This post holder also takes overall responsibility for academic matters in the College and additionally functions as the Director of Postgraduate Studies. The Director of Undergraduate Studies is employed on a part-time basis and works in close partnership with the Director of Academic affairs and reports to him on matters relating to undergraduate students. More recently, a new post was created to manage practice placements. This is a key role given the challenges identified below in supporting placements appropriately. The Practice Placement Officer is now in post on a fixed-term basis and works part-time.

3.25 The academic teaching team is drawn from practitioners who are in current practice and are considered to meet the specialist expertise required by the programme. Of the 65 part-time specialist teaching staff, 45 are currently engaged in active teaching both at Limerick and across the off-campus centres. The panel was provided with staff profiles for 39 of the teaching staff – 36 out of the 39 profiles indicated the teaching staff are graduates of ICHAS, many undertaking doctoral level qualifications. The three non-graduate teachers have highly specialist clinical expertise and are appropriately qualified in their field of practice.

3.26 Part-time teachers are employed on a standard fixed-term contract of employment. Each member of staff receives a lecturer handbook that outlines details of the job description. The contract does not specify the job requirement or any specific duties for which the member of staff is contracted. As indicated above this leads to potential confusion, for example, in relation to the requirement to attend examination board meetings. Fixed term teaching staff are remunerated according to the agreed schedule in their contract. Attendance at ICHAS for in-service days and attendance at examination board meetings is not remunerated, unless there is a requirement to attend, but travel expenses are reimbursed. Attendance at ICHAS for ‘specific inputs’ requested by the Directors is funded at €200 and travel expenses are also reimbursed. Attendance at Academic Council or programmatic review is also fully remunerated as well as reimbursed expenses. Given the lecturers’ payment structure it became apparent to the panel why there is confusion about a requirement to attend meetings for which staff are not paid directly. The panel heard considerable praise, from students, for the support from part-time lecturers, particularly those in off-campus centres. It was evident from the comments from students and the meeting with teaching staff that these members of staff go well beyond that which is expected to offer support and guidance and do all that they can to enable the student to complete
the programme of studies. Lecturing staff give considerable time and support and recognise the special needs of mature part-time students returning to study.

3.27 Staff in off-campus centres are heavily reliant on regular effective communication. On occasions they feel isolated although many talked warmly about the responsive and supportive assistance provided from the main campus and recent improvements in communications. The challenge for ICHAS is in ensuring that there is a collegiate contribution and engagement from this disparate community. This is achieved through a number of devices including the in-service days where staff come together to discuss key issues and receive updates on major items of change. Notwithstanding this periodic contact, there is relatively little input from off-campus staff into key committees and academic decision making. These lecturers are the crucial link for students and the panel believes that their contribution could be greatly strengthened to create a more inclusive approach to the operational management of programmes at module level.

**Blended Learning**

3.28 ICHAS is moving to a new platform of blended learning to provide asynchronous on-line learning opportunities. The teaching team recognised that the current virtual learning environment has been unstable and frequently the student portal is not accessible off-campus. To support on-line learning more effectively the College has recently migrated to a new server system that is highly reliable in supporting the electronic portal. Students provide their own access to on-line learning and the panel established that to undertake key modules in the blended learning programme it is essential that the student has access to broadband internet access.

3.29 The panel was given a demonstration of the new on-line repository of materials to support blended learning. While the materials and approach was fairly typical of the sector, the panel recognised that additional support had been invested to ensure that students and staff understood how to use the system. The panel is of the view that the College is using a limited range of tools and is not utilising the most contemporary resources for blended learning that may be seen in the virtual learning environments (VLE) of many different types of higher education institutions. However the system does provide an integrated environment that supports programme administration; student records; a forum for discussion with other students and asynchronous lectures with accompanying slides. The panel came to the view that there is potential to develop more innovative approaches using the new VLE which could contribute to the development of new approaches to flexible and distant learning. Students reported that, in parts of the country, internet access is more difficult to secure and some reported having to study at exceptional times in order to gain access to the home/family computer.
3.30 The Registrar is in the process of developing specific regulations to address expert scrutiny and external examination of web-based elements of programmes. This will enhance the way in which ICHAS continues to learn about technology-supported learning. The approach to-date appears to have been systematic and thoughtful. Staff and students were positive about their experience of the new pilot blended learning programmes and for many the ease of access considerably reduced the travel pressures on the burden of study.

Practice Placements

3.31 Practice placements make a crucial contribution to student learning, particularly for students following programmes leading to professional practice in clinical work settings. Placements provide the link between theoretical knowledge and its application in a professional setting. They provide the key link to applied studies in which students acquire core skills and competence in professional practice. This is one of the most important motivators for students undertaking programmes at ICHAS. The unique blend of theory and practice was widely commented upon by staff and students who met the panel. Practice placements are supervised by a clinical practice supervisor who is a qualified supervisor in psychotherapy or counselling.

3.32 Students who responded to the SER consultation survey identified a high level of dissatisfaction with the arrangements to secure practice placements. These strong views were confirmed by students who met the panel during the site visit. Due to the tendency for clinical services to support students from programmes that link with specific programmes in other institutions (often reflecting the programme undertaken by clinical staff in an organisation), there is a shortage of readily available placements for students at ICHAS, that are able to meet the criteria for support and supervision of professional students. This is particularly challenging given that ICHAS is one of the few providers of recognised higher education programmes in this field and developing supervisors and mentors takes time - although ICHAS is making a significant contribution particularly in higher education. ICHAS has sought to secure a number of partnerships that enable as many placements as possible but places are extremely hard to source. Students reported that they are generally expected to find their own placements and approval of the placement would then be undertaken by ICHAS. Where a student is unable to find a placement then ICHAS will offer support where possible. Students find that the process is highly stressful and feel that ICHAS could do much more to support practice placement arrangements. While the panel heard that ICHAS considers it helpful for students to find their own placements as part of their professional development, it is difficult for students to negotiate directly with senior practitioners in order to determine the nature of the practice that they require. As this is a key requirement of the programme of studies, students, not unreasonably, expect more direct
intervention and support from ICHAS in establishing appropriate arrangements for clinical practice.

3.33 There is no formal transition programme to ensure that students are adequately prepared for practice and are supported, and debriefed, on return from practice. This type of support rests with the clinical supervisor who also contributes to reporting back to ICHAS on the student performance. Assessment of practice skills is undertaken through the proxy of the reflective learning journal. This is more generally informed by a report from the practice placement manager on the student performance. There is no direct observation and assessment of skill. Moderation of practice placement decisions is undertaken through a system of second marking of the reflective learning journal.

3.34 Practice placement staff do not contribute to the programme of studies directly except through the support and direction given in practicum. Students commented on the considerable value of their learning in practice placement and how it actively prepares them for working in these specialist professional areas. Students reported that they have no contact with ICHAS staff during their placements and no visits to students on placement are undertaken by ICHAS staff. The panel came to the conclusion that there is much that ICHAS could do to improve the links with practice and support students more appropriately in finding clinical placements. Given the recurring commentary on placement problems this is clearly a matter of considerable importance for students that should be addressed as a matter of some urgency.

Staff support, appraisal and development

3.35 ICHAS appoints staff with sound professional credentials. The College expects that professional updating will be undertaken through continuing professional development that is the responsibility of the individual practitioner. Full-time staff have an opportunity to attend conferences and undertake scholarly activity. There is no formal policy for staff development but the panel was provided with examples of activity that had been undertaken. Part-time fixed-term staff are expected to attend to their professional development as part of their practitioner role. A number of staff development days are provided by ICHAS as an in-house activity and these are free of charge to all staff.

3.36 There is no requirement for lecturing staff at ICHAS to hold a teaching qualification. There is no formal peer observation of teaching in place and there is no systematic formal review or appraisal system in place. In the absence of any tracking system and the lack of personal development review processes, ICHAS cannot have a robust understanding of the developmental needs of staff, particularly those in professional practice fixed term roles. There is a strong
commitment to supporting academic staff development but this requires a more formal approach to ensure that all staff are able to deliver programmes for which they are employed as lecturers.

Element 5: Learning resources and student support

3.37 The environment at Limerick is pleasant and comfortable with a range of resources, including a canteen facility for students. Senior Management of ICHAS emphasise their commitment to students and the continuing investment of profit into the College. An impressive example is that of the major bursary funding made available in the past year that offers supportive funding to students. The sum of €250,000 was made available and supported fee reduction on application from students. Decisions were made by senior management and enabled students who applied to receive an average reduction of €1,000 against programme fees.

