Online Assessment Quality Assurance – a case study

Aisling Reast - Registrar
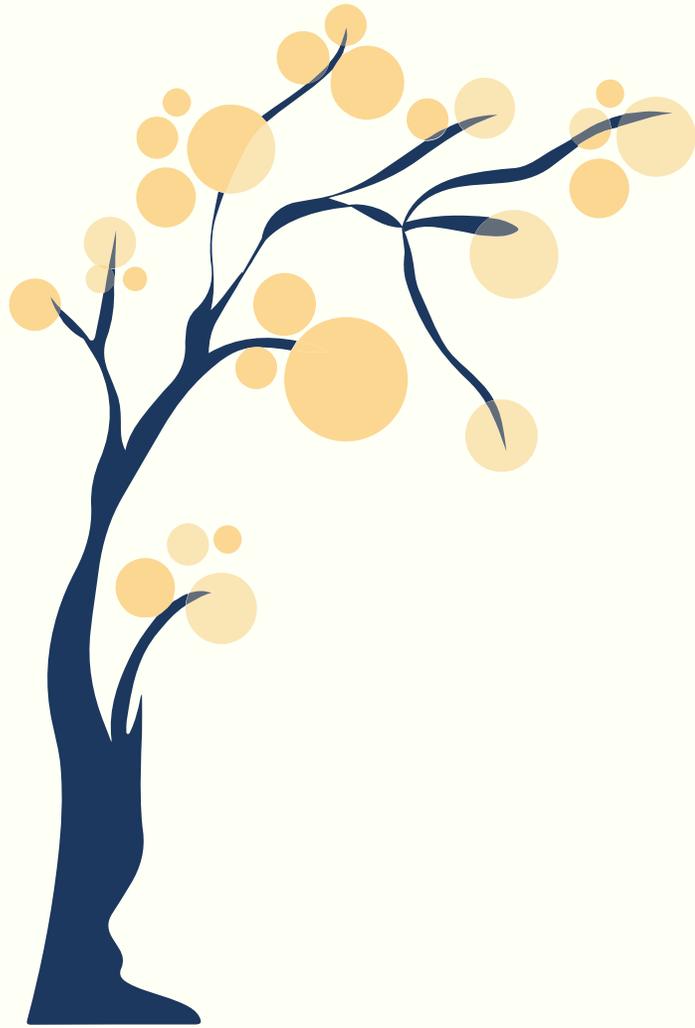
Impact of COVID-19 on Assessment

