

[IBAT College Dublin]

2022

Annual Quality Report - IBAT College
Reporting Period 2020-2021

[Higher Education Institution]

2022

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2020-2021

PREFACE

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

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

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

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

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Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report - where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

Report Structure

Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new policies or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period - these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template¹

Legislation

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

QQI Documents

Statutory QA Guidelines (QAG)

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

Other QQI Policy Documents

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

Other National/International References

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

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

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

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

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for **IBAT College Dublin** for the reporting period 1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021.

It was submitted on Friday, 25 February 2022. The AQR has been approved by Academic Council on 11/02/2022 and is submitted by Dr Finbarr Murphy, Registrar. This is IBAT College Dublin's second Annual Quality Report (AQR) submission.

IBAT has three schools

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

How this AQR developed and was approved is outlined as follows.

- In November 2021:
 1. The College Principal, Head of School, Registrar and Head of IT (the senior management group (SMG)) initially met to discuss the 2022 submission, considering the feedback received from the Quality Dialogue Meeting with QQI on Friday 2nd July 2021.
 2. The Registrar was nominated again to lead this project and keep the SMG apprised of how the AQR drafting was developing.
- In December 2021
 1. Academic Council met on 1st December 2021 where the AQR template and requirements were discussed.
 2. Board of Governors were apprised at their meeting on 7th December 2021. The Governors emphasised the importance of completing this requirement in a thorough, systematic, and inclusive manner.
 3. The Registrar initially checked QHUB and confirmed with QQI that access was granted to the template for submission.
 4. The Registrar then developed a schedule outlining the requirements - data required, by whom and when it was required by.
- In January 2022
 1. Data was compiled, case studies drafted.
- In February 2022
 1. A first draft was compiled. Academic Council was convened on 11th February 2022 to consider the Report.
 2. Members of Academic Council comments were considered and incorporated.
 3. Final draft circulated to Academic Council and senior management for approval prior to the deadline date, 25th February 2022.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

The section on the IBAT website that is available to the public outlining our quality assurance framework, processes and procedures is as follows. <https://www.ibat.ie/quality-assurance.html> The College Quality Assurance Handbook and the Associated Policies that accompany it are hyperlinked at the end of the second paragraph. Version 4.5 of the College Quality Assurance Handbook and its Associated Policies was approved by Academic Council on 30.04.2021. (Subsequently in October 2021 there was a further update approved to address the conditions of a Blended Learning panel convened on 07.09.2021).

Chapter 2 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook discusses how the College is governed, decisions are made (Academic Council being the supreme decision-making body for all quality assurance related decisions in the college), representation of staff, external persons, and learners in the College governance units.

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

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

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

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

We are engaged in collaborative provision with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) in delivering a FHEQ (The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies) Level 7 Masters in Business Administration. The Masters in Business Administration equates to a level 9 award on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). In 2019 the programme was revalidated. In 2020 we validated the exit programmes, Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration and Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration. Progression in awards is subject to UWTSD Recognition of Prior Learning regulations.

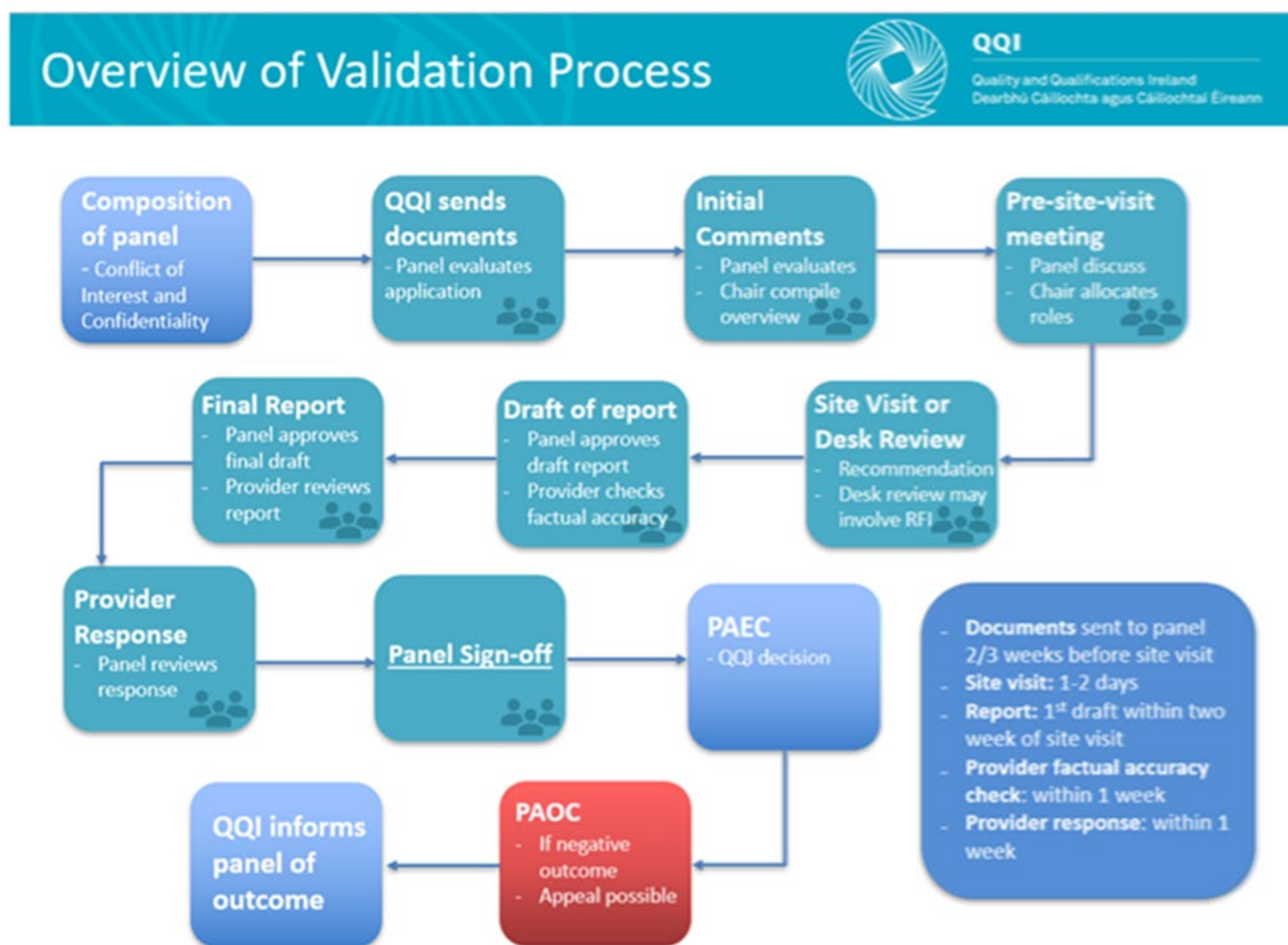
2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Chapter 3 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook outlines the processes in the college to develop and approve programmes. In 2020/21 there was significant development in this space as IBAT College Dublin secured Springboard funding on 1 of its 3 submissions in February 2021, subject to the programme being validated. In April 2021 the college submitted 3 Special Purpose Awards along with an extension of scope, blended learning application. Significant amendment was required in respect of programme development QA to address the requirements as outlined in the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (March 2018).

