2023 Annual Quality Report (IBAT College Dublin)
CASE STUDIES RELATED to
Academic Year September 2021 – August 2022

Title: Reassessing the IBAT Mentorship Scheme

Theme: Taking a closer look at student-staff partnerships was a theme specifically identified by QQI as important in this reporting period and the college had coincidentally commenced a review on the effectiveness of its original mentorship offering.

Keywords (2-3 words): Partnership, Ambassadors, Peer learning, knowledge-sharing,

Abstract

In 2020 the IBAT Mentorship Scheme was unveiled for all IBAT Professional Diploma* students. This was a pilot prior to extending the scheme to include degree students. The initiative was led by the Marketing Manager and Director of Strategic Partnerships of Global University System (GUS). Its focus was to promote courses by facilitating discussion with a person who had successfully completed a course and was working in that area. It also showcased to potential applicants that the college was connected with industry. During CoVID open evenings were online. When on-campus courses and open evenings were permitted there was a reticent from people to attend such programmes and the college found that many mentors were no longer willing to engage, hence the need to fundamentally reassess what the purpose of the scheme was.

*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).

The Old Scheme

This case study outlines the review process, adopting a more balanced approach between commercial and teaching and learning perspectives of such an initiative.

The current mentorship scheme details with some images are as follows.

https://www.ibat.ie/ibat-mentorship-programme.html

IBAT Mentorship Programme
What does a mentor do?

- Testimonial/Videos
- Speaker on Webinars
- Social media involvement
- One-to-one support

Mentoring can change someone's world

Alumni Mentoring Programme

Our new scheme aims to connect current and prospective IBAT students with our Alumni who now have a career in their field of interest. Gain valuable insights, advice, and clarity on opportunities before you 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.
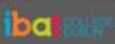
How can I become a Mentor

Become a Mentor

Mentoring will give you an op change someone's world

MEET OUR CURRENT ALUMNI MENTORS

Sagar Nikam
Portfolio & Performance Lead Analyst

A diploma in Psychology helped me in people management while choosing appropriate leadership styles in managing teams with diverse age groups and experience levels, considering different behavioral differences as per age and individual attitude.

Sagar Nikam Portfolio & Performance Lead Analyst / Bank of Ireland

Caroline O'Regan
Client Success Specialist

The course that I took at IBAT really has helped me already with my career goals. I have taken leadership of small SME activities to which I try to drive engagement across my department. I feel more confident to apply for a management position in the future once this becomes available to me as I feel like that I now have the necessary knowledge gained from doing the course.

Caroline O'Regan Client Success Specialist / Indeed

Karla O'Rourke
Principal Consultant

I collaborate with organisations to find them top talent in the Project Management community. As a specialist recruitment consultant, it is my duty to understand the role of a Project Manager and my decision to complete the certification at IBAT derived from that obligation. Client and candidates appreciate that I understand the world of Project Management from a theoretical perspective and I have gained a lot of respect in the PM community as a result.

Karla O'Rourke Principal Consultant / IT Search

In 2020 we had anticipated getting mentors would be a challenge but that was not our experience. Our approach though was less targeted and sent to all Diploma alumni. The outcome was a concentration of courses and more female volunteers.

Current Scheme
Representation: 5 females, 2 males
Courses represented:
3 - PMI (Project management)
2 - Psychology
1 - Human Resource Management
1 - Event Management

What has happened?

On its second anniversary in 2022 it was obvious to us that the scheme was not producing the outcomes we had intended. Therefore, the following steps were taken.

- A meeting to brainstorm and agree actions was convened in late 2022, with a cross section of the college community. There was representation from the School, Student Affairs, Registry, Marketing, and The Careers Manager and Director of Strategic Partnerships of the college's parent company. The focus of this meeting was how to reconceptualise the IBAT Mentorship Scheme.
- Registry, the School, Student Affairs, and lecturers considered the data produced from Registry to identify potential new mentors.
- The School and Registry conducted desk-based research on best practice and were informed by the publication of the National Student Engagement Programme's framework for student engagement, Steps to Partnership (2021). The Head of School and Registrar in 2021 had attended the briefing and launch of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's Student Success Toolkit. The toolkit, the Mentorship scheme and careers workshops in planning will complement each other to support published in 2021.
- All mentors were contacted to request their feedback, if they wished to re-engage and if so, why they did / did not.
- Learners that availed of the service were contacted to get their feedback. Were expectations met, if not, why not?
- A new incentive and training are being offered to mentors to entice and support them. Central to this is the premise that they are equal partners in this process and that they can learn leadership skills whilst helping others in their learning journey.

Constitution of the new mentorship scheme	
4 males	4 females
- Project Management - Psychology - HRM - Cyber - Bookkeeping - UXUI - Introduction to Computer Programming - Web Design	

Both IT & Business are considered to reflect the ethos of the college being the Institute of Business and Technology (IBAT).

Also, in this reporting period the college created the Women in Tech Scholarship offering any female applicant a significant discount (+25% to enroll in any IT related course), advancing diversity and inclusion in the technology space within

What's next?

- We're awaiting responses to our call to action sent to alumni and will ideally achieve representation against the criteria above.
- We can reassess the value proposition we created for mentorship involvement if take up is low.
- Update our website and create a campaign to inform all Diploma students that this and other services are available.
- Provide training to new and existing mentors, impressing upon them the connection of the mentorship scheme with career services, student affairs and other initiatives e.g., Student Success Toolkit.
- Assessing the new scheme in 2024 will inform how a similar mentorship arrangement will be offered to our learners on QQI awarded programmes.

It is still early days in this new initiative but the College has acted in recognizing that action was required when a well-intentioned initiative, yet narrowly informed one was not as effective as it could have been.

References:

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (2021), Student Success Toolkit. [Online]. Available at: https://studentsuccess.teachingandlearning.ie/ Accessed 07/02/2023

National Student Engagement Programme, (2021) STEPS TO PARTNERSHIP, A Framework for Authentic Student Engagement in Decision-Making. [Online]. Available at: https://studentengagement.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/NStEP-Steps-to-Partnership-WEB-VERSION.pdf Accessed 07/02/2023