- Blended learning Higher Education Institution

- Minimal changes to delivery

- Much assessment unchanged

- Alternative mechanisms needed:
    - Examinations
    - Placement

COVID-19

A

Oral Examinations

PME (primary) – Oral Irish

- Three examination centres

- 600-700 students
  - April – 163 students
  - July – 517 students

- Two assessors per examination
  - April –16 assessors
  - July – 28 assessors

- Project Group
  - Registry
  - School of Education
  - IT
  - Others

- Requirements:
  - Academic
  - Technical
  - Governance
  - Support

B
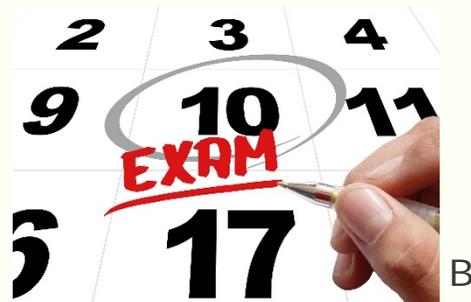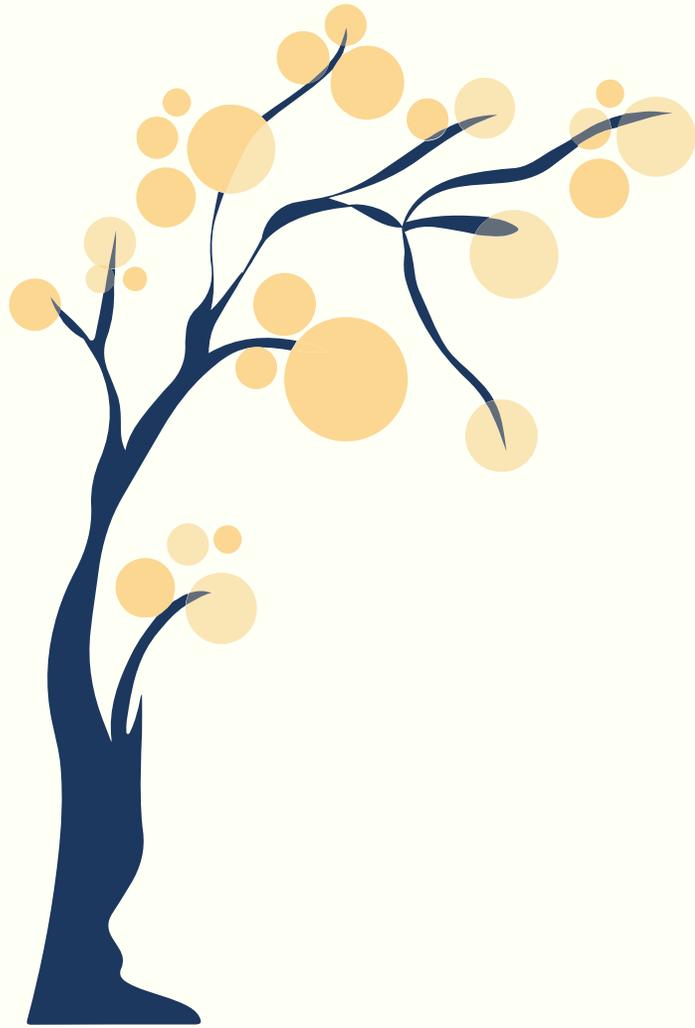
Technical

- Individual meetings

- Waiting rooms

- Excess number of sessions

- Breaks between sessions

- Recording

- Scheduling tool

Governance

- Regulations For Online Oral Examinations[1]

  - Part A: Academic Integrity Statement

  - Part B: Preparing for Online Oral Examinations

  - Part C: Regulations During Online Oral Examinations

  - Part D: Breach of Examination Regulations

- Declaration

"The provider's strategy, infrastructure and policies systematically address and enable existing or planned arrangements for blended learning (incorporating online learning)."[2]

"Reaffirm expectations for learners to behave at all time with academic integrity"[3]

1. https://qualityframework.hiberniacollege.com
2. QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes
3. QQI Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments

Governance

Assessors/Invigilators

- Academic Integrity

- Supports

- Exam Preparation

- Invigilation During the Exam

- Securing the Examination Environment

- Managing Matters Arising

- Concerns for Academic Integrity

Support

SUPPORT

Technical

- Zoom drop-ins

- Helpdesk

Governance

- Training sessions

Academic

- Provided by the School of Education

Buddy system

"The level and nature of support available to learners is clear."[2]

"Recognise the challenges for staff and students in switching at such a late stage to alternative modes of teaching and assessment. "[3]

2. QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes
3. QQI Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments
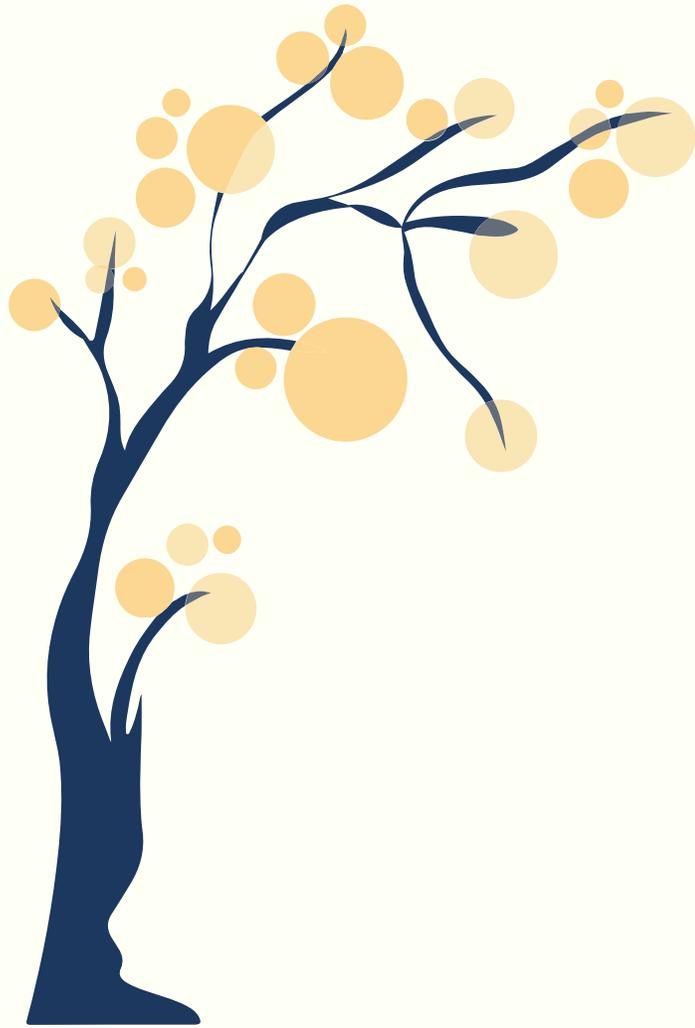
Incidents

Session 1 - Spring

- 163 Students

- 12 incidents (7%)

  - 8 Technical difficulties

  - 2 – Student Card not available

  - 1 – Integrity query

  - 1 – Student welfare

Session 2 - Summer

- 517 Students

- 18 incidents (3%)

  - 9 Technical difficulties

  - 3 – Student Card not available

  - 4 – Integrity queries

  - 2 – Students welfare

Outcomes

2017 Intakes

606 students

70+	13%
60-69	28%
50-59	27%
40-49	26%
0-39	6%
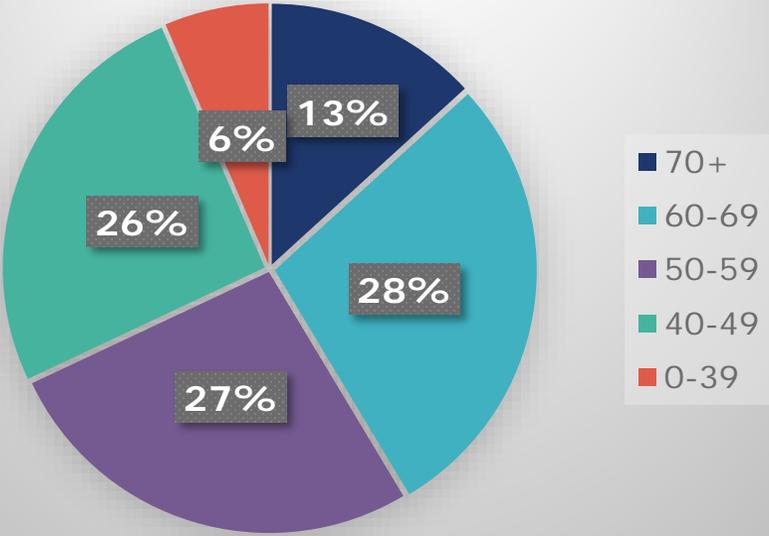
2018 Intakes