3.38 Library resources are provided through online access to the journal collection of Science Direct. Lecturing staff are of the view that this database is the most appropriate to provide the range of material required in these subject disciplines. Staff confirmed that students are additionally required to access relevant books that are recommended from their own resources. Students either purchase these books or use reading rights at other university libraries such as the University of Limerick - which is within walking distance of the main ICHAS campus. Students following undergraduate programmes had, in the most part, found the relevant materials available through Science Direct. Some, however, had found this a more limited resource and reported using the access to other libraries through friends and colleagues. Student survey responses indicated some dissatisfaction with library access although the report of the Peer Evaluation (Programmatic Review) in July 2011, made little comment on this area. Members of the panel were surprised that no review of resources was recorded given the level of disquiet amongst students, in particular those undertaking post-graduate programmes. In the light of the intention of ICHAS to broaden the subject discipline beyond the existing programmes the panel came to the view that Science Direct is a valuable but limited resource that will require extending to include other source materials.

3.39 Computing resources are available on-campus at Limerick but many students studying in off-campus centres have little IT support. Managers confirmed that many off-campus centres are located in hotels and ICHAS ensures that Wi-Fi facilities are available. Given the intention to move to blended learning, the College expects that students will have access to broadband. The panel came to the view that while future needs may be met, through clearer information that ensures students have access to their own computing resource, the current IT support arrangement is inadequate to meet the needs of all students in the off-campus centres.
3.40 Students have access to a low-cost counselling service that is provided by senior students and graduates of ICHAS. None of the students who met the panel had used this service and could not comment on its efficacy. The panel recognised that the demand for counselling services may be greater in subjects where there is a predominance of mature students studying psychological therapies. It is not clear to the panel whether the current arrangements are satisfactory in meeting the demand or maintaining the private nature of counselling given that the arrangements involve fellow students and graduates.

3.41 Survey responses described in the SER identified a major demand from students for better profiling of ICHAS within the professional field. This would strengthen opportunities for career development more widely. 47% of students indicated weak or no influence of their studies on their employment role. This suggests that there is a need for enhancing careers support for students with advice that broadens the horizons in terms of the mobility of their qualifications.

3.42 Students are not assigned a personal tutor who oversees their academic progress across modules. There is, however, strong support from module tutors and central staff at ICHAS. Programme Leaders play an important role in ensuring that resources and support are available for students and the panel was particularly impressed with the support and guidance offered by academic lecturing staff. The Academic Council at ICHAS may wish to consider establishing a personal tutor role for each student to ensure that continuity of academic supervision and support across modules is maintained, particularly in the off-campus centres.

3.43 Students undertaking postgraduate studies with research requirements have academic supervisors. There does not seem to be a baseline requirement for supervision and students reported variable experience. Some students enrolled on postgraduate degrees reported having limited access to supervision and little direction throughout the programme. The panel came to the view that the Academic Council at ICHAS has a responsibility for the oversight of research degrees and should consider more systematic approaches to ensure effective supervision for all students undertaking dissertation, thesis or project components of post-graduate programmes.

3.44 The panel learned that staff make every effort to make learning materials available to students. This includes the use of inter-library loans, personal loans of texts and access to copies of materials. While there is no evidence of inappropriate practice the panel recognised the need to ensure that all staff are clear about academic conventions, particularly in relation to provision of written materials. In addition, ICHAS may wish to explore licensing arrangements that enable wider access to published materials.
3.45 Students have a system of representation whereby a class representative is elected to meet periodically with the programme leader. There has been discussion about the establishment of a student council but this is yet to be progressed. Students confirmed that staff are responsive to issues that are raised and supportive of change that enhances their learning experience. The students who met with the panel were able to give examples of changes that had occurred as a result of their contribution. Students play less part in formal committees although there is a student representative in the membership of Academic Council. The panel came to the view that students have a voice in College affairs and their views are taken seriously. There is room, however, for considerable improvement in the contributions students make to the development, planning and other decisions that impact on their studies. While the panel recognises that the existing arrangements reflect the tradition of informal friendly support, there is a need to ensure a more systematic approach to student involvement in formal processes as the College continues to expand.

Element 6: Information systems

3.46 ICHAS has a diverse range of provision across a number of off-campus centres as well as the main campus in Limerick. A recurring theme from staff and students has been the need to improve communication between off-campus centres and the need for more effective communication has been highlighted by most stakeholder groups. ICHAS recognises this as a major issue and the panel affirms this view. A number of developments are planned to improve information and communication. The panel heard about the further planned development of the online portal that links into the student record system and supports better report generation. Newsletters and bulletins are now being developed and are likely to make a major contribution to regular communication with off-campus centres.

3.47 There has been an investment to improve student and staff handbooks and students, both past and present, commented strongly on the considerable improvements in the last eighteen months.

3.48 Student progression and achievement data is presented at examination board meetings. Data provided is coded so that it is possible to generate reports that present data according to the location of study and other variable based information. ICHAS has yet to develop the formal mechanisms by which these reports are generated systematically to inform the senior committees of key aspects of student performance. The panel learned that there is an intention to develop systems in ways that map into key strategic objectives and link to performance indicators that are currently being developed.
Element 7: Public information - findings

3.49 Students are given a handbook which contains all key information and was confirmed to be helpful by some students who met the panel. As indicated above there is a need to ensure that students have effective programme information that supports them in their preparation for studies. The prospectus and website information is generally focussed on marketing programmes and attracting candidates. Programme information could be strengthened to include more explicit information about the nature of study, the requirements for students to have internet access and to purchase key books in addition to a clear explanation about the demands of the study programme mentioned above.

3.50 Public information is available through the website and through written materials. ICHAS presents clear and useful marketing information that is useful to the public. There is a need, however, to strengthen the external profile and information about ICHAS to better reflect its important contribution to the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. External stakeholders were in agreement that current information tends to underplay the importance of ICHAS and its role within the professional community. The specialist research that is undertaken warrants wider publication and greater acknowledgement of the key role of academic staff in building the strong academic profile at ICHAS.

Overall finding on quality Assurance

3.51 The panel considered the ICHAS procedures in relation to the seven elements of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance* and concludes that the criteria have been substantially met, and need further implementation to fully meet the requirements of HETAC policy and procedures and the European Standards and Guidelines. Recommendations for further action are identified under each of the seven Elements above and represent the need for further development of systems and procedures to ensure that the planned processes are rapidly implemented and that academic oversight at the most senior level is strengthened. As many systems are described as ‘work-in-progress’ the panel came to the conclusion that further review of the effectiveness of quality assurance systems is required to be carried out by HETAC once the forthcoming implementation of the QA procedures is concluded.

Summary of Commendations — Quality Assurance

6. In the light of the above commentary the panel came to the conclusion that the close links with real world practice is a unique and highly valuable aspect of the teaching provision at ICHAS.

7. The commitment of teaching staff, particularly those on part-time and fixed term contracts is impressive and in excess of the requirements of their contractual hours. The personal support and resources made available to students by teaching staff is significant and highly valued by students.
8. The systematic approach to the development and implementation of blended learning is impressive.

9. The commitment to students from the Executive Management Team is strong and evidenced by the reinvestment plans including significant bursary funding made available to potential students.

10. The opportunities that are presented to students at ICHAS make it possible for them to undertake studies in professional practice areas that would otherwise not be available due to location or access through Higher Education. In particular the panel commends the highly vocational nature of programmes that build practice skills in the psychotherapy disciplines. Students are positive and enthusiastic about the quality of their learning experiences that provide opportunities that otherwise would be unavailable to them.

Summary of Recommendations — Quality Assurance

Recommendations arising from Element 1: Policies and procedures for QA

In light of the findings above the panel made the following recommendations:

8. The work in progress on the design and implementation of quality assurance systems must be completed as a matter of urgency. There are many systems under development resulting in a failure of academic oversight as communication flows and reporting mechanisms are not embedded as yet. ICHAS must act to ensure that these processes are implemented as a matter of priority to ensure that the quality controls and feedback loops are operating effectively.

9. ICHAS should review the staff and student membership of key committees to ensure that there is an active contribution from these key stakeholders in decisions that affect academic operations.

Element 2: Recommendations arising from findings relating to the approval, monitoring and review of programmes

The panel recognised that systems are relatively new and that many things are operating informally. In light of the findings, the panel makes the following recommendations:

10. New procedures for annual monitoring must be formalised and mechanisms put in place to ensure that appropriate scrutiny is undertaken of annual reports that are collected in a systematic way and fed into programme boards before consideration by the Academic Council.

11. The student voice in the formal committee structures should reflect an active participation with appropriate representation in all significant committees. Student evaluation should also be developed to feed into more formal reports to Academic Council that support academic oversight of teaching and learning.
Element 3: Recommendations arising from the findings on the Assessment of students

12. Programme information should be clarified to ensure that students understand the burden of work and the demands of assessment to support the transition back to higher education.

13. A policy should be established whereby the volume and complexity of the external examiner workload is identified. Additionally the workload of current external examiners should be reviewed to ensure that robust scrutiny of the assessment process is possible for the numbers of students who are assigned to ensure that standards are not compromised. The panel was of the view that two external examiners may be insufficient to cover the existing large volume of work required.

14. As a matter of urgency and priority, mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that all students receive timely written feedback on their assessments to enable them to develop and learn from the process. Additionally results should be available to students within a defined turnaround period that gives effective feedback as soon as is practicable.

