Innopharma education

Self-Evaluation Report

for the QQI CINNTE process 2026



Message from the President



On behalf of Innopharma Education, I am pleased to present our first Self-Evaluation Report (SER) as part of our inaugural CINNTE review by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI).

Innopharma Education is a QQI-approved provider of further and higher education programmes leading to awards at Levels 5–8 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Our development has been supported by longstanding collaborative partnerships with Technological University Dublin and Griffith College, which have contributed to our academic growth and will remain an integral part of our programme provision.

This review comes at an important stage in our development, as we continue to expand our provision at NFQ Levels 5–8 and seek to extend our QQI-approved scope of provision to Level 9. Our Strategic Plan 2026–2030 sets out our ambitions for academic development and institutional growth. The findings of this self-evaluation will inform its implementation, helping to ensure that our academic governance, quality assurance, learner supports and organisational capacity develop in a coherent, sustainable and learner-centred way.

Our programmes are informed by close engagement with government and its agencies, industry, staff, lecturers and learners, alongside the economic and technological developments reshaping the sectors we serve. These relationships help us respond to evolving skills needs while maintaining our commitment to academic quality and learner success.

We approached the self-evaluation process as more than a regulatory requirement. It provides an opportunity to reflect critically on our development and consider how our policies and procedures are experienced in practice. This report identifies both our strengths and the areas where further development is required. We have sought to be transparent about both, recognising that a mature quality culture depends on an institution's willingness and capacity to identify challenges and address them.

The perspectives of learners, graduates, faculty, staff, employers, industry partners and external stakeholders have informed this report through engagement throughout the self-evaluation process. We are sincerely grateful to everyone who contributed.

As Innopharma Education enters its next phase of development, we welcome the independent perspective that the CINNTE review will bring. We see it as an opportunity to deepen our reflection, strengthen our practice and renew our commitment to placing quality, integrity and learner success at the centre of everything we do.



Orla Callan
President and CEO, Innopharma Education

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Introduction



Introduction

Innopharma Education presents this report as an in-depth evaluation of its governance, activities and arrangements for self-monitoring and review. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) was developed in line with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) CINNTE process for institutional review of Irish higher education providers, and evaluates the effectiveness of the College's quality assurance policies and procedures, the quality of its programmes, and its teaching and learning environment.

This is Innopharma Education's first institutional review following approval of its QA procedures by QQI in October 2020. Since then, the College has extended its own QQI provision across NFQ Levels 5–8, secured approval for blended learning including asynchronous provision, and is progressing towards extending its scope of provision to NFQ Level 9. This development builds on collaborative provision with TU Dublin since 2009 and Griffith College since 2013. The trajectory from collaborative delivery partner to an independent private provider offering QQI-validated programmes, while continuing these partnerships, provides an important context for this review.

The SER evaluates the College against the four CINNTE review objectives using evidence from learners, staff, governance bodies, programme monitoring and external stakeholders. For each objective, the report presents the relevant arrangements, evaluates the evidence, and identifies resulting strengths and enhancement priorities. Illustrative case studies are included in the appendices.

The SER uses the following approach for each objective:

- Description, to set out current arrangements, systems, structures and activities
- Evaluation, assessing effectiveness using evidence
- Key strengths
- Opportunities for enhancement
- Where a specific example illustrates a point particularly well, it is included as a case study in the link provided to the appendices

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Innopharma Education Approach to the SER



Innopharma Education Approach to the SER

A collaborative, evidence-based and reflective process

The development of Innopharma Education's Self-Evaluation Report (SER) was an inclusive, consultative and reflective process, drawing on the views and experiences of our staff, learners and external stakeholders, and informed by a wide range of institutional evidence. The process provided an opportunity to reflect on our progress to date, assess the effectiveness of our quality assurance arrangements and identify priorities for the next phase of our development.

Our SER Development Process

1 Engage	2 Gather Evidence	3 Consult	4 Analyse & Reflect	5 Draft	6 Review & Challenge	7 Endorse
All staff event to introduce CINNTE, its purpose and objectives, and to gather initial feedback.	Review of internal data, reports, feedback and key documentation	Engagement with staff, learners and external stakeholders.	Triangulation of evidence and identification of strengths and areas for enhancement	Preparation of the SER with input from across the College.	Discussion through management and governance structures	Final SER endorsed by College President prior to submission to QQI.

Stakeholder Engagement

We sought the views and insights of our key stakeholders to ensure a representative and balanced self-evaluation.