Operating Protocols and Procedures OPP 3.4 Protocol on addressing the Planning questions and key considerations in Stage 1 (Analysis) of ADDIE (ISD) was drafted to assist lecturers, Educational Technologist and other stakeholders in the development and design of a blended learning programme.

Currently the QQI Programme Validation process is 25 weeks duration, and the process is depicted in the image below;



IBAT Suggestion:

As one of the conditions of the competitive tendering process to be awarded Springboard funding is programmes are validated by QQI, IBAT would respectfully request that QQI review and consider increasing the number of times QQI conduct in house meetings to approve or disapprove validation of programmes. The stakes are particularly high for smaller providers that secured funding contingent on this condition being met.

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

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

Chapter 2, Section 2.3 describes the role the Admissions Committee serves. It meets 3 times per year and considers all matters relating to admitting a learner.

In April 2021 an independent and external audit of all admissions to the BA Honours in Business was conducted by Stephen McManus, Higher Education Consultant, and former Registrar of IT Dundalk. The audit assesses compliance according to admission criteria. Please refer to PART B, Section 1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR for more detailed information.

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

Please also refer to Associated Policies:

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

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Standard Operating Procedure:

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

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

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

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Chapter 6 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook describes the College's educational philosophy, explains our academic framework and how we assure quality through support and engagement with staff and learners.

Associated Policy 1.6, the IBAT College Dublin Teaching and Learning Strategy further illustrates this, as does, Associated Policy 1.15 IBAT College Dublin Blended and Online Learning Policy.

Chapter 8 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook considers the people, policies, and procedures in place in the assessment of learners. It addresses matters such as academic integrity, external examining, and many other issues.

As summative, end-of-semester exams continued were delivered online during the CoVID 19 emergency we deemed 3 hours an appropriate duration (ordinarily exams are 2-hour in duration). Students were typing answers and assisted them get familiar with doing virtual exams. Student feedback was positive. The exams were spaced out, typically a day between each and 2 days in some cases.

Dr Pio Fenton, Munster Technological University (MTU) and Dr Gerry Grenham, Institute of Banking (IoB), an externally recognized college of University College Dublin are the two External Examiners on the BA Honours in Business.

In their respective External Examiners Annual Report for 2020/21 (Form 8.4 in the College QAH) they state.

The programme assessment strategy is in line with my expectations and is on par with best practice in other institutions. There appears to be deep reflection on the type of learner in designing the assessment approaches overall. In addition, the team have an excellent emphasis on student wellbeing, and this has been very heartening. The programme management team have been very positive throughout the year.

Dr Pio Fenton, MTU

The programme team has handled the full academic year of COVID very well. There is a very high level of communication and interaction with students and great effort is made to ensure students know what is required, have full programme and modules details and to follow-up with any outstanding academic issues that might arise. Students are given full and fair consideration at Examination Boards within academic regulation and standards.

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A variety and mix of assessment methodologies have been implemented across the programme, with slight variation across modules as a result. This flexible approach has worked well and allows appropriate variation, within an overall coherent assessment framework.

