

Implementation Plan

National College of Ireland

August 2025

	Recommendation	Commentary	Planned Actions	Planned Completion Date
1	The review team recommends that the self-identified 'next steps' developed in the ISER chapters are developed as more tangible sets of actions and prioritised with implementation timescales and assigned responsible parties to support their implementation.	All 'next steps' actions identified within the self-evaluation process will be progressed within the CINNTE Implementation Plan and/or the Executive Strategic Implementation Plan for 2025-2027. Both implementation plans are SMART, with Executive leads named for enhanced transparency and accountability.	a. Mapping exercise completed of ISER 'next steps' to drive progression and/or completion within the CINNTE and the Executive Strategic Implementation Plans.	August 2025
			b. Implementation plan monitoring added as a standing agenda item for Academic Council and Executive Group meetings.	October 2025 onwards
2	NCI should review the totality of action lines related to the strategic plan that are currently being progressed and monitored and consider how actions are prioritised and factored into the action plan in an appropriate and timely manner.	The NCI Governing Body mid-strategic plan review process approved a streamlining of actions under six priority areas. Each priority area is owned by an Executive Director with SMART actions identified. Progress will be regularly reviewed by the Executive and Governing Body.	a. Governing Body workshop held to approve refined Executive strategic priorities for 2025-2027.	February 2025
			b. SMART Executive strategic plan to be monitored quarterly by Executive Group and Governing Body.	October 2025 onwards
3	NCI should ensure that each of its strategic objectives is SMART, with clear indicators of performance, agreed milestones and targets to allow better tracking of progress and performance.		c. Annual review of the Executive Strategic Implementation Plan completed by Governing Body.	December 2025

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4	NCI must complete the vital review and revision and publication of its academic governance structures within the 2024 – 25 academic session, as planned, to ensure that all academic decision-making that should be the responsibility of an academic council and an appropriate set of committees and sub-committees is principally considered by or through that governance forum.	NCI has completed the planned review of its Quality Assurance and Enhancement System (QAES). The refresh took account of CINNTE panel feedback as well as advancing preparations for NCI's delegated authority application to QQI.	a. Academic Council approved a refresh of QAES Chapter 2 - Academic Governance Structures and Chapter 3 – Programme Quality. This included the terms of reference and membership of the new Academic Programmes and Quality Committee.	June 2025
5	NCI should develop full Terms of Reference that clearly state the remit, constitution and operational practices of its academic council and each committee and sub-committee.	The review resulted in the establishment of a new Academic Council Sub Committee – the Academic Programmes and Quality Committee (APQC). This will be responsible for the QA oversight of all NCI programmes and academic partnership arrangements with national, European and international partners.	b. Updates to the Terms of Reference and membership of Academic Council and its sub-committees approved by Academic Council.	December 2025
6	NCI should ensure that the constitutions of the academic council and each of its committees and sub-committees provide appropriate and balanced representation across internal stakeholder interests to enable appropriate challenge and academic scrutiny.	All Committee membership and terms of reference will be reviewed annually in the first committee meeting of each academic year, with changes approved by Academic Council and reported to Governing Body and QQI in the Annual Quality Report (AQR). Changes will be published alongside	c. Changes to Committee Terms of Reference and membership reported to Governing Body and QQI in the Annual Quality Report (AQR). Outcomes published on the NCI Website.	February 2026
7	NCI should ensure that the details of all academic committees are, and remain, up to date, accurate and complete, that they are published and accessible and		d. Academic Council approved a restructuring of QAES policies and procedures aligned to QQI and ESG Part 1 requirements.	June 2025
			e. QIE Website refreshed and relaunched providing the single source of truth for all academic	August 2025

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8	that they are housed in a location that acts as a ‘single source of truth.’	the AQR on the NCI Website each February. All QAES academic policies and procedures are published in a single source of truth on the NCI Website managed and maintained by the NCI Quality and Institutional Effectiveness (QIE) Team. QIE also manages registers of all NCI academic policies and procedures, programmes and academic partnerships. These, alongside associated academic risks, are monitored annually by the APQC and Academic Council.	governance and academic policies and procedures.	June 2025
	NCI should, as an immediate priority and before the start of the 2025 – 26 academic session, in line with its planned intentions, ensure that all of the policies, procedures and other information in the QAES that falls within ESG Part 1 and/or QQI’s statutory QA guidelines is accurate, complete, accessible and functions effectively as a single source of truth.		f. Academic Council approved the new Academic Programmes and Quality Committee Terms of Reference which included oversight for academic quality, partnerships and risks.	
20	NCI should revise its governance structures for oversight of the quality of delivery with other partners to ensure that academic matters relating to collaborative delivery, including academic risks, are considered by a sub-committee of academic council prior to being reported to that committee.			
9	The review team recommends that NCI prioritises and expedites its work to determine the optimum balance of full-time faculty and associate faculty to support the overall NCI strategy and for effective learning on each programme, to initiate a plan to achieve this balance, and to monitor the contract regularisation and currency of expertise of associate faculty.	Significant progress has been made on developing a workload allocation model for NCI Faculty and Associate Faculty. Once finalised, the model will be used in conjunction with programme full economic costings to support decision making, service provision and academic planning at both School and institutional levels.	a. Stakeholder consultation completed on Faculty/ Associate Faculty workload allocation modelling prior to the model being finalised.	December 2025
			b. New policies and procedures for workforce modelling approved by the Senior Management Team and launched.	May 2026