Staff	Learners	External Stakeholders	Evidence Base
Whole-staff engagement event on CINNTE	Series of class representative meetings with Learner Support Coordinator and College President	Input from industry partners	Learner and programme data
Opportunities for feedback and discussion	Review of all learner feedback	Feedback from external examiners	Learner, lecturer and staff feedback
Review of staff feedback and development needs	Consideration of learner experience data	Consideration of collaborative partner perspectives	Programme monitoring and review
		Insights from QQI panel reports	External examiner reports
			Panel reports and recommendations
			Governance and committee records
			Quality assurance documentation
100% of staff engaged through all-staff event	**Representative engagement across all programmes and levels**	**Multiple external perspectives considered**	

Key Consultation Activities

1	Series	Review	Multiple
All-staff CINNTE event	of class rep meetings	of learner and lecturer feedback	external stakeholder inputs

Governance and Endorsement

The development of the SER was iterative, with emerging findings reviewed and challenged through the College's management and governance structures, including the Senior Management Team, Academic Council and the Board. The final SER was endorsed by the College President prior to submission to QQI, ensuring institutional ownership and alignment with our strategic priorities.

"A shared opportunity to reflect, learn and shape what's next."

Figure 1.1 – Our approach to the Self Evaluation Report

Leading and Coordinating the Process

The Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes coordinated the self-evaluation, supported by a cross-functional CINNTE Working Group comprising the Registrar, Head of Teaching and Learning, College Librarian and Research Specialist, Head of Academic Programmes, Programme Leads (L5–L8), IT Manager and Programme Co-ordinators. The group coordinated evidence gathering, drafting, review and challenge across the four objectives.

1 Project Management

Central management and oversight of CINNTE preparation

- Overall coordination of the review process
- Development and monitoring of timelines and milestones
- Tracking of progress and identification of risks and mitigations
- Regular reporting to Senior Management Team, Academic Council and the Board of Directors

2 Working Group

Establishing and maintaining a work group comprised of key staff

- Representation from academic, professional and administrative teams
- Responsibility for progressing key sections of the SER
- Regular meetings to review progress, share insights and agree next steps
- Collaboration across the College to ensure an inclusive and representative approach

3 Document Management

Central management of all document versions and collaborative working documents using the College's platform of EduConnect

- Secure storage and version control of all documentation
- Shared access for the working group and contributors
- Use of templates and structured document naming conventions
- Real-time collaboration and tracking of changes

4 Feedback Mechanisms

Engagement with staff, students and external stakeholders

- All-staff event to introduce CINNTE and gather initial feedback
- Series of class representative meetings with the Learner Support Coordinator and College President
- Review of learner, lecturer and staff feedback
- Engagement with external stakeholders, including industry partners, collaborative partners and external examiners
- Consideration of feedback from QQI panel reports

5 Evidence Gathering

Identifying and gathering relevant data to support evaluations

- Review of internal data (learner, programme and quality assurance)
- Analysis of learner, lecturer and staff feedback
- Review of policy and procedural documentation
- Consideration of external examiner reports and QQI panel reports
- Collation of case studies and other relevant institutional evidence

6 Communication and Engagement

Building awareness of CINNTE and QA processes in general with all staff, with members of academic council and with members of the board of directors

- Regular updates to all staff on progress
- Information sessions and briefing materials
- Engagement with Academic Council and Board of Directors
- Opportunities for questions, feedback and discussion
- Ongoing communication throughout the review process

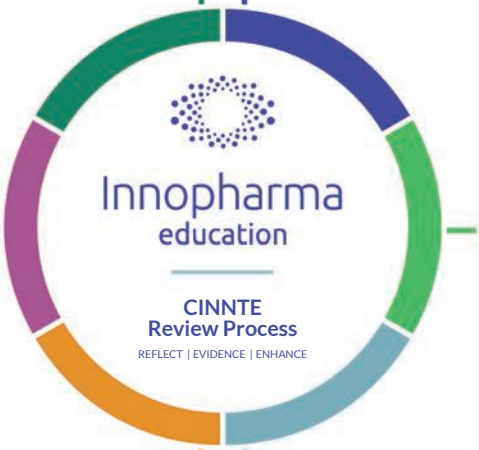


Figure 1.2 – The Review Process

Consultation and Evidence-Gathering

The formal self-evaluation process commenced in March 2026 following notification from QQI that the CINNTE review process for smaller independent and private providers was beginning.