680 students

70+	17%
60-69	30%
50-59	27%
40-49	20%
0-39	6%
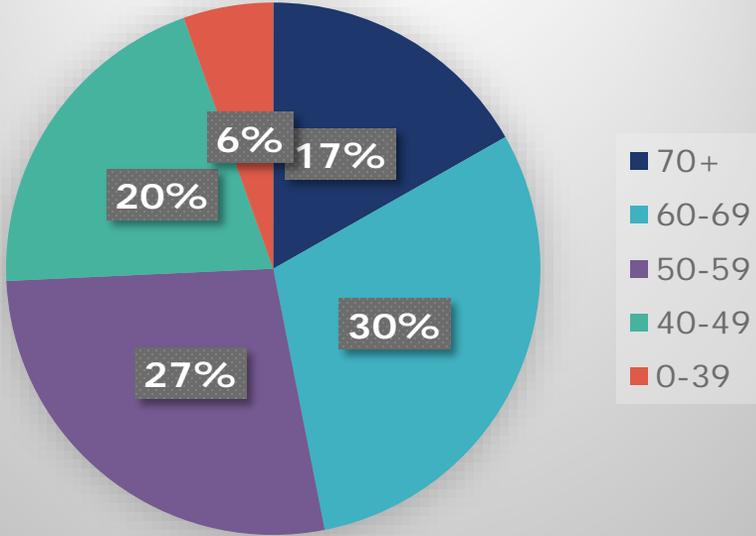