15. Academic teaching staff should be more closely involved in the assessment of learning. This should include taking responsibility for setting papers, albeit subject to internal or external approval. Additionally it should be made clear that staff whose student work is being considered must attend examination board meetings.

16. Academic staff should routinely receive copies of external examiner reports and these reports should be made available to students directly, or through other committees that consider examiner reports and the follow up action required. Lecturers should contribute to the response to external examiner reports and take responsibility for the implementation of any actions required at module level.

17. Academic teaching staff should be included in the design of modular content in order to create an academic community thus enabling subject specialist staff to make a dynamic contribution to the development of subject knowledge and module programmes.

Element 4: Recommendations arising from the findings on the quality of teaching staff

18. Fixed term contracts should make explicit the nature of the duties required and more particularly the meetings, events and Boards that require the attendance of the post holders. The arrangements for the continuity of key post holders should also be considered in the light of the reliance on fixed term contracts.

19. ICHAS should consider whether the requirement to develop a minimum number of modules through blended learning on all programmes can be sustained given the variable internet access for some students and teaching staff.

20. An urgent review must be undertaken by ICHAS to ensure that the identification of practice placement and the support systems in place are effective and robust. Additionally there should be a review of the effectiveness of ICHAS contact with students while they are out in placement to
ensure that there is on-going support from the College to students and supervisors. Additionally further consideration should be given to determine what, if any, action could be taken to strengthen the contribution of the practice placement report to the overall assessment of practice skills and competences in accordance with the approved programme schedules.

21. Mechanisms for tracking and recording the professional development of teaching staff should be established to ensure that staff are supported in maintaining the professional underpinning of their teaching. Oversight of teaching staff should also include consideration of the pedagogical skills of staff as well as their professional subject knowledge.

Element 5: Recommendations arising from the findings on Learning Resources

22. Resources should be reviewed as a matter of some urgency. The library support should be strengthened to ensure that students have access to books and journals that are considered to be key requirements of their programme, notably in off-campus centres. In the short term mechanisms such as extending the on-line resource to include some key e-books may help to support current students but longer term resource planning is required to address the expansion of the subject base throughout the College.

23. Protocols for project, thesis and dissertation supervision should be reviewed to ensure consistency of support and oversight of student progress in the postgraduate programmes.

24. IT support for current students should be reviewed to ensure that mechanisms are in place to offer appropriate assistance for those students who have limited access to broadband, particularly those in off-campus centres.

25. ICHAS should consider whether a more systematic approach to careers guidance might support graduates more effectively in using their awards within their employment roles.

26. Mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that staff and students observe standards and requirements of key policies relating to intellectual property, scholarship norms and academic practice in their access to a wide range of teaching and learning materials.

27. ICHAS should explore mechanisms by which students are supported in making a direct contribution as members of key committees and to meetings. The College should ensure that there is feedback to students on matters that they have raised. This might include expediting the work undertaken to develop the student council.

Element 6: Recommendations arising from the findings on information systems

28. ICHAS should move quickly to implement its planned system of management information and academic reporting to committees.

29. Review current information flows to ensure that all centres are up-to-date with changes and key elements of policy and protocol.
**Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression**

To confirm the extent to which the College has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression

This objective has two main strands:

1. Review of the Institution’s activity in implementing the National Framework of Qualifications
2. Procedures for access, transfer and progression

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) has produced guidelines in relation to these two strands. These include issues such as credit, transfer and progression rules between levels and award types, entry arrangements, the types of information provision on programmes, and policies and procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

4.1 ICHAS has a commitment to widening access to higher education. Less than 10% of students enter through the mainstream Central Applications Office system. Access is supported by a range of programmes that support skills development and support access to higher education programmes. Additionally there is a system for the recognition of prior learning that permits access to programmes and in some cases exemption from some programme modules and units. Currently the development of an access policy is underway to make more explicit the mechanisms for transfer and progression. The panel learned that blended and distance learning has been developed to facilitate wider non-conventional access to programmes. ICHAS is also undertaking work to establish the entitlement of students to be awarded exemption from their undergraduate programmes in childhood and adolescent studies.

4.2 The panel learned that transfer and progression routes are available, mainly for those progressing from FETAC awards. The panel also learned that the access and progression policies are in the final stages of development. Procedures are laid out in the Student Handbook for the recognition of prior learning and its use in transfer and progression. Decisions about access, credit and progression are taken by the Director of Academic Affairs in conjunction with the Head of Academic Administration and Student Services.

4.3 ICHAS uses the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) in developing and providing programmes that are approved by HETAC and FETAC. All programmes developed at ICHAS are designed within the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) with modules organised into academic study units of five credits. ICHAS has processes in place for the recognition of prior

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accredited learning and gives access and exemption based on a candidate’s application for advanced standing or exceptional entry to programmes. ICHAS understands the challenge of recognising prior experiential learning but currently does not have a formal system to undertake this area of accreditation. The processes as described by ICHAS appear to be compliant with the requirements underpinning the national framework of qualifications for access and progression in higher education programmes.

4.4 Currently ICHAS does not issue a Europass Diploma Supplement although the College provides transcripts on request. ICHAS recognises that this is a breach of national requirements and the College is in the process of rectifying the situation and indicated to the panel that Europass Diploma Supplements will be issued in the future. The panel understood the need for ICHAS to act as a matter of urgency and to provide students with a European Diploma Supplement that meets the national requirements as set out by the NQAI and at the minimum level provides a description of the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were pursued, and successfully completed by the student named on the parchment associated with the Diploma Supplement.

(Guidelines for the completion of the Diploma Supplement, 2003)

4.5 The panel concluded that systems are in place to manage recognition of prior learning, transfer and progression for students studying at ICHAS and for access for applicants from other institutions. The need to offer the Europass Diploma Supplement is recognised and work is underway to complete this. The panel advises that work on the Europass Diploma Supplement should be completed as a matter of urgency and completion of the ICHAS policy on access and transfer should be expedited. The panel concluded that other than the matters concerning the Europass Diploma Supplement, ICHAS broadly meets the requirements for Public Information as required by the NQAI:

All information and publicity documentation referring to a programme leading to an award will include a statement of the arrangements for entry, and a description of the transfer and/or progression possibilities into and out of the programme. Any supplementary document (i.e. certificate or diploma supplement to promote transparency of an award) issued by providers with independent awarding powers will include information about:- the placing of the award in the National Framework of Qualifications – the name of the awarding body, title, award-type and framework level designation of the award - the transfer and progression opportunities associated with the award.

(NQAI Policies, actions and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners, 2003, page 37)

4.6 Students are able to transfer between programmes within ICHAS although no formal processes exist for the transfer in and out of programmes for students from outside providers. Given the
intention to expand provision into new areas ICHAS may find it useful to establish processes that support transfer in and out of ICHAS from other programmes in ways that supports flexibility in attracting students to add to their professional experience.

4.7 The requirements for public information and recommendations for improvements have been referred to in earlier sections of the report.

Recommendations — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

30. ICHAS should act immediately to ensure that Europass Diploma Supplements are issued, as described above, to all students leaving with HETAC awards in 2012 and beyond.

31. ICHAS should ensure that information regarding entry, transfer and progression arrangements should be clearly stated where programme information is published.

32. ICHAS may find it desirable to consider what, if any, further mechanisms could be established to strengthen the opportunities for transfer into and out of programmes that support professional development for students undertaking other programmes of study.
Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

*To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the College*

This includes both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and the recommendations arising from the internal self-evaluation process.

6.1 ICHAS has been subject to a number of internal and external reviews in the past year. The system for taking deliberate steps to enhance the quality of student learning remains largely in the informal domain. ICHAS responds to reviews and recommendations and is moving towards a more formal system of reporting through Academic Council.

Commendation — Recommendations for Enhancement

11. The panel recognises the commitment and investment made by the senior management team in establishing mechanisms to learn from reviews and external scrutiny. In particular the panel commends ICHAS for the work of the Office of the Head of Quality and Standards that has led the development of new systems that are likely to make a significant contribution to the enhancement of learning opportunities at ICHAS.

Recommendations — Recommendations for Enhancement

33. All recommendations of the Programmatic Review of 2011 should be addressed and included in the action plan that is developed as a response by ICHAS to this Institutional Review Report and submitted to HETAC.
HETAC Special Considerations

As indicated in the opening sections of this report HETAC identified three special considerations for the panel in the Review of ICHAS. These have been considered in some detail and recommendation pertaining to each has been identified.

Relevance, currency and standing of professional qualifications:
Specific reference may be found in Objective 1 - Public Confidence and Objective 3 - Quality Assurance, Element 4 (Quality of Teaching) where there is a commentary on practice placements.

Impact of continuous growth and recent change
The panel has made a number of recommendations in a number of areas but most specifically in Objective 2 - Strategy and Planning and in relation to the management of resources Objective 3 - Quality Assurance, Element 5 (Learning Resources).