Dr Gerry Grenham, IoB

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

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

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

- 1.5 IBAT College Dublin Assessment Strategy
- 1.5b Assessment Workload Guidelines
- 1.12 Guidelines on Assessing Group Work
- 1.14 Policy on Recording of Oral or Visual Presentations
- 1.17 IBAT College Dublin Social Media Protocol / Etiquette

Please also refer to:

Standard Operating Procedure:

- SOP 2.4 The 5 Stage Model of e-moderating - Teaching online and supporting online learners

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

Currently this is not applicable to IBAT College Dublin.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

Chapter 10 in the College Quality Assurance Handbook provides details about staff recruitment, appraisal, development, and support. It also accounts for the different skills required to deliver blended learning courses. Also refer to Associated Policy 1.8 Human Resource Policy for Staff Recruitment, Management and Development.

6.0 Information and Data Management

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

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

7.0 Public Information and Communication

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

The Registrar is responsible for information and data management issues in IBAT.

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

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

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

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

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

1. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
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Name of body:	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	Principal Programme PG24032 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business Embedded Programme PG24033 Certificate in Arts in Business https://www.ibat.ie/courses/degree-business-full-time-undergraduate-ireland.html
Date of accreditation or last review	20/12/2018
Date of next review	29/02/2024

2. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	QQI
Programme titles and links to publications	Principal Programme PG24379 Bachelor of Business in Business Embedded Programme PG24384 Higher Certificate in Business https://www.ibat.ie/courses/degree-business-full-time-undergraduate-ireland.html
Date of accreditation or last review	03/12/2020
Date of next review	29/09/2025

3. Type of arrangement	Awarding body
Name of body:	University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Programme titles and links to publications	Masters in Business Administration (Full and Part-Time, 180 CATS on FHEQ) & Modular Enrolment leading to the awards Postgraduate Certificate in Business Administration (60 CATs) & Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration (120 CATs) https://www.ibat.ie/courses/mba-masters-degree-course-dublin.html Last intake of part-time students is February 2022. Last intake of full-time students & Modular students is September 2022. By mutual consent both parties have terminated the relationship with effect from May 2024
Date of accreditation or last review	18/08/2021
Date of next review	30/05/2024

9.2 Collaborative Provision

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

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Articulation agreements - Total number	0
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1. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	Digital Marketing Institute (DMI)
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma in Digital Marketing https://www.ibat.ie/courses/professional-diploma-in-digital-marketing.html
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	30/05/2018
Date of next review	30/05/2023
Detail of the agreement	Licence Agreement IBAT is a recognised education provider of DMI content. It prepares learners for DMI certification.

2. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	Project Management Institute (PMI)
Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Diploma in Project Management https://www.ibat.ie/courses/project-management-diploma-courses.html
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/12/2022
Detail of the agreement	Now an Approved Training Provider status (ATP) in accordance with the new regime in place from 2021 as PMI has developed into a member-based professional organisation. Annual renewal basis Licence Agreement IBAT is a recognised education provider of PMI content. It prepares learners for PMI certification.

3. Articulation agreement	Articulation agreement
Name of body (/bodies):	GISMA Business School
Programme titles and links to publications	https://www.gisma.com/programme/postgraduate-degrees
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	01/01/2022
Date of next review	31/12/2022
Detail of the agreement	https://www.gisma.com/ GISMA Business School is one of the institutions owned by Global University Systems, the owner too of IBAT College Dublin. To acquire skills GISMA postgraduate

	<p>students are offered 2 complimentary courses of their choosing from the IBAT portfolio of Professional Diploma courses. An IBAT Professional Diploma is a focused, short-duration practical course that consolidates, upskills, and/or reskills learners in a professional area. They are stand-alone qualifications that do not lead to an award on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).</p>
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IBAT College Dublin

2022

**PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT**

Reporting Period 2020-2021

Annual Quality Report – IBAT College Dublin

PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.5), **Part B** of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**.

Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR submission were progressed during the reporting period - these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. Institutions are encouraged to reflect both on what worked well and what did not work well, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks and feedback/judgement) in how they led to specific QA improvements and enhancement.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact² of QA activities within the totality of an institution's QA system.

Section 1 pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

Section 2 deals with institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, and the enhancements and impacts resulting from same.

Section 3 relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

Section 4 provides an opportunity for institutions to illustrate IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited, if they wish to do so, to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

² The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf>. This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

Two major activities in 2020/21 with QA implications relating to the Strategic Objectives of the College until 2025 were;

Extension of Scope - Approval of Blended Learning QA Policies and Processes

Delivering a 5-year expansion plan is one of the 3 key objectives of the college to 2025. Being able to broaden the portfolio of programmes offered in the higher education school and deliver programmes in a manner dictated by the marketplace, expected by learners and other stakeholder (e.g., Springboard, maximum flexibility) necessitated in April 2021 along with 3 Special Purpose Award programme validation submissions an application for approval to deliver the SPAs by blended delivery. The College QAH and its APs were amended significantly to reflect blended learning programmes. This entailed clarifying new roles, how existing roles would be affected, programme design and development, assessment consideration, learner supports and staff recruitment, training, and appraisal. It was an iterative process following desk-based research, guidance from QQI and an expert panel being convened.

- Partnership discussions

To meet 2 of the 3 key objectives of the college to 2025,

1. Delivering a 5-year expansion plan and
2. Leverage GUS Global footprint to expand the range of programmes offered by IBAT.