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11	The review team recommends that NCI continues its work on developing a workload management model and expanding and improving its full economic costing model to ensure that the wellbeing and development of its staff is sustainable and assured.	NCI takes staff wellbeing seriously and actively engages with HEA initiatives such as Healthy Campus to ensure alignment with sector best practice. This commitment will be further strengthened through a data driven approach to workload management.	c. Culture Project and stakeholder consultation process launched.	June 2025
			d. Consultation launched on a new performance management system to be implemented by 2027 in line with Strategic Plan targets.	November 2025
10	The review team recommends that a Performance Management and Development System is established for all College staff so that formal performance quality assurance is conducted and that development needs are recorded and addressed in a systematic, transparent and timely way.	One of the six strategic plan areas for 2025-2027 is focused on performance management and culture. This includes a commitment to reinforcing NCIs culture, which was acknowledged by the CINNTE panel to be unified around our institutional mission of 'changing lives through education'.	e. New Learning Management System Launched	February 2026
			f. Stakeholders consulted on preferred and most effective performance management framework and the KPIs to demonstrate alignment with institutional objectives.	March 2026
12	The review team recommends that the communication of learning and development opportunities for all staff is improved and that staff participation in these opportunities is systematically monitored and analysed.	Our strategic plan commits us to establishing a performance management and development system by 2027. This system will replace the existing promotions processes available to academic and non-academic staff. It will also include a systematic learning management system to record and promote staff development, education and training opportunities.	g. Implement the processes and tools for assessing employee performance. Provide guidelines and templates to facilitate the appraisal process and ensure consistency and fairness.	May 2026
13	The review team recommends that an updated and transparent promotion policy and framework for non-academic staff be introduced, comparable with that for academic staff.			

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14	The review team recommends that NCI seeks to expand the range of programmes which have accredited placement and/or work integrated learning.	All NCI's undergraduate degrees include work-placement opportunities (other than those that prohibit it due to professional accreditation requirements). NCI is a leader in apprenticeship programmes in the areas of Recruitment and Finance. In 2025/26, NCI will also offer student placements at a European level through Erasmus+ student mobility agreements.	a. NCIs Scope of Provision expanded to enable programmes to include a work placement opportunity to students through Erasmus +.	September 2025
			b. NCI Consultation initiated with key stakeholders to refresh policies and procedures around work placements and work integrated learning in alignment with updated QQI Guidelines.	May 2026
15 18	The review team recommends that NCI expedites its work to ensure monitoring and review of its access and progression work is supported by timely and readily accessible data that enable staff to better understand impact, including as it relates to inter-sectionality within the student body. The review team recommends that NCI prioritises the further work of the MIS project team to fully support the institution's goal of making better data driven decisions.	Qualitative and quantitative datasets that span the totality of the programme lifecycle are used in programme and institutional planning, monitoring, self-evaluation and reporting activities. This work has been led by the MIS Project Team. The MIS Project - including the use of AI and automation - has been approved as one of the six strategic plan priority areas for 2025-2027. This	a. Executive Group MIS data requirements gathering process completed and duplications identified prior to a prioritisation list being agreed for 2025-2027.	August 2025
			b. New NCI student attendance and engagement policy and procedure approved by Academic Council and launched as part of our student retention and success strategy.	December 2025

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27	The review team recommends that NCI incorporates data and evidenced based approaches more systematically as integral elements of self-evaluation monitoring and review	will enable NCI to target resources and supports to enhance student retention, progression, engagement and success. It will also seek to optimise staff and faculty access to module, programme and institutional data through self-access dashboards.	c. Quantitative and qualitative data provided to academic leaders for utilisation in annual and cyclical programme monitoring and review processes to be undertaken throughout 2025/26.	October 2025
16	The review team recommends that NCI reviews the selection and appointment process for external examiners so that the eligibility of potential external examiners is considered and approved for recommendation by a subcommittee of academic council and that all those involved in the process are familiar with its details.	The refreshed QAES Chapters 2 (Governance) and Chapter 3 (Programme Quality) provides clarity on the roles and responsibilities of Academic Council and its Sub-Committees for oversight of the external examiner system and an analysis of learner progression and achievements.	a. QAES Chapter 4 (Assessment and Examinations) refresh launched, including a refresh of the external examiner system.	June 2025
17	The review team recommends that NCI further investigates the causes of workload issues associated with learner results validation and verification and,	QAES Chapter 4: Assessment, is currently under review with stakeholder consultations completed	b. Academic Council approved refreshed QAES Chapters 2 and 3 including role of academic council and its sub-committees. The APQC will have responsibility for reviewing data and trends on student progression and achievement in advance of Academic Council.	May 2025