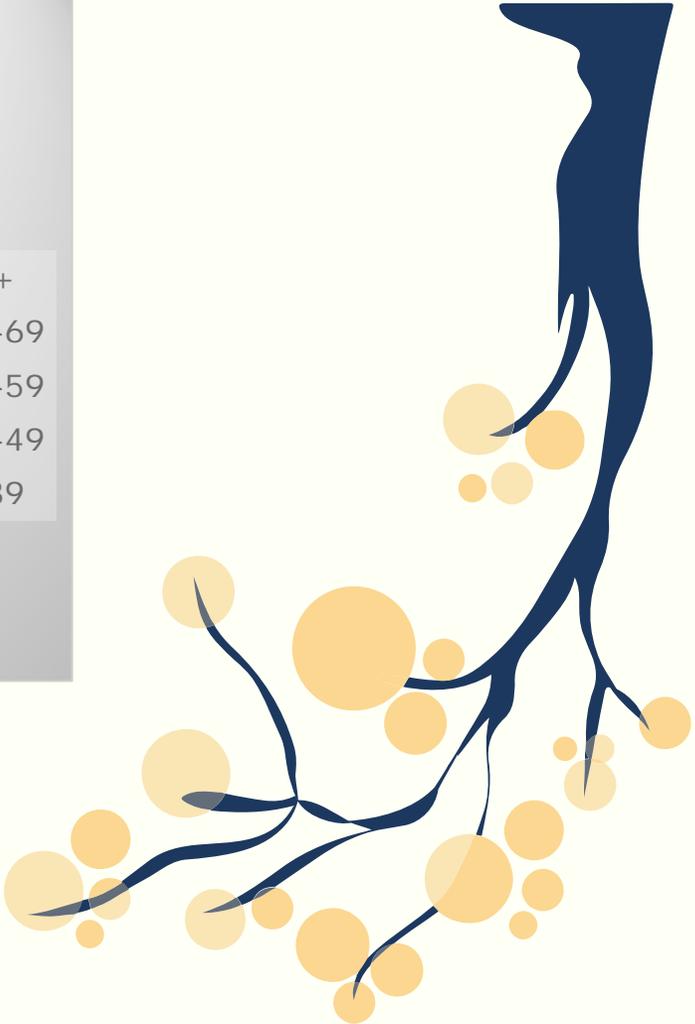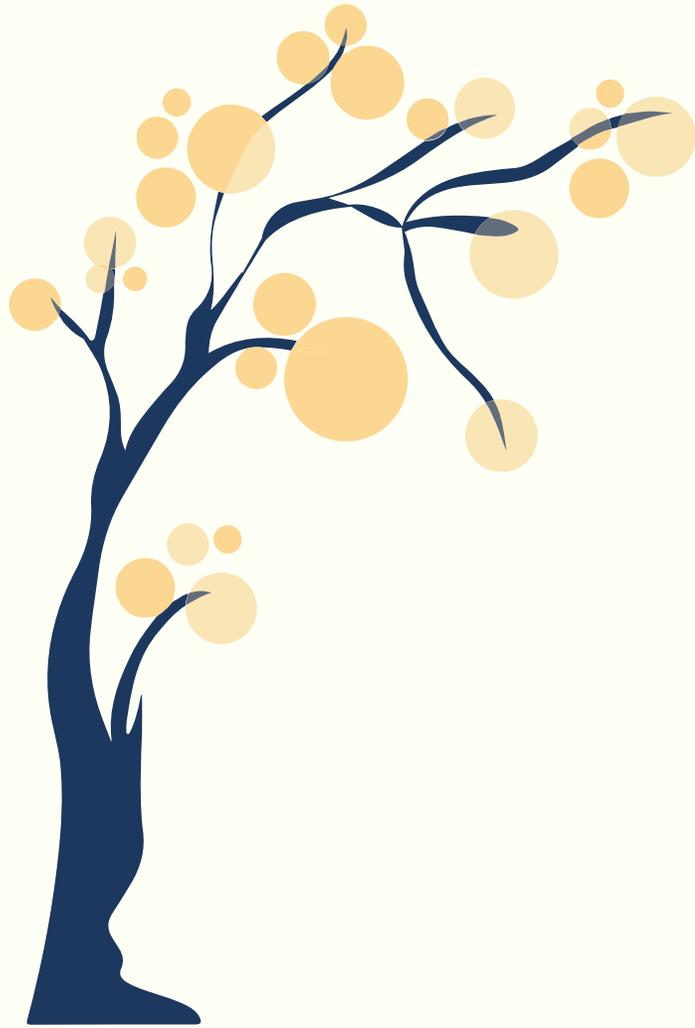
Assessment Changes