IBAT is now wholly owned by 9822 Limited. 9822 Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Global University Systems (GUS)

The College Principal devoted significant time and resources to seek appropriate HEIs to collaborate with on several potential activities – recruitment, programme provision, joint funding applications, lecturer, and student exchange arrangements. The intention is for a reciprocal agreement whereby IBAT can broaden the portfolio of programmes offered in the higher education school offering partner institution programmes in its campuses and align our current professional diplomas to the NFQ, through validation in the partner institution.

Talks commenced with 3 institutions. It became apparent quite early on that one institution was more aligned with our vision. The talks with this institution are ongoing. An announcement is imminent at the time of writing.

An example of this is our collaboration with another Global University Systems (GUS) institution, GISMA, a Berlin based college in 2020/21 now offers its postgraduate students 2 complimentary IBAT professional diploma courses. An IBAT Professional Diploma is a focused, short duration practical course that consolidates, upskills and/or reskills learners in a professional area. They are stand-alone qualifications that do not lead to an award on the NFQ.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

In the 2019/20 AQR submission the following reviews were planned for 2020/21 (Section 3.2.1, Part B of the 2019/20 AQR)

Unit to be reviewed	Due Date	Status
Align definitions of Academic Integrity as per National Academic Integrity Network with definitions contained in the college QAH and considered at Academic Misconduct Hearings.	February 2021	Completed Incorporated in QAH approved by Academic Council 30.04.2021
Submission of special purpose awards to meet the Springboard+ call from providers	March 2021	Completed Submitted 02.04.2021. Programmes initially submitted to HEA for Springboard consideration.
Draft a College Blended and Online Policy	March 2021	Completed Submitted initially 02.04.2021 Formally approved by PAEC 10.02.2022
An external review of college admissions to the BA Hons in Business	April 2021	Audit completed in April 2021. Report issued in May 2021. All the documentation for the admissions from October 2019 and February 2020 were available in hard copy and were examined in detail. The student management system held records for subsequent admissions, September 2020, and February 2021. The documents for these latter entries were submitted online due to COVID restraints. A sample of these records were examined. This audit examined whether the implementation of the admission procedures follow the college quality assurance handbook (chapter 5) and the

		<p>requirements of QQI's 2015 2015 "Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners". Code of Practice. The requirements fall into broad areas.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligibility: ensuring that students are adequately prepared academically for the programme. 2. English language competency. 3. Information Provision: student has adequate information to make informed decisions about joining the programme. <p>Main Findings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligibility: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. All students enrolled in the cohorts examined were admitted according to the admissions policy. b. The file of ineligible applicants was provided. The majority of these were from India or Pakistan. IBATs entry requirements for these countries are higher than that of other providers. 2. English language competency. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. IBAT uses CEFR B2+ as its required English language level for entry. It was established by IBAT that all those enrolled had competency in English to meet the entry requirements. 3. Information Provision <p>Several recommendations in all areas were made to enhance the process. For example, information prior to arrival. In 2020/21 IBAT agreed to be bound by the Key Principles for the Arrival of International Higher Education Students to Ireland 2020/2021 issued by the Department of</p>
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		<p>Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.</p> <p>These recommendations have been considered by the Senior Management Group and the Audit & Risk Committee who sought the audit. Academic Council were appraised of the report too.</p> <p>The full report is available upon request.</p>
Curriculum Review - New curriculum currently being written for all levels in the English Language school	June 2021	<p>Completed – August 2021</p> <p>Commenced delivery when CoVID 19 restrictions lifted, and face-to-face instruction recommenced on 26.10.2021</p>

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

Activity	Update
<p>1. Teaching and Learning Strategy</p> <p>Aim: to produce a comprehensive and effective Teaching and Learning Strategy aligned to IBAT's Strategic Plan and designed to support the IBAT mission to produce graduates who are industry focused, socially responsible, and globally relevant.</p> <p>Themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development of Teaching and Learning Strategy/ educational philosophy. • Skills for employment (employability audit on new programmes) • Business Advisory Group to inform programme design and development of graduate attributes. 	<p>On April 2nd IBAT submitted its initial application for Extension of scope (Blended Learning QA) along with 3 Special Purpose Award programme validations. On 10.02.2022 PASEC formally approved the college QA on blended learning provision.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended learning- technology enhanced teaching -where it adds value. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Enhanced Quality Student Engagement</p> <p>Aim: to enhance the quality of learner engagement with the College in all aspects of college life.</p> <p>Themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Representatives training introduced. • Learners involved in more comprehensive consultation on policy and process. <p>This will be measured, in the first instance, by improved attendance by learner representatives at Boards and Committees and quality of feedback from consultation exercises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alumni engagement - first destination survey introduced in Dec 2017 and has been issued at every graduation since. 	<p>An Alumni Proposition was planned to be developed in the 2020/21 academic year. An Alumni Proposition is what IBAT can offer to graduates of its programmes to remain engaged and associated with the college. Desk-based research has been conducted. This is an area that needs to be addressed. A B2B person was approved with alumni and corporate engagement within the brief. Interviews were conducted and as the pandemic continued the position has been put on hold until a resumption of normal business.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Benchmarking Performance</p> <p>Aim: To ensure through effective process, reporting and analysis that IBAT College Dublin identifies areas of good practice and areas for improvement. Benchmarking against similar providers, nationally and internationally to be undertaken, and the production and use of key performance indicators (KPIs) for internal improvement. Current benchmarking exercises include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Staff Ratio • Retention, Progression, Completion and Awards 	<p>All benchmarking activity as conducted in 2019/20 was replicated in 2020/21</p> <p>IBAT is regularly benchmarked against its peers with the parent company, Global University Systems. The College Managing Directors manage a portfolio of GUS institutions and IBAT perform well on the LMS they use, recruitment of certain nationalities, e.g., Brazilian, and Mexican learners,</p> <p>The Student Recruitment and Marketing Manager regularly benchmark against competitors in terms of pricing and how similar providers nationally market similar programmes.</p> <p>The Academic Team review similar programmes to consider content, assessment and staff involved.</p> <p>The Registrar provides the Academic Team with appropriate data for exam boards and programme boards to consider matters such as retention, progression, completion, and award recipients.</p> <p>Whilst recruitment figures are improving the student staff ratio remains low relative to our peers. This is a cause of concern for the College, QQI and impacts on the student experience both positively and negatively. Positively they receive more personalized</p>