To assess the quality arrangement operated by the College with special reference to off-campus centre provision
This has been the subject of commentary throughout the report, notably in the Section for Objective three – quality assurance. Attention is also drawn to the overarching recommendation that quality assurance systems should be subject to further review and that this should take special account of off-campus centre arrangements.
Appendix A  Terms of Reference

Higher Education and Training Awards Council
TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OF
The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) in November 2011
STATUS: SET

Section 1. Purpose
The purpose of this document is to specify the Terms of Reference for the Institutional Review of the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) (formerly the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland [NCPII]) in November 2011. The HETAC Institutional Review policy applies to all institutions providing HETAC accredited programmes, or programmes accredited under Delegated Authority. These Terms of Reference are set within the overarching policy for Institutional Review as approved in December 2007 and should be read in conjunction with same. These Terms of Reference do not replace or supersede the agreed policy for Institutional Review. The Terms of Reference once set may not be amended and any significant revision required to the Terms of Reference will result in a new Terms of Reference to be set by HETAC following consultation with the institution. These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for Institutional Review.

The objectives of the Institutional Review process are
1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the institution and the standards of the awards made;
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution;
3. To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the institution;
4. To confirm the extent that the institution has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression;
5. To evaluate the operation and management of Delegated Authority where it has been granted;
6. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution.

It is possible that, within the objectives outlined above, institutions may have specific sub-objectives to which they will attach particular importance and wish to emphasise in their TOR. To maximise the benefits of the review process, institutions may also consider including additional objectives relevant to its context.

The approach taken by HETAC to Institutional Review will:
- Acknowledge that institutions have ownership of and responsibility for their activity;
- Be conducted in a spirit of partnership with institutions, with a view to improvement and enhancement, whilst acknowledging statutory requirements for accountability;
- Be conducted in a manner which adds value to the institution, minimises overhead and assists in building institutional capacity;
- Be flexible, adaptable and scalable in order to meet the needs of diverse institutions;
- Be conducted in an open, consistent and transparent manner;
- Be evidence-based in accordance with established criteria;
- Promote learning and development for all involved;
- Reward innovation and experimentation when it seeks to enhance our understanding of good practice;
- Promote collaboration and sharing of good practice between institutions;
- Take cognisance of international best practice and contribute to European and international developments in this area.
Section 2. College Profile

[The National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland (NCPII) was reconstituted as the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) with effect from 1st August 2011. Please note all references to NCPII in this or other documentation supporting the process should be read as ICHAS.]

Background 1999-2011

The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) (formerly known as the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland) is an independent education provider, specialising in the delivery of third level programmes, currently focusing on the fields of counselling and psychotherapy. The College has consulted with HETAC and signalled its intention to apply for approval and validation of programmes outside these areas in the coming period. The full list of programmes on offer at Levels 5 to 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is set out in Table 1. Over the past ten years, the College has expanded rapidly. For example, 100 students were registered on programmes in 2002 with this number rising to a total of 650 registered students in 2010. Currently, 84 students attend the Limerick campus on a full-time basis. The remaining 566 students study on a part-time basis. These students attend in Limerick as well as in one of a number of off-campus centres around the country. These centres which have been approved by HETAC are indicated on page 13 under objective 3 as a special consideration. The provision of tuition in off-campus centres commenced in 2006.

ICHAS is a private college and is registered as an Irish limited company. Its founder and current Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Declan Carey, is the majority shareholder and there are two other shareholders. The College, which was established in 1999, was initially called the National Counselling Institute of Ireland (NCII) and offered a small number of college-developed programmes in the field of counselling. In 2005, NCII agreed its quality assurance procedures with the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). The process of quality assurance commenced with HETAC in 2005 and concluded in parallel with the first programme validation in 2006. Since then the College has exclusively provided programmes validated by FETAC and HETAC and represented on the National Framework of Qualifications. The only source of operational funds is student fees, while the growth and expansion of the College has been funded entirely by the company. Although the College is registered as a for-profit company, ICHAS says that all profits generated by the company to date have been reinvested in the organisation and it has effectively operated on a ‘not-for-profit/not-for-loss’ basis with no dividend ever having been paid to the directors at any point in its history. ICHAS believes the development of the College has been characterised by a phased expansion of the range and suite of programmes and a corresponding expansion of resources to meet the growing needs of the College and to assure the quality of the education provided.

In 2009 the College changed the name to the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute of Ireland (NCPII) to reflect the expansion of programme provision into the field of psychotherapy. Following an internal review in 2010 and an external consultation that considered the future remit of the College, the appropriateness of the current range of academic programmes and future expansion into the wider domains of higher education provision, the Board of Governors recommended the adoption of the name The Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (ICHAS) in April 2011. The College officially adopted this name on 1st August 2011 following notification to HETAC. ICHAS comprises a number of appropriate ‘Institutes’, one of which is the National Counselling and Psychotherapy Institute, thereby ensuring continuity and consistency for its current students and key stakeholders. Other institutes being developed within ICHAS are:

- National Institute of Childcare and Humanities
- National Institute of Business and Management
- National Institute of Science and Technology
- Open Learning Institute

The College believes that the new College title and structures provide the basis and context for strategic development in the coming five-year period and beyond.
Programmes

All programmes offered by ICHAS are validated by FETAC or HETAC and lead to qualifications at Levels 5 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The current range of programmes is set out below in Table 1.

Table 1: College programmes validated by FETAC and HETAC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>PROGRAMME TITLE</th>
<th>NFQ LEVEL</th>
<th>FIRST APPROVAL</th>
<th>STUDENT NUMBERS 2010/2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>FETAC PROGRAMMES (2010 to present)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>N22551</td>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Addiction *</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N22789</td>
<td>Psychology *</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E20143</td>
<td>Working with Groups *</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>E20159</td>
<td>Substance Use Issues in Youth Work *</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>E30163</td>
<td>Group Work Theory &amp; Practice *</td>
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<tr>
<td>E30152</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Suicide Awareness * (now discontinued)</td>
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<td>TBC</td>
<td>Certificate in Counselling Studies**</td>
<td>6 Minor)</td>
<td>04.07.11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills and Practice</td>
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<td>Single BA module</td>
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<td>TBC</td>
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<td>8 (add-on)</td>
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<td>MA in Cognitive &amp; Behavioural Therapy</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>05.07.10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI803</td>
<td>MA in Counselling &amp; Pastoral Care***</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>05.07.10</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI804</td>
<td>MA in Childhood &amp; Adolescent Studies***</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>05.07.10</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI805</td>
<td>MA in Leadership &amp; Management in Professional Practice***</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>05.07.10</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total student numbers in 2010/2011</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Programme has been offered but did not run.
** Programmes have not been offered to date.
*** Programme will be offered for September 2011 intake.
The Bachelor of Arts in Counselling and Psychometric Testing was the first programme validated by HETAC in 2006. A further three Level 7 degrees were validated in 2007 with a one-year follow-on Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Counselling & Psychotherapy. This is an add-on programme to the Level 7 bachelor degree programmes and it was validated in 2008. ICHAS has in recent years developed a number of Level 9 taught Master degree programmes and now has a total of six Master of Arts programmes validated by HETAC. According to the College these programmes offer eligible students clear progression routes and specialisation opportunities. HETAC has recently validated a Level 8 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Childhood and Adolescent Care and Practice (240 ECTS) which will be offered by ICHAS from September 2011.

Chart 1 represents the breakdown of students per programme category for the academic year 2010-2011.

ICHAS aims to be an acknowledged leader in the professional and academic education of competent professionals. To support this aim the College also incorporated an Open Learning Institute that currently contributes to the continuing professional development of practitioners in counselling and Psychotherapy. The role of the Institute is to ensure that the currency and value of graduate qualifications are maintained and that their skills are updated in line with professional standards and employer requirements. In addition, the Open Learning Institute offers a range of FETAC programmes at Levels 5 and 6 on the NFQ, as outlined in Table 1 of this document, and will in future offer programmes in a wider variety of disciplines. ICHAS also runs 10 conferences during the academic year which are delivered by practitioners in the field of counselling and Psychotherapy. Registered students and lecturers may attend these conferences for free.

ICHAS sees the provision of programmes to part-time students, who are geographically dispersed, as a central element of its programme proposition and educational philosophy. The provision of programmes in off-campus centres commenced in 2006. To facilitate the needs of such students, workshops and lectures are delivered at off-campus centres. At present examinations are run in the main campus. The selection, monitoring and management of these centres was reviewed as part of the 2011 programmatic review process, as was the teaching and communications strategies for off-campus students. As part of the programme improvement plan arising from that process, enhanced procedures have been developed and are currently being implemented. The College will provide an update for panel members on progress to date.
ICHAS says it is committed to adopting a formal blended learning strategy which will optimise and expand the Institute’s current online student portal (Moodle) as a platform for the delivery of its programmes, and as a medium for communication with students and faculty at off-campus centres.