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23	where appropriate, reviews and refreshes the assessment and examination guidelines, taking care to maintain the robustness of their current processes.	prior to new policies and procedures – including external examiner procedures – being submitted for Academic Council approval in December 2025.	c. Academic Council approves updated QAES Chapter 4 with outcomes published on the NCI website.	December 2025
24	The LTAC should carry out thorough and ongoing monitoring, benchmarking, and analysis of learner results and outcomes and should do so at a level of detail that enables differential performance to be identified and explored; it should formulate follow-up actions based on this analysis.	The review will clarify administrative, academic and governance roles and responsibilities from assessment design through marking and result validation and verification to graduation. The review will enhance consistency, clarity and accessibility of assessment information for campus and online assessments and examinations.		
19	The provision of assessment information should be checked for consistency and accessibility.			
19	NCI should strengthen its approach to information and communication, particularly in light of its ambitions for growth. This should include developing a range of mechanisms to regularly test the effectiveness and impact of approaches to information and communication across all areas to support continuous improvement.	A refresh of QAES Chapter 10: Public Information against ESG requirements will be completed in 2025/26. This will clarify roles and responsibilities for ensuring the accessibility, accuracy and completeness of programme	a. A refresh of QAES Chapter 10 – Public Information - completed and the updated Chapter approved by Academic Council and published on the NCI website.	May 2026

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25	The College should enhance the clarity and accessibility of information on student services in student handbooks.	information and information about online and campus support services. Student Handbooks are approved in all programme validation and revalidated processes. Information on the new Student Hub and the supports available to students online and on campus will be updated in advance of each academic year by programme coordinators.	b. Review of student handbooks completed prior to the 2025/26 academic year by programme coordinators.	September 2025
21	A specific, measurable plan with a well-defined set of targets should be put in place to enable progress to be tracked to support the achievement of NCI's research strategy, build awareness of its importance within NCI, and its potential impact both internally and externally.	Delivery of the Research Strategy is one of the six strategic priorities for 2025-2027 agreed by the NCI Governing Body. This approach includes the identification and tracking of SMART goals.	a. Academic Council approved new Research Integrity Policy and Misconduct Procedures.	June 2025
			b. NCI Research Website refreshed and relaunched.	July 2025
			c. Researcher Portal launched.	October 2025
			d. Researcher Register published.	May 2026
22	NCI should establish a robust and systematic approach to the appointment, training and ongoing support of class representatives to maintain the excellent practice introduced in 2024 – 25.	The NCI/NCISU class representative structure will be reinforced as part of the 2025 NCI/NCISU Partnership Agreement refresh. This will provide reinforce administrative supports to the NCISU and Class representatives throughout recruitment, appointment and deployment.	a. Refreshed NCI/NCISU Partnership Agreement approved by Academic Council.	October 2025
26	The review team recommends that NCI considers how it can further develop and enhance a "Students as			

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	Partners” approach in self-evaluation, monitoring and review activities. This should involve the inclusion of students in all governance fora including academic council committees and programme committees.	The Partnership Agreement will also reinforce the ways class representatives and NCISU Officers participate in NCI governance structures building on the current student representation at Governing Body and Academic Council. The student voice and experience remain a key component of qualitative data that informs planning, monitoring and review processes at a programme and institutional level.	b. Changes to the membership of Academic Council and its sub-committees to include additional student representatives approved by Academic Council and reported to Governing Body and QQI in the Annual Quality Report (AQR).	February 2026
28	NCI should ensure that matters arising from the oversight, monitoring and review of collaborative arrangements are specifically highlighted as part of its routine annual and periodic review process and reported to academic council to ensure that any good practice can be readily shared and any lessons to be drawn from any challenges or issues are identified and addressed.	The new Academic Programmes and Quality Committee includes in its terms of reference, oversight of proposed and existing academic partnerships.	a. Terms of Reference for the new Academic Programmes and Quality Committee approved by Academic Council with responsibility for oversight of partnership arrangements.	June 2025
29	NCI should ensure that the conduct of due diligence reflects the approach and processes set out in its QAES	APQC will review thematic and programme specific information regarding the quality and impact of academic partners within annual and cyclical programme monitoring processes. APQC will also report	b. QAES update to be approved by Academic Council clarifying management and governance structures for academic partnerships including due diligence processes.	October 2025

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	and should record the dates of due diligence as part of its register of collaborative provision. Should due diligence not be undertaken, that fact and the reason for it, should be formally recorded.	<p>annually to Academic Council on the quality of academic partnerships.</p> <p>The QAES refresh process will include the development of a distinct set of policies and procedures for national, European and International academic partnerships.</p> <p>This refresh will be led by the QIE Director who will be responsible for the quality management and reporting of academic partnerships from the completion of due diligence processes to partnership review and renewals mapped across each phase of the programme lifecycle management structure. The quality of the partnerships will be reviewed and reported explicitly in annual and cyclical programme monitoring processes.</p>	c. Holistic refresh of Academic Partnership policies and procedures approved by Academic Council.	May 2026
			d. Qualitative and Quantitative data on academic partnerships assessed and discussed within annual and cyclical programme monitoring.	November 2025 onwards
			e. Annual report on Academic Partnerships considered by APQC and Academic Council.	February 2026