	<p>tuition. Negatively, a diverse student cohort creates a vibrant learning environment and maintains the sustainability of provision.</p> <p>Being part of the National Academic Integrity Network, we now can benchmark our students in terms of integrity.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4. Academic Staff Development</p> <p>Aim: To ensure IBAT learners learn in a research informed environment and have access to effective teaching and learning methodologies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Staff qualifications in T&L • Improve the College engagement with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education • Enhance and demonstrate staff engagement with Scholarship. • Support Continuous Professional Development initiatives undertaken by academic staff 	<p>All staff were encouraged to undertake a teaching or learning qualification, particularly courses offered through the National Teaching & Learning Forum. 2 lecturers acquired the Facilitator badge for online delivery.</p> <p>Several lecturers were nominated for teaching awards and 2 IBAT lecturers received awards in recognition of their work.</p> <p>All academic staff can attend any programme offered in the college, either free of charge or had a heavily discounted fee, depending on their employment status.</p> <p>A schedule of workshops involving staff and external experts is being developed for 2021/22</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5. Enhancing the Learning Environment</p> <p>Aim: to ensure IBAT College Dublin learners are learning in a high-quality learning environment with effective learning resources. This project will commence with an evaluation of the effectiveness of IBAT facilities for the delivery of all programmes of Higher Education and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure facilities are appropriate, maintained and provide a conducive learning environment. • Improve Library provision and ensure library resources are available for day, evening, and weekend learners. • Information Technology - ensure support is available to encourage uptake of technology enhanced learning supporting the Teaching and Learning Strategy. 	<p>Following the investment in 2019/2020 in terms of IT and human resources there was the introduction of a new role Moodle Coordinator in 2020/21. An Educational Technologist will be recruited in March 2022.</p> <p>The Moodle Coordinator ensures that all lecturers have a repository in place that is clear and logical and is available to all enrolled learners on the college LMS from the commencement of their studies.</p>

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Senior Management Meetings	Every Tuesday at 11.30 am
Board of Governors	14.10.2020, 09.12.20, 02.02.2021, 13.04.2021, 16.06.2021, 18.08.2021
Academic Council	23.03.2021, 30.04.2020*, 09.06.2020, 10.08.2020 * By circulation
Audit & Safety Committee	26.11.20, 29.01.2021, 13.05.2021, 29.07.2021
Exam Boards	08.01.2021, 26.02.2021, 25.06.2021, 26.08.2021
Programme Boards	11.02.2021, 27.05.2021
Admissions Committee	06.10.2020, 08.12.2020, 21.04.2021
Academic Misconduct Hearing	07.01.2021
Expert Advisory Committee	15.01.2021, 18.02.2021, 01.04.2021, 06.05.2021 14.06.2021, 20.07.2021, 11.08.2021
Student Disciplinary	No meetings

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

In the period 2020/2021 the Head of Student Recruitment resigned in May 2021 after all intakes for this academic year (September 2020 and February 2021).

As a consequence of submitting an extension of scope - blended learning QA application new positions were created, and existing positions were amended. How existing roles changed, and the new roles and responsibilities of an Educational Technologist and Moodle Coordinator are contained in Chapter 2 of the College Quality Assurance Handbook.

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

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

There were no programme reviews and revalidations during the 2020/21 academic year.

In addition to quality assurance reviews, there was an annual financial audit conducted and a three surveys with students to inform the college on online provision. These considered facilities, resources, the learning environment, and student experience. These were conducted in November 2020, January and May 2021.

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

With the exception of the audit of admissions by Stephen McManus there was no expert review team / panel involved in IQA in 2020/21. A preparatory session on 31st August 2021 was conducted prior to the QQI Panel Visit (07.09.2021) to consider our blended learning application. This will be reported in the 2023 AQR.

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

The following are a number of initiatives released or conducted during 2020/21 with the aim to support learners, create efficiencies or review the efficacy of our processes.

- Elevate – IBAT Student Magazine

Elevate was released in 2020/21. It has contributions from staff, lecturers and learners. Article themes are career related, well-being, cultural awareness etc.

Links to the copy are as follows;

1. February 2021 – First edition

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/3ac87b6c-33e6-4646-8fe5-25233ca13c81>

2. December 2021 – Second Edition

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/a65bb447-6f36-437a-931c-3a78606956e6>

- Air Cover webinar series– Students and lecturers

GUS, the parent company of IBAT College extended to our staff, students, and lecturers' access to The *Air Cover* webinar series they have developed. The first webinar

The webinar series aims to provide business webinars with inspiring, thought-provoking, and challenging speakers who share and will bring to life, values of respect, competence, entrepreneurship, student focus, integrity, communication, and collaboration.