- Written examinations

- School Placement assessment

- Research

- External Examiners

- Academic Board

- Teaching Council/QQI

F

Feedback

- *"the support ... I was at ease going into the interview once I was aware what was happening."*

- *Academic integrity was not, in my experience, impacted in terms of the material delivered and the methods of delivery.*

G
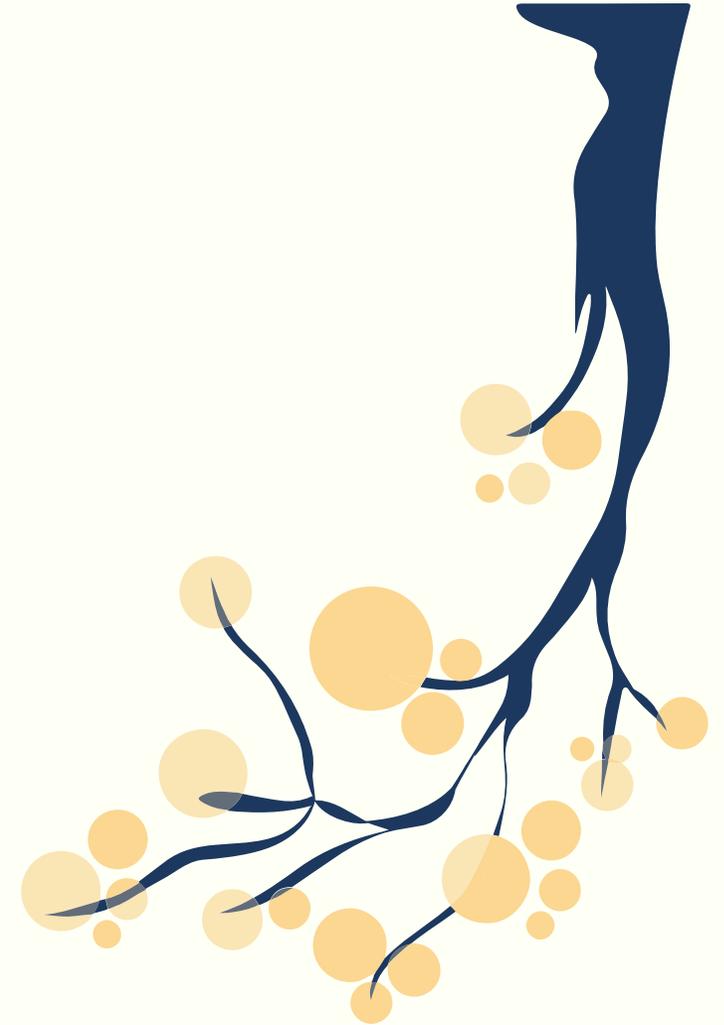
Lessons Learned
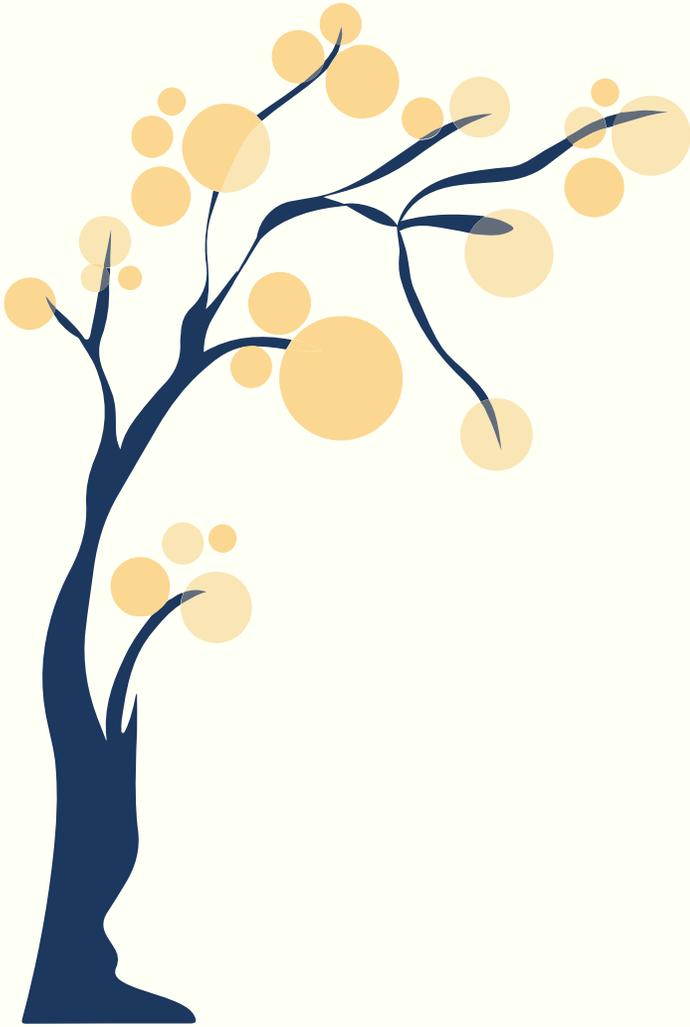
- Significant planning, training and administration is required to move processes online.

- There may be a role for continued provision of some online processes.

- Having excellent technical support and IT infrastructure is a key success factor.

- Development of detailed guidelines supports the delivery of new assessment methodologies.

Thank You

- Project team
    - School of Education
    - IT Dept
- Michael O'Leary – Assessments and Awards Manager
- Ruth Ní Bheoláin – Quality Assurance Officer

References

1. https://qualityframework.hiberniacollege.com

2. QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (2018) – QQI.ie

3. QQI Guiding Principles for Alternative Assessments (Devised in Response to the COVID-19 Emergency Restrictions) (2020) – QQI.ie

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