**Operating Environment**
ICHAS believes that competition for its undergraduate programmes comes primarily from Irish higher education providers, both public and private - a wide number of institutions now offer ordinary and higher degree programmes in the core fields of counselling and psychotherapy, which was not the case when the College commenced activities in 1999. According to the College, most of these institutions, like ICHAS, attract mainly mature students who wish to study on a part-time basis. Many of the students already work in private practice in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy; while others are interested in developing a private practice on graduation. ICHAS also offers its programmes to school-leavers and entry is through the Central Applications Office (CAO\(^7\)). Programmes similar to the range of ICHAS graduate programmes are also offered by a number of Irish third level education providers in both the broad fields of counselling and psychotherapy as well as in specialised cognate disciplines.

**Professional Context**
The fields of counselling and psychotherapy are currently unregulated by statute in Ireland. There is a broad range of bodies which offer professional accreditation - having access to a professional body which affords graduates an opportunity for professional accreditation is a key requirement for career progression. However, ICHAS says this is also a contentious area within the fields of counselling and psychotherapy with, for example, considerable divergence of opinion around areas such as the nature of the professions themselves, the qualifications needed, and how the profession will and can develop over the coming years.

At its inception in 1999, the College was influenced by these dilemmas and was established with a dual mandate as both a professional association and a training body. This model was common in other professions, such as management and accountancy. Due to the growth and expansion of ICHAS, the possibility of a perception of conflicts of interest and the need to allow the professional body to develop as an independent entity, a decision was taken in 2009 by the College (then NCII) members to separate the two bodies. The Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP) subsequently emerged as the representative body for former NCII members.

According to ICHAS, APCP is now an independent organisation with over 900 members, representing not only the College graduates but also a wide cross-section of the counselling and psychotherapy profession in Ireland. ICHAS graduates who wish to attain professional accreditation can currently do so through APCP. APCP is the only accreditation body for both Counsellors and Psychotherapists in Ireland which requires accredited counselling members to demonstrate educational attainment to Level 7 on the NFQ. IAAAC (a professional body specifically for addiction counsellors) has also recently moved to require the same standards of applicant members and ICHAS is now in early discussions with IAAAC in relation to potential accreditation routes. Applicants, students and graduates are all advised that participation in, or successful completion of, ICHAS programmes offers no guarantee of professional accreditation with professional membership bodies on its own. Applicants who successfully complete any of the programmes and who wish to attain professional accreditation with any of the professional accreditation bodies must meet all of the requirements of those bodies. Graduates of other institutions would be subject to the same requirements.

APCP is a limited company with charitable status which is funded entirely by member subscriptions. At the time of its establishment, subscription fees collected by NCII were transferred to APCP. In addition, it was agreed at that time that APCP would utilise a serviced office within ICHAS until September 2012, at which time APCP will have identified its own premises. Given the historical links between APCP and ICHAS, there is ongoing involvement in APCP by members of ICHAS staff. While ICHAS does not

\(^7\) The higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland have delegated to the Central Applications Office (CAO) the task of processing centrally applications to their first year undergraduate programmes.
have representation as a body on the board of APCP, members of staff do serve on its boards or committees in a private capacity.

**Student Profile**
The College conferred its first graduates of HETAC-validated programmes in October 2010, when more than 120 graduates from Level 7, Level 8 and Level 9 programmes received their parchments at a conferring ceremony held in NUI Maynooth.

An analysis of the student population 2010-2011 yields the following details regarding the profile of its students:

- The student population is predominantly female across all programmes, comprising 76% of the total population.
- 10% of the total population are full-time students; 90% are part-time students.
- 60% of all registered students are enrolled on Level 7 programmes, 35% on Level 8 programme and the remaining 5% are registered at Level 9.
- Approximately 45% of students are based at the main Limerick campus on either a full-time or part time basis with the remainder basing their studies at a range of approved locations nationally as set out in Chart 2.
- The majority of students fall within the mature student category, with 88% of all students aged 20 years and older. The Limerick campus is the only centre which accommodates students under the age of 20.
- Over half of all students are aged between 30-49 years (57%). Full details of the age ranges of students on the basis of gender can be found in Chart 3.

![Chart 2: Campus and Off-Campus Learner Population](image-url)

Off-Campus 55%
Main Campus (FT & PT) 45%
Management and Administration
The College has a total of 14 full-time staff and two contracted staff holding administrative and managerial positions as indicated in Table 2 below. Non-permanent full-time staff members are on fixed term contracts of 12 months duration – such employees will become permanent upon completion of three fixed-term contracts.

The management team of the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences (which came into effect on 1st August 2011) is:

Mr. Declan Carey  Chief Executive Officer
Ms. Maria Carmody  Director of Corporate Affairs, ICHAS and President of NCPII
Prof. Denis Ryan  Director of Academic Affairs
Ms. Tina O’Dwyer  Head of Quality & Standards
Ms. Marie Mulcahy  Head of Finance
Ms. Lorraine Halpin-Foley  Head of Learning & Innovation

The composition of the Governing Authority is as follows:

Mr. Gerry Kearney, Former Secretary General, Department of Gaeltacht and Rural Affairs (Chair)
Dr. Noel Colleran, Co. Clare VEC
Dr. John Gaffney, Senior Lecturer, IT Sligo (Psychology)
Mr. John Lonergan, Former Governor of Mountjoy Prison
Mr. Declan Carey, CEO, ICHAS
Ms. Maria Carmody, Director of Corporate Affairs, ICHAS and President of NCPII
Professor Denis Ryan, Director of Academic Affairs, ICHAS
### Table 2: Managerial and Administrative Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
<th>Fixed Term/Permanent</th>
<th>Specific Purpose Contract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Declan Carey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President NCPII/Director of Corporate Affairs, ICHAS</td>
<td>Maria Carmody</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Prof. Denis Ryan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Prof. Denis Ryan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Undergraduate Studies</td>
<td>Dr. Jane Alexander</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Quality &amp; Standards</td>
<td>Tina O’Dwyer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Suzanne O’Callaghan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Learning &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>Lorraine Halpin-Foley</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Finance</td>
<td>Marie Mulcahy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Manager</td>
<td>Mary Roche</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Co-ordinator Level 7</td>
<td>Helena Hanrahan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Co-ordinator Level 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Gemma Harte</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator</td>
<td>Nora Clery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Placement Officer</td>
<td>Linda Hayes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Administrators x 2</td>
<td>Caroline Burke, Jonathan Flynn</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to support the transition to and planned development of ICHAS, the internal governance and operational structures are currently being reviewed. Since August 2011 the internal management team report to the Chief Executive Officer. The overall strategy, operations and quality of the College will in turn be overseen by a newly appointed Board of Governors, comprising executive and non-executive directors, including a number of external representatives.

**Lecturer Profile**

The academic team at ICHAS comprises a range of appropriately qualified lecturers who are employed on a fixed contract basis. Many of the staff maintain busy practices in their relevant professional area and ICHAS attributes high levels of student satisfaction with lecturers to the practical experience brought by the practitioner-lecturer. There are currently 62 lecturers working with ICHAS throughout the country. All of these lecturers (with the exception of lecturers who have their own limited company) are issued with fixed term contracts. The lecturing team is led by the Director of Academic Affairs, Professor Denis Ryan (also Director of Graduate Studies), and the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Dr. Jane Alexander.

**Quality Assurance**

In 2005, NCII agreed Quality Assurance (QA) Procedures with FETAC and also commenced the process of agreement of Quality Assurance Procedures with HETAC which concluded in 2006 in parallel with the first programme validation. As part of the agreed Quality Assurance Procedures, ICHAS completed its first programmatic review process\(^8\), covering the revalidation of the following programmes:

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\(^8\) Programmatic Review is a revalidation of the programmes initially validated by HETAC and typically occurs every 5 years.
ICHAS will review the effectiveness of the programmatic review process (as managed by ICHAS) and this will inform the Institutional Review process. The report of the programmatic review process will be available for consideration by the panel.

The QA Statement [policy and procedures] is currently being reviewed in light of the phasing in of blended learning platforms, the transition to ICHAS and the findings of an internal quality audit in 2011. An advanced draft of a revised QA Statement will be available for consideration by the panel.

Co-operative arrangements
ICHAS has placed great emphasis on developing and continuously enhancing links and relationships with relevant representative groups, public bodies, private practitioners and professionals in the fields of counselling and psychotherapy, where most of its programme provision has rested to date. Many of the lecturing team also work professionally in their areas of professional practice and so bring current knowledge of trends and developments to their academic delivery. In addition, the practice placement element of the current programmes allows the College to maintain a vital link with practice. ICHAS has strong collaborative relationships with a number of organisations, for example the VHI, the HSE, IRD Duhallow (a community-based rural development company) and ALLjeff (a Limerick-based drug treatment centre). None of these involve collaborative provision and are not subject to the HETAC 2008 Policy on Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards.

Strategic Planning Cycle
ICHAS is currently entering a new five-year strategic planning cycle and a new strategic plan is at an advanced stage of development in line with the development of ICHAS. The plan is under continuous development and will be considered by the Governing Body at its meetings in September and October 2011.