The Series is sponsored by accessiBe, an automated AI-powered solution that make websites accessible to people with a range of disabilities. accessiBe is a mission and vision driven company with the goal of making the internet accessible by 2025 and enabling every individual with and without a disability to enjoy what the internet has to offer! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mPnS8sPqvY>

In 2020/21 there were 2 webinars delivered in the series

22.07.2021 - Mark Webb, Head of Communications for Shift.ms, a social network for people diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

Mark is a disability advocate who was shortlisted by Shaw Trust as one of the 'UK's most influential disabled people' and was nominated for 'Positive Role Model of the Year (Disability)' in 2021. Mark also plays Wheelchair Rugby for Bournemouth Lions, has sky-dived for charity multiple times and has taken part in Tough Mudder.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=545bISTcUok>

15.06.2021 Caroline Buckingham, Senior Vice President for Korn Ferry, a global organisational consulting firm Caroline brings with her over 20 years' RPO experience and a personal passion for diversity and inclusion which started at Microsoft when she was the Diversity Lead for the UK. During this time, she implemented initiatives

to retain and attract senior females into the business. Today her legacy lives on in the CWT network which pulls together six leading technology companies in the UK to meet every six months to share best practices. This is your opportunity to hear first-hand how to build recruitment strategies, diversify and hire talent.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Esv6lIE-HVo>

- Helpdesk System


In 2020/21 a web-based helpdesk – 24/7 ticketing service was implemented to record, manage and analyse all requests from learners, applicants and other stakeholders. A ticket is created, assigned to a department. The Head of that Department assigns it to a member of staff in their department.

<https://my.ibat.ie/helpdesk/public/auth/login>

Analysis of the tickets to date show;

 + 2573
TOTAL CREATED

 x 2614
TOTAL CLOSED/
RESOLVED

 x 13
CURRENT IN PROGRESS
(OPEN INBOX)

 493
TOTAL REOPENED

 x 1
TOTAL OVERDUE

Statistics

Department	Closed	Open	Resolved	Overdue
English Language School	716	5	500	1
General	182	1	108	
Higher Education School	315		158	
IT	120		137	
Library	1		46	
Reception	14	7	101	
Registrars Office	421		715	
Sales / Admissions	74		122	
Student Affairs	46		29	

The English School who has the most students receive the most requests, followed by the Registry Office. The nature of EL requests during the period was requests to move from morning to evening classes, access links to online classes, holiday and absence requests. In Registry the nature of requests was for letters, duplicate certificates, education verifications etc.

- Audit of Admissions

The expert, external and thorough audit of admissions on the BA Honours in Business is discussed in item 1.2 above. Whilst the audit found IBAT to be compliant a number of recommendations were offered in the report. These were considered and actioned, e.g., more information prior to arrival, simplifying the English about English language requirements.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

IBAT College has been represented in the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) since its inception. The Head of School and Registrar both attend every meeting or at a minimum 1 is in attendance. In the period 2020/21 we attended the following meetings.

- 10.09.2020
- 10.12.2020
- 15.04.2021
- 07.05.2021
- 17.06.2021

In November 2020 the Registrar also provided baseline enrolment data to assist NAIN Working Group 3 with their work.

In 2020/21 there was only 1 Academic Misconduct Hearing convened on 07.01.2021. Two learners were considered, one minor incident, one recidivist affecting several submissions. Having been exposed to the current best practice we adopted a less punitive stance and a more reflective and collaborative approach to assist the individual concerned to improve their poor practice. They were successful subsequently in resits (August 2021) and progressed to stage 2 in September 2021.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

No.	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators <i>Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.</i> <i>If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).</i>
	Staff become familiar with QA policies of potential partner.	Upon agreement of terms / roles and responsibilities with a partner HEI Access and training of the QA processes is part of the arrangement, particularly for the Registry and Academic team
	CPD for staff	Blended Learning Workshop – December 2021 IBAT led - National T&L Forum Workshop – March 2022 AI Workshop – April 2022
	College website	Our parent company, GUS, their IT along with our Head of IT and Marketing Manager will overhaul the IBAT platform to augment its security, ensure its accessible to all types of learners, redesign pages (less text / more visual with content), faster and standardised further.
	English Language Curriculum Review	Led by the Academic Enhancement Coordinator a more contemporary curriculum with less reliance on printed material, 2 as opposed to 3 books required for all levels, incorporating technology assisted learning content was finalized in September 2021. It was rolled out to new starters in October 2021 when the Frederick Street campus reopened after an easing of CoVID 19 restrictions

	Develop Alumni Proposition	<p>In 2020/21 the IBAT Mentorship Programme was announced.</p> <p>https://www.ibat.ie/ibat-mentorship-programme.html There are currently 7 mentors. The scheme is managed by the Marketing Manager.</p> <p>It's a scheme that aims to connect current and prospective IBAT students with our Alumni who now have a career in their field of interest. Prospective and current learners, along with other alumni can gain valuable insights, advice, and clarity on opportunities before they choose a programme to study at IBAT or while you are studying a programme at IBAT and want to know more about the job market in a certain field, how to make a career transition or basically just insights into the industry.</p>
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3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
BA Honours in Business – Preparation to commence for Programmatic review in 2023	Semester 2, 2021/22	Ongoing via Programme Boards
An external review of College Health & Safety policies and processes	Semester 2, 2021/22	February 2020

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

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

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

Case Study 1: Student centric approach in handling students who contracted CoVID 19

Introduction – Context

Section 1.5 of the College Quality Assurance Handbook outlines the College’s Mission, Vision, and its Values. Our values are not mutually exclusive, and each complements each other. The first and most important value though is **Learners’ First**, expressed in the following statement of what students can expect from us and guiding staff on what conduct is expected of them.

1. We have a deep commitment to our learners. The learner sits at the heart of everything we do. We seek and act on their feedback to enhance their experience.

We were acutely aware of the impact of the pandemic from a student perspective as we maintained regular communications with our students, seeking feedback on how they were feeling and engaging in their studies. This allowed us early on to identify the issues facing them and the actions required to address these issues, and the lessons that can be learned to improve teaching and learning, as well as their overall experience in Ireland. Student well-being is an important factor of academic achievement.

The number of students who had counselling sessions between 01.09.2020 to 31.08.2021 were:

Number of students: 58

Number of sessions booked: 275

The college counsellor noted an increased number of students attending counselling sessions. She confirmed that there was a significant increase in sessions being booked by students, both in percentage terms and in absolute numbers relative to non-Covid years. Furthermore, students were more committed to continuing with sessions. Main concerns were being home-sick, worried for their family in countries that were slow to respond to CoVID, feeling isolated and detached. Some had pre-existing conditions of anxiety, and a few had diagnosed cases of depression. These people were made clear that the counselling sessions were only part of an overall care plan for them.

Survey responses in the period 01.09.2020 to 31.08.2021 of higher education and English language students showed a high awareness of the counselling student support service offered by the college. In addition, respondents were very satisfied with the administrative support they received from the college. They responded positively too that they felt they could ask questions in a supportive learning environment. There were more mixed responses to the question, I find the online experience is broadly equivalent to the classroom experience. MBA

Planning for CoVID

- College wide CoVID specific Risk Assessment

Available upon request an institutional risk assessment specific to CoVID was conducted on all aspects of college operations. This was led by the College Principal with participation from all departments. This group was called the Return-to-Work group. It initially met in early June 2020, twice weekly, Tuesdays and Thursday to create the risk assessment and develop protocols and draft communications for all relevant stakeholders. Eventually meetings became weekly until the college reopening in October 2020.

Signage, training and developing protocols were outcomes identified from this exercise. Protocols on notification of symptoms from students and staff were developed. Entrance and egress protocols to operate in both campuses utilising QR codes so questionnaires could be completed were developed too. Ongoing monitoring and Marshalls on the ground enabled the operationalising of such protocols.

- CoVID Marshall Training

The risk assessment identified specific training required. Safety Squad Limited was contracted to provide this training on 23rd September 2020 prior to the college reopening both its campuses in October 2020. 25 staff received the training (13 in Wellington Quay campus & 12 in North Frederick Street campus).

This course considered the following.

- Help with putting in place the COVID-19 control measures.
- Communicate regularly with your employer and assist in providing COVID-19 health advice to your co-workers.
- Carry out regular checks that COVID-19 control measures are in place.
- Keep a record of non-compliance with COVID-19 workplace controls. • Report to your employer / manager any problem areas or non-compliance.
- Listen to the concerns of fellow workers and raise them with your employer.
- Help keep your fellow workers up to date with the latest COVID-19 advice from Government.
- Help as part of a response team in managing someone with symptoms of COVID-19 at the workplace

Certificates were issued from the training provider. These and the presentation are available upon request.

- Key Principles for the Arrival of International Higher Education Students to Ireland 2020/2021

Prior to the commencement of the 2020/21 academic year the Department of Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science invited all HEIs to endorse, accept and be bound to The Key Principles for the Arrival of International Higher Education Students to Ireland 2020/2021 and its successor the International Student Protocol 2021-22. The principles aimed to ensure the safe management of the arrival of international students into Ireland in line with public health requirements. IBAT College Dublin welcome this initiative and agree to protocols for the academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

A clear description of the entry requirements for international students arriving in Ireland was provided to all new and returning students. In IBAT College we applied the principles to our English language students too. Offer letters were modified to provide information on entry requirements to ensure adherence to government regulations. Communications were sent to students on entry requirements, what fully vaccinated meant? Travel arrangements were requested to ensure staff could provide timely information on current government requirements. What to do post arrival regarding current restricted movement and post-arrival testing if they developed symptoms of COVID-19 was also provided.

Our view was that ensuring a safe and managed arrival of international learners protects the students, staff, and the wider community.

The office of the Registrar completed weekly reporting to the Department of Further, Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on student numbers relating to prearrival, arrival, post arrival symptom tracking, accommodation, and restricted movement activity. This was based on data collated from the Admissions team and documented interactions between the Student Affairs Coordinator and learners. Colleagues were appraised of the requirements through an information session Chaired by the Registrar. Training took place in August 2020 and August 2021.

QQI were informed that the December 2020, January, May & August 2021 exam diets required us to replicate the real experience virtually.