Section 3. Institution’s Team
ICHAS has engaged in the Institutional Review Process with a view to enhancing its education provision, improving its strategic planning and governance processes. As such, there has been widespread involvement of staff at all levels within the organisation and so the Institutional Review team has a very broad base. The core management team involved may be defined as:

Declan Carey Chief Executive Officer
Maria Carmody Director of Corporate Affairs, ICHAS and President of NCPII
Professor Denis Ryan Director of Academic Affairs, ICHAS
Tina O’Dwyer Head of Quality and Standards, ICHAS and Project Manager Institutional Review
Suzanne O’Callaghan Registrar, NCPII

For the purposes of Institutional Review, the main contact person is:
Tina O’Dwyer, NCPII, Walton House, Lonsdale Road, National Technology Park, Castletroy, Limerick.
Tel: 061 216288 Email: tina.odwyer@ncpii.ie

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>NFQ Level</th>
<th>First Validation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CI001</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI002</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Counselling Studies and Addiction Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI005</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts in Youth and Counselling Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI101</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Counselling and Psychotherapy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 4. HETAC objectives for Institutional Review

There are six prescribed objectives for Institutional Review as outlined below. Institutions may wish to highlight any areas of specific importance to the College within each of the objectives.

**Objective 1: To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made**

This objective is to enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the College and the standards of the awards made. This is an overarching objective which covers all areas of the institution’s activity. The quality of the Institutional Review process itself is a critical part of this as is the internal self study, the publication of the Self Evaluation Report and Panel Report. The information provided by the College to the public falls within this objective.

*Special considerations for ICHAS*

None

**Objective 2: To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution**

This objective is to contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution. The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning. For recognised institutions with Delegated Authority this objective also includes the Operation and Management criterion of the review of Delegated Authority (governance, management, administration, planning and evaluation) and the Objects of the Qualifications Act criterion relating to national contributions *etc.*

*Special considerations for ICHAS*

To assess the relevance, currency and standing of ICHAS qualifications in professional practice

All NCPII graduates may become members of the Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP). Given the existence of a number of other professional membership bodies in the areas of counselling and Psychotherapy, however, the opportunity and/or necessity to broaden the professional recognition open to graduates of NCPII programmes could be reviewed. With statutory regulation of these fields of practice on the horizon, establishing the ‘fit’ of the current suite of programmes is important and the professional recognition context has implications for the ICHAS future planning.

When NCII was first founded in 1999, the core team was very small and strategic decision-making power was held by the owner-manager. In order to manage the continuous growth (current and future) of ICHAS, the organisation has been undergoing a transition from an entrepreneur-led model to a wider management base which is formally organised according to function. A number of strategic appointments were made in the period under review:

- **2006:** Registrar
- **2008:** President
- **2009:** Dean of Academic Affairs
  - Director of Graduate Studies
  - Director of Undergraduate Studies
  - Head of Finance
  - IT Consultant
  - Legal Consultant
- **2010:** Programme Co-ordinator for Level 8 and 9 Programmes
  - IT Manager
  - College Manager (now Head of Quality & Standards)
  - Human Resource Consultant
- **2011:** Head of Learning & Innovation (including blended learning implementation)
Formal appointment of Governing Authority

In order to support the transition to and planned development of ICHAS, the internal governance and operational structures are currently being reviewed. The majority shareholder now holds the position of Chief Executive Officer, and considerable authority has been vested ‘upwards’ to a Governing Authority and ‘downwards’ to a broad-based management team (as detailed in Section 3 (of this terms of reference) on the Institution’s team).

Objective 3: To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the institution

This objective is to assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the institution. This will be based on Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance. By including this in the Institutional Review process the statutory requirement for review of QA is met. How the College manages its QA for the “seven elements” of Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines should be explicitly addressed by the review process including: Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance; Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes and Awards; Assessment of Students; Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff; Learning Resources and Support; Information Systems; Public Information.

Special considerations for ICHAS

The Institutional Review should consider the quality assurance arrangements in place for off-campus provision in centres/locations other than the main campus as set out below.

**ICHAS Off Campus Centres – Academic Year – 2010-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Programme Offered</th>
<th>Lecturing Staff</th>
<th>Student Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ennis</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tralee</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>MA Counselling and Psychotherapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA Counselling and Psychotherapy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portlaoise</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA in Youth and Counselling Studies (youth modules only)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA Honours in Counselling and Psychotherapy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portarlington</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>Programme Offered</td>
<td>Lecturing Staff</td>
<td>Student Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MA C&amp;P</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills and Addiction Studies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clonmel</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashel</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mullingar</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Studies and Psychometric Testing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 4: To confirm the extent that the College has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression**

This objective is to confirm the extent that the College has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression. The National Qualifications Authority has produced guidelines in relation to this. For example, this includes issues such as credit, transfer and progression routes between levels and award types, entry arrangements and information provision. As part of this objective, HEA-funded institutions should be mindful of the goals of the HEA’s National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2008-2013) and pay particular attention to the objectives relevant to Higher Education institutions.

*Special considerations for ICHAS*
None

**Objective 5: To evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted** [Not Applicable]

**Objective 6: To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution**

This objective is to provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution. This will include both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and recommendations arising from the internal self study process.

*Special considerations for ICHAS*
None

**Section 5. Institution-specific objectives**

In addition to the prescribed HETAC objectives and the special considerations noted in relation to them, there is an option to include additional objectives to maximise the benefits of the review process.

Additional Institutional Objectives
None
Section 6. Schedule for ICHAS

As outlined in the Institutional Review policy, the process consists of six phases
1. HETAC sets the Terms of Reference following consultation with institution;
2. Self-study by the institution;
3. Visit by expert panel appointed by HETAC and written panel report;
4. Institutional response including implementation plan;
5. Panel report and response published;
6. Follow-up report submitted by the institution.

The major milestones in the timeframe for the Institutional Review of ICHAS are outlined below. This should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for Institutional Review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative timeframe</th>
<th>Actual Date</th>
<th>Milestone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 6 months before panel visit</td>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td>College indicates timeframe for Institutional Review as per overall HETAC schedule of reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 6 months before panel visit</td>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Terms of Reference set following consultation with College and post on HETAC website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 months before panel visit</td>
<td>April – August 2011</td>
<td>College undertakes self study process and produces Self Evaluation Report (SER)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 7-8 weeks before site visit</td>
<td>8 September 2011</td>
<td>Submission of SER and other supporting documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 week following receipt of SER</td>
<td>15 September 2011</td>
<td>HETAC Desk based review of SER and feedback to College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 3 weeks before site visit</td>
<td>5 October 2011</td>
<td>Advance Meeting between Chair, Secretary and College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel Visit</td>
<td>2-3 November 2011</td>
<td>Site visit by external peer review panel (2 days approximately as determined by TOR) Preliminary (oral) feedback on findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 12 weeks after site visit</td>
<td>14 February 2012*</td>
<td>Draft report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to College for factual accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. 1 week following this</td>
<td>22 February 2012</td>
<td>Final report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks following receipt of final report</td>
<td>4 April 2012</td>
<td>Response by College to HETAC including plan with timeframe for implementation of any changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next available HETAC Academic Committee meeting</td>
<td>14 May 2012</td>
<td>Consideration of report and institutional response by HETAC Academic Committee Publication of report, response and SER on website once adopted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months after adoption</td>
<td>May 2013</td>
<td>Follow up report by College to HETAC on implementation of recommendations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Setting of dates takes into account the Christmas break
Appendix B  Panel membership

Chairperson
Prof. David Timms
Former Professor of English and Deputy Vice Chancellor at Bath Spa University

Secretary
Prof. Sue Frost
Associate Senior Lecturer at the University of Kent and Professor Emeritus at Huddersfield University

Dr. Brendan Finucane
Former Executive Director of Enterprise Ireland

Ms. Ann Campbell
Assistant Registrar at the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Ms. Linda Kelly
Former Equality Officer at USI (Union of Students in Ireland), currently working as Project Assistant with AHEAD, the Association for Higher Education Access & Disability

Dr. Nicholas A. Covino
President of the Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology (MSPP)
Appendix C  Supporting documentation received before the site visit

Documentation received as part of the submission with the SER
- ICHAS Self Evaluation Report
- Self Evaluation Report Appendices:
  1  ICHAS Terms of Reference for Institutional Review
  2  ICHAS Draft Strategic Plan 2011-14
  3  Summary of Outcomes of Consultation Process May – July 2011
  4  Report of Peer Review Group
  5  NCPII Response to the Report of the Peer Review Group
  6  Recommendations of the Psychological Therapies Forum 2008
  7  Curriculum Vitae of Professor Denis Ryan
  8  Curriculum Vitae of Dr. Jane Alexander
  9  Professional Accreditation Supporting Information
 10  Profile of faculty (Qualifications & Experience)
 11  ICHAS Bursary Information
 12  Schedule of Conferences 2010 and 2011
 13  Quality Enhancement Plan
 14  ICHAS Organisational Chart
 15  Academic Council Terms of Reference
 16  Functional & Operational Responsibilities of Board of Management
 17  NCPII Strategic Plan 2009-2012
 18  Review with respect to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance Procedures in the European Higher Education Area
 19  Review of the operation of documented QA procedures
 20  Review of the effectiveness of QA procedures
 21  ICHAS Student Handbook 2011-12
 22  Governing Authority Terms of Reference
- ICHAS prospectus 2011
- NCPII Prospectus 2010
- ICHAS Quality Assurance Manual 2011
- NCPII QA Statement 2010
Appendix D  Documentation requested by the panel

Additional Documentation required prior to the site visit
1. Professional Body Status outline- (approx. 1 page statement) describing the current and future status of professional bodies, regulation and the status of ICHAS in this regard.
2. Status update of outcomes of current review of QA procedures- details of changes implemented (approx. 1 page statement)
3. Documentation relating to management of the placement process- (any documentation used in placement process e.g. protocol in briefing etc.)

Additional documentation to be provided on-site for the panel
1. Committee Minutes (Academic Council/School/Board of Governors)
2. External Examiner Reports
3. Any third party reports, reports on engagement with any agencies or external bodies, e.g. FETAC or any relationships with any external bodies - including any appropriate action plans and follow ups etc.
4. Any Flexible and Distance Learning (FDL) guidelines
5. Assisted Assessment Procedure
6. Student committees/ Student & Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)
7. Sample of programme evaluation forms (good, bad and middling)
8. Programme specification or equivalent
9. Summary of outcomes of current review of QA procedures
10. Student support information for IT
11. Financial data- end of year auditor accounts, any other financial information deemed appropriate
12. Documentation on student committees/forums
13. Copies of other reviews which have taken place recently by other external bodies
14. Brief explanation of the relationship between the Governing Body and Board of Directors

Programme documentation
15. Some hard-copy programme documentation to be available on site, for the following programmes:
   • MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy
   • BA in Counselling Skills & Psychotherapy Studies
   • Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills and Practice (single subject certificate)

The documentation should include, for example – for each programme:
   Programme validation documentation, including programme/course handbook
   Follow up issues relating to student input, retention etc. - 2009/2010/2011
   External Examiner reports 2009/2010/2011 and documentation relating to follow-up by ICHAS on the reports- progression to other programmes
   Programme review documentation
   Programme evaluation forms/ reports of evaluation results
   Staff qualifications – summary
   Other appropriate QA documentation indicating follow-through of issues raised
   Sample exam Board minutes
   Student feedback evaluations and programme statistics
   Student handbook for each programme
Appendix E  Documentation provided to the panel at the site visit

- Academic Council/Board Minutes 2009-2011
- Academic Staff Meetings 2007-2011 (including Lecturer Induction & Inservice Materials)
- Programme Board Minutes 2010-11
- Governing Authority Minutes 2011
- Administration Staff Communications Meetings – Minutes
- External Examiner Reports/Responses 2007-11
- Examination Board Minutes 2007-11
- Examination Files (Broadsheets) 2007-11
- Quality Assurance Review File 2011
- Blended Learning Guidelines - pack
- Assisted Assessment Procedure
- Student Representative Meetings 2009-2011
- Sample programme evaluation forms – students
- Sample Communications to Students 2011
- IT Student Support Information
- Student Academic Support Materials (Writing Skills Workshop)
- ICHAS Newsletter, Issue 1
- Student Induction Materials
- Reasonable Accommodations File
- 2010 Graduate Destination Survey
- Student Handbooks 2009-2011
- MA Programme Handbooks 2009-2011
- BA Programme Handbooks 2011
- Sample lecturer monthly reports 2009-2011
- Financial Accounts 2007-2011
- FETAC 5 year review documentation 2011
- Conference Schedules & Speakers 2010-11 and 2011-12
- Collaborative Projects
- Management meetings
- Draft strategic plan
- Lecturer Handbook
- IR consultation file
- Complaints log
- Summary profile of staff and staff CVs
- Disaster Recovery Plan for IT systems
- Service level agreement with IT Service Providers
- Information on IT backup system

- Information specific to the following programmes:
  - MA in Counselling & Psychotherapy Programme Documentation
  - BA in Counselling Skills & Psychotherapy Studies Documentation
  - Certificate in Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills & Practices Documentation
Appendix F  Agenda for site visit

Institutional Review of ICHAS 1-3 November 2011

The format of each session is a discussion in question and answer format unless otherwise indicated. Prof. David Timms, Review Chairperson to chair all sessions unless otherwise indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 November 2011 Evening</td>
<td>4.00pm- 7.00pm - Panel Induction and planning (evening before)</td>
<td>HETAC presentation/induction on Institutional Review criteria and background to Higher Education in Ireland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day One 2 November 2011 Morning</td>
<td>Private meeting of panel and briefing session at College</td>
<td>9.00am-10.30am - Panel planning and finalising agendas for each session - Review of questions/issues for each session with College – proposed questions and assignment of role – highlight areas that need further clarification. 10.30am – 12.00pm - Documentation Review – Answering questions with documentation provided -Assign panel members to documentation review. Panel members review supplementary documentation provided and highlight any areas where further clarification is required. 12.00pm-1.00pm Lunch at College– Panel private lunch and opportunity for panel members to continue review of supplementary evidence – documentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td>1.00pm–2.30pm - Session One with College Representatives - Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance and Objective 1: Public Confidence</td>
<td>Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance -Brief presentation (10 mins max Setting the scene - an overview of the College context) Mission, and vision. Clarification on structure and roles and overall activities the College is engaged in. Environmental factors including competitive position. Strategic planning and governance. Links between internal reflection and strategic planning decision making. Objective 1: Public Confidence –Overarching objective. Demonstrating evidence of public confidence in the quality of education and training and standards of awards made. Information provided by the Institution; Stakeholder interaction. Overall approach taken to self study for Institutional Review (outline of self study process etc). 2.30pm- 3.15pm Break for coffee / brief panel discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.15pm – 4.15pm – Session Two- Objective 3: Quality Assurance - Overview of Quality Assurance system/framework in place in the College (Brief presentation 10 minutes max) and management of change to QA system. The “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines and the stage of development of the Colleges QA system in each area; evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes and strategic planning etc. The session will also consider the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Day Two 3 November 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00am – 9.45am</td>
<td>Session Four- Meeting with External Stakeholders (Two parallel sessions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.45am – 10.15am</td>
<td>Break for coffee / brief panel discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.15am – 11.15am</td>
<td>Session Five- Objective 3: Quality Assurance continued (Seven Elements Review): Meeting with non committee/non-management lecturing staff - and Student Support/ Service Staff / Administrative Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15am - 11.45am</td>
<td>Coffee and brief meeting of panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.45am – 12.45pm</td>
<td>Session Six- Objective 3: Quality Assurance (Seven Elements Review) and Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45pm - 2.40pm</td>
<td>Panel private lunch and opportunity for panel members to review supplementary evidence – documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.40pm - 3.25pm</td>
<td>Supplementary meeting with College staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.25pm – 5.20pm</td>
<td>Private meeting of panel to consider its findings and recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.20pm – 5.40pm</td>
<td>Meeting with CEO, and College’s Senior Management team to provide preliminary feedback on findings and recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G   List of people met by the panel

**Wednesday 2 November 2011**

1.00pm-2.30pm- Session One – Strategic Planning & Governance; Public Confidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>JOB TITLE/ DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>FT/PT</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declan Carey</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Governing Authority Board of Management Financial Management Group Marketing Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Denis Ryan</td>
<td>Director of Academic Affairs (Director of Graduate Studies)</td>
<td>Governing Authority Board of Management Academic Council (Chair) MA Programme Board (Chair) Board of Examiners (Chair)</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Carmody</td>
<td>Director of Corporate Affairs (President of NCPI)</td>
<td>Governing Authority Board of Management (Chair) Financial Management Group Marketing Committee (Chair)</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Kearney</td>
<td>Former Secretary General, Department of Gaeltacht and Rural Affairs</td>
<td>Governing Authority (Chair)</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. John Gaffney</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer, Institute of Technology Sligo</td>
<td>Governing Authority</td>
<td>External</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina O’Dwyer</td>
<td>Head of Quality &amp; Standards</td>
<td>Board of Management Academic Council Quality &amp; Standards Committee (Chair) Board of Examiners Internal Moderation Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine Halpin Foley</td>
<td>Head of Learning &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>Board of Management Academic Council Quality &amp; Standards Committee Programme Boards</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Mulcahy</td>
<td>Head of Finance</td>
<td>Board of Management Financial Management Group (Chair) Quality &amp; Standards Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
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</table>
3.15pm-4.15pm Session Two – Objective 3: Quality Assurance (Seven Elements Review):
Overview of QA System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>JOB TITLE/ DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>FT/PT</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tina O’Dwyer</td>
<td>Head of Quality &amp; Standards</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Board of Management, Academic Council, Programme Boards, Board of Examiners</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Denis Ryan</td>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Academic Council, Undergraduate Programme Board (Chair), Internal Moderation Committee (Chair), Board of Examiners</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzanne O’Callaghan</td>
<td>Head of Academic Administration &amp; Student Services</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Academic Council, Programme Boards, Board of Examiners</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Linda Butler</td>
<td>Programme Lead – Youth Studies</td>
<td>Academic Council, Programme Board, Board of Examiners, Ethics Committee</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Lacey</td>
<td>Programme Lead – Addiction Studies</td>
<td>Academic Council, Programme Board, Board of Examiners</td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemma Harte</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator Level 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Board of Examiners, Level 8 and 9 Programme Boards</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena Hanrahan</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator Level 7</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Board of Examiners, Level 7 Programme Board, Marketing Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nora Clery</td>
<td>Programme Coordinator Level 5 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Flynn</td>
<td>Office Administrator</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Marketing Committee</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine Halpin Foley</td>
<td>Head of Learning &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>Board of Management, Academic Council, Quality &amp; Standards Committee, Programme Boards</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
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</table>