In advance all students received an exam attendance notification outlining details of the exam date, duration, module assessed and the format of the exam. How exams were set-up and administered further assisted in countering any attempts to undermine the integrity of the exams process. All students had signed an integrity pledge and were aware that we had the option to ask students to develop their answer in more detail in the form of a Q&A session (integrity test) after the exam.

We utilised the same Google tools the students are familiar with in the delivery of lectures- Google Classroom, Google Meet and Google Docs.

• Google Classroom –

Each exam was set-up as if it were a Class with its corresponding resources. Exam Regulations, The Exam Paper, Answer Book, and Excel sheet for calculations. A meeting link was generated and shared with students, the lecturer, and invigilator(s). This allowed us to manage the start and finish time (owner can start & stop sharing, can un-share an individual). There is less disruption from a person leaving/entering within the time permitted as this is done virtually. Invigilation & Attendance Reports were completed as per offline exam processes. .

• Google Meets –

The Virtual Exam Hall Link was sent in advance and only accessible if students are accessing via the App or via Google Classroom directly. Here the Invigilator and Lecturer can see the registered students and speak with them all. They had visibility of each student. All our Attendance logs have a photo of the registered student so the right person can be accounted for.

• Individual Google Documents –

Each student registered to the exam had access, via Google Classroom, their individual answer book and excel sheet for calculations/rough work/their thoughts etc. The answer book and sheet were shared with the lecturer & invigilator(s). Students were informed of this in the exam attendance notification. Shared Google Docs allowed the invigilator in real-time to review an individual script as the student is typing. They could see if the student copied and pasted, font changes etc., indications that academic integrity may be compromised. The Invigilator could then message the student privately to cease or to speak after the exam. Any interaction was noted in the Invigilator Report completed for each exam.

At 1.00 pm when the exam finished all remaining students were removed from the Classroom and from the document being shared so they could not subsequently make edits. In addition, all exam scripts are uploaded to SimCheck (Plagiarism Software) to be checked after the exam. Therefore – cheating can be determined in

real-time and if missed another opportunity after the exam through SimCheck. • Exam Paper – this was released in Google Classroom at 10.00 am each morning to mirror the handing out of exam papers in a FTF setting.

• **Correction –**

Lecturer had shared access to the individual google docs, and they could commence their marking once we had sent them the originality reports.

• **Time management –**

Ordinarily exams are 2-hour in duration. We deemed 3 hours appropriate in this case as students are typing answers and to get students settled as this was their first time doing virtual exams.

Student feedback was positive. The exams were spaced out, typically a day between each and 2 days in some cases.

Performance in the online exam diets:

December 2020 and January 2021

• September 2020 cohort

8 of 15 students, year 1, semester 1 completion (6 modules, 30 ECTS, December 2020 exam diet, considered at the February 2021 Exam Board). 1 student withdrew, 1 student had COVID, the other 5 had resits ranging from 1 to 6 modules. Resits are taken in August 2021 (end of stage)

• February 2020 cohort

8 of 14 students progressed to Stage 2 after the January 2021 Exam Board (December 2020 exam diet), with a further 3 progressing to stage 2 after the resits (January 2021 exam diet, considered at the February 2021 Exam Board). The other 3 are completing resits in May 2021 for possible progression in September 2021.

• October 2019 cohort

4 of 6 students, year 2, semester 1 completion. Other 2 students had 2 and 4 resits.

May 2021

• February 2021 cohort

18 of 23 students, year 1, semester 1 completion. 5 with resits, 2 people will the whole semester. The other 3 only had single modules to remediate.

• September 2020 cohort

6 of 14 remaining students progressed to Stage 2.

8 students had resit exams in August 2021. 2 of these students had all 12 modules to complete and decided to complete year 1 again.

• February 2020 cohort

Only 3 in the cohort, year 2, semester 1.

Despite 11 being eligible to progress many transferred to an alternative provider. These students sought instalment plan arrangements to meet Y2 fees. A VISA condition is all fees for international students must be paid in full. The Registrar contacted INIS to see if a derogation to the rules could be applied during CoVID19 as many international learners were affected with reduced employment opportunities. INIS responded saying that the only concession was automatic visa extensions and all other rules applied.

Despite IBAT having comparable fees with other private providers these students left. It would suggest that providers under QQI's regulatory remit are engaging in unfair, unethical and illegal recruitment practices if they are issuing instalments plans to international students.

2 completed the semester. The other student had 3 resits.

3 of the original Feb 2020 cohort completed year 1 module resits in May 2021 and 2 progress to Stage 2 in September 2021.

- October 2019 cohort

3 of 6 students progressed to stage 3, Other students had 2, 4 & 5 modules to resit in August 2021.

August 2021

- February 2021 cohort

Of the 5 students taking resits, 2 semester completion all 6 modules, 30 ECTs. I can pass by compensation, subject to performance in semester 2. 2 other students did not engage and did not complete at resits.

- September 2020 cohort

Of the 6 taking resits, a further 3 eligible to progress to Stage 2, 2 withdrew and went to another provider. Of the other 3 students, 1 withdrew, 2 others have 11 & 10 modules to retake. They are not engaging with the college.

- February 2020 cohort

1 student withdrawn after exhausting all attempts to pass year 1 modules.

1 student did not do his 3 resits.

- October 2019 cohort

1 further student progressed to Stage 3. In September 2021 there were 12 students in 3rd year, 4 from the October 2019 cohort and 8 students admitted on advancing standing basis.