4.45pm- 5.30pm – Session Three – Students and Graduates (Two parallel sessions)

**Group A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PROGRAMME</th>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>MODE</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noelle Hedderman</td>
<td>Certificate in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapeutic Skills and Practice</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemary Howell</td>
<td>Certificate in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapeutic Skills and Practice</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Cork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>PROGRAMME</td>
<td>STAGE</td>
<td>MODE</td>
<td>CENTRE</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Ryan</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Youth Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Penny</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyril Hyland</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Galway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Grealis</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT &amp; FT</td>
<td>Castlebar &amp; Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siobhan Griffin</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Blended, Physical classes at Limerick campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Leonard</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien Brett</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Graduate 2010</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Mullingar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Russell</td>
<td>MA in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Graduate 2011</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Waterford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PROGRAMME</th>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>MODE</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul Moriarty</td>
<td>Certificate in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapeutic Skills and Practice</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul O'Carroll</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Youth Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Duffy</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Addiction Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Tralee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McGovern</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinead Patten</td>
<td>BA in Counselling Skills &amp; Psychotherapy Studies</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Limerick &amp; Tralee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andre Moonan</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in Counselling &amp; Psychotherapy</td>
<td>Award</td>
<td>PT Blended</td>
<td>Blended learning / Limerick campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Murphy</td>
<td>MA in Clinical Supervision in Professional Practice</td>
<td>Graduate 2011</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Hanson</td>
<td>MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
<td>Graduate 2011</td>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thursday 3 November 2011**

**9.00am-9.45am-Session Four- External Stakeholders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION/TITLE</th>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>LINK TO ICHAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Billy Fox</td>
<td>Chairperson (General Manager of Aljeff)</td>
<td>Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP)</td>
<td>APCP is a professional association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. ICHAS programmes in counselling and Psychotherapy are formally recognised and accredited by APCP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>POSITION/TITLE</td>
<td>ORGANISATION</td>
<td>LINK TO ICHAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Jordan</td>
<td>Secretary (Professional Counsellor and Psychotherapist)</td>
<td>Association of Professional Counsellors and Psychotherapists (APCP)</td>
<td>APCP has its origins in the National Counselling Institute of Ireland and emerged as an independent professional body in 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Lally</td>
<td>National Chairman (National Director of Counselling for ACCORD, a marriage counselling service)</td>
<td>National Association of Pastoral Counsellors and Psychotherapists (NAPCP)</td>
<td>NAPCP is an organisation which certifies counsellors and psychotherapists, accredits pastoral counselling centres, and approves training programmes. It is an independent professional body and is a member of the Psychological Therapies Forum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siobhan Walsh</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Stats Development Officer – homeless persons. Tenancy Support Officer, Housing Department.</td>
<td>Limerick City Council</td>
<td>Graduate of the MA in Counselling and Psychotherapy programme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally Howard</td>
<td>Nurse Psychotherapist</td>
<td>Health Service Executive (State organisation)</td>
<td>Graduate of the MA in Clinical Supervision and Professional Practice, accredited psychotherapist with the British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian O’Halloran</td>
<td>Rehabilitation Officer, Psychological Support Trainer</td>
<td>National Learning Network</td>
<td>MA graduate of the College, currently in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Meaney</td>
<td>Professional Counsellor</td>
<td>Private Practice</td>
<td>MA Graduate of 2011. Currently in private practice and also works as a counsellor in a voluntary capacity with a number of different charitable organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Johnston</td>
<td>Psychiatric Nurse</td>
<td>Health Service Executive (State organisation)</td>
<td>MA graduate of the College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>POSITION/TITLE</th>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>LINK TO ICHAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. John Evoy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Wexford VEC</td>
<td>Practice placement host organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Tom Holden</td>
<td>Senior Addiction Counsellor</td>
<td>Aljeff, Limerick</td>
<td>Aljeff is an organisation which assists individuals and families affected by addiction by providing quality recovery treatment programmes. Aljeff has hosted ICHAS students and employed a number of graduates of the College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>POSITION/TITLE</td>
<td>ORGANISATION</td>
<td>LINK TO ICHAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Carmel Fox</td>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
<td>Ballyhoura Development</td>
<td>Ballyhoura Development is a local development company offering a broad range of rural development and social inclusion supports in the geographic area of South and East County Limerick and North East County Limerick. NCPII has been retained by the company to provide bespoke training solutions to individuals and businesses within this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Lindsey Liston</td>
<td>Project Worker</td>
<td>Southill Family Resource Centre, Limerick. Co-ordinator for Southill Domestic Abuse Project.</td>
<td>Southill Family Resource Centre has hosted ICHAS students on practice placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Eileen Lenihan</td>
<td>Assistant CEO</td>
<td>IRD Duhallow</td>
<td>IRD Duhallow is a community-based integrated rural development company in the North West Cork and South East Kerry region of Ireland (known as Duhallow). Since 2006, NCPII has been retained by the company to provide various bespoke training solutions to individuals and businesses within this area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.15am-11.15am Session Five- Objective 3: Quality Assurance: Non-Committee staff and Student Support/Service Staff/Administrative Staff

**Campus-based Lecturers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PROGRAMME LEVEL</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
<th>AREA OF PRACTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christine Beekman</td>
<td>Level 7 &amp; Level 9</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>Private practice with complementary health therapies, counselling, psychotherapy and hypnotherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ailbe Coffey</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finbar Chambers</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie O’Halloran</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>Addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maeve O’Regan</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
</tr>
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**Student Support/Service Staff / Administrative Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>JOB TITLE/ DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>FT/PT</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christine Beekman</td>
<td>Counselling Liaison Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemma Harte</td>
<td>Programme Co-ordinator Level 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Standards Committee Board of Examiners Level 8 and 9 Programme Boards</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>Limerick</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Institution Review of ICHAS – November 2011
#### Report of the Expert Panel
#### Final Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Helena Hanrahan        | Programme Co-ordinator Level 7 | Quality & Standards Committee  
Board of Examiners  
Level 7 Programme Board  
Marketing Committee | Full-time | Limerick |
| Linda Hayes           | Practice Placement Officer |                                                                                      | Part-time | Limerick |
| Jonathan Flynn        | Library Support        | Quality & Standards Committee  
Marketing Committee                      | Full-time | Limerick |

11.45am-12.45pm Session Six- Objective 3: Quality Assurance: Off-campus staff and Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression

**Off-campus Lecturers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>PROGRAMME LEVEL</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
<th>AREA OF PRACTICE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clair Bel Maguire</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>Private Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Nunan</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Portlaoise</td>
<td>Instructor at the Health Service Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia Duffell</td>
<td>Level 7 &amp; Level 9</td>
<td>Galway &amp; Mayo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat O'Connor</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Kerry</td>
<td>General Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patti O'Connor</td>
<td>Level 7</td>
<td>Clonmel</td>
<td>Private Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Gavin</td>
<td>Level 7 &amp; Level 8</td>
<td>Portlaoise / Mullingar</td>
<td>Private Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Admissions Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>JOB TITLE/ DEPARTMENT</th>
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<th>FT/PT</th>
<th>CENTRE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Gemma Harte            | Programme Co-ordinator Level 8 & 9 | Quality & Standards Committee  
Board of Examiners  
Level 8 and 9 Programme Boards | Full-time | Limerick |
| Helena Hanrahan        | Programme Co-ordinator Level 7 | Quality & Standards Committee  
Board of Examiners  
Level 7 Programme Board  
Marketing Committee | Full-time | Limerick |
| Nora Clery             | Programme Co-ordinator Level 5 & 6 | Quality & Standards Committee | Full-time | Limerick |

2.40pm-3.25pm – Session Seven- Supplementary meeting with College staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declan Carey</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Carmody</td>
<td>Director of Corporate Affairs (President of NCPI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tina O'Dwyer</td>
<td>Head of Quality &amp; Standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Denis Ryan</td>
<td>Director of Academic Affairs (Director of Graduate Studies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>