Summary of Timelines	Detail of Timeline
6th March 2026	Email notification to Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes, advising of the commencement of the CINNTE review process which includes Innopharma Education
23rd April 2026	At a scheduled meeting of the Academic Council (AC), members were updated on the correspondence from QQI regarding the upcoming CINNTE review process.
28th April 2026	Update to all employees at weekly meeting regarding correspondence from QQI regarding the CINNTE process
4th June 2026	Staff survey 1 was distributed
16th June 2026	Following our first meeting with QQI, the briefing slides were shared at weekly all employee education meeting
6th July 2026	Receipt of formal commencement letter of the CINNTE external quality assurance review of Innopharma Education. This letter also requested the appointment of a Review Coordinator and response by July 10th. The Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes was appointed by the President as the Review Coordinator and following this, a working group was also formed.
15th July 2026	QQI briefing slides, QQI relevant documentation and timelines appropriate to Innopharma Education presented to the Board of Directors (BOD) by Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes.
23rd July 2026	All staff CINNTE focused day, at Innopharma offices in Sandyford.
Mid – Late August 2026	Series of class representative meetings held with College President & Learner Support Coordinator.
Early – Mid September 2026	Lecturer feedback and Learner feedback surveys conducted.
21st September 2026	Interview conducted with chair of Industry Advisory Board
22nd September 2026	Staff survey 2 was distributed
Mid – Late September 2026	Iterative process of drafting SER to gather feedback from Working Group, Executive Management Team, AC and BOD
5th October 2026	Submission of SER to QQI

The approach taken by Innopharma Education drew on consultation with staff, learners, teaching staff and external stakeholders using a combination of surveys, interviews, weekly staff meetings, an all-employee day, and consultation with the Executive Management Team (EMT), AC and BOD.

Existing evidence, which forms part of the College's routine quality assurance activity, was also utilised to inform the SER findings, including Annual Programme Reports, learner and class representative feedback, External Examiner and External Authenticator reports, and programme monitoring data. There were some restrictions gathering learner feedback for the purposes of this SER due to the nature of the programmes being typically 11 months in duration and commencing in September / October timeframe.

- The staff survey was conducted in two separate parts:
  - Staff Survey 1 had an 85% response rate and gathered qualitative feedback on roles, responsibilities, collaboration, priorities, challenges and areas of satisfaction along with utilisation of a new HR software system; and
  - Staff Survey 2 had a 93% response rate and was a staff perception and evidence-gathering survey intended to identify strengths, improvement priorities and examples of quality enhancement or good practices.
- Consultation with learners took the form of structured class representative feedback meetings. These were focus-group discussions, held online with class representatives, the College President and the Learner Support Coordinator. There was a 71% participation, which included representation from Innopharma programmes and collaborative programmes with Griffith College and TU Dublin.
- Additional learner feedback was gathered through a survey sent to learners who commenced their study in September 2026 which had a 20% participation rate. The structure of programme commencement which is throughout September and October resulted in limited opportunity to gather SER specific details so existing learner and class rep feedback processes were utilised.
- Industry Advisory Board consultation was achieved through a 1:1 interview with the chairperson of the Board.



All-Employee Day

An important step in the process was an all-employee day held on 23 July at Innopharma's Sandyford campus. All functions from programme administration, full-time academic staff, programme management, IT, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, the library, business development and senior management. The day was structured around facilitated table discussions in mixed groups addressing the four SER objectives and discussion about what CINNTE means.

A note-taker captured contributions at each table, and the themes that emerged have been incorporated throughout this SER.



Figure 1.3 – Slide example from Employee Day

Drafting, Review and Approval

The development of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) followed a structured and iterative process of drafting, consultation, review and governance oversight.

- The first consolidated draft was circulated for review to the AC, Executive Management Team and CINNTE Working Group.
- The second draft was submitted to the College President and the Chair of the BOD for review.
- A third draft was subsequently submitted to the BOD, Executive Management Team and CINNTE Working group
- The final SER was provided to the AC, BOD for review and approval and subsequently endorsed by the College President.

The drafting and review process was therefore designed as an integral part of the College's self-evaluation.

Innopharma education

Provider Profile



Provider Profile

Founded in 2009, Innopharma Education was established in response to the growing skills demands of Ireland's pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and medical technology sectors, seeking to bridge academic rigour with practical workplace application. Innopharma positioned itself as a specialist provider of industry-focused education, with a particular emphasis on life sciences. It achieved this initially through strategic, collaborative partnerships with Technological University Dublin[1] (commencing in 2009) and Griffith College[1] (commencing in 2013), through which over 14,000 learners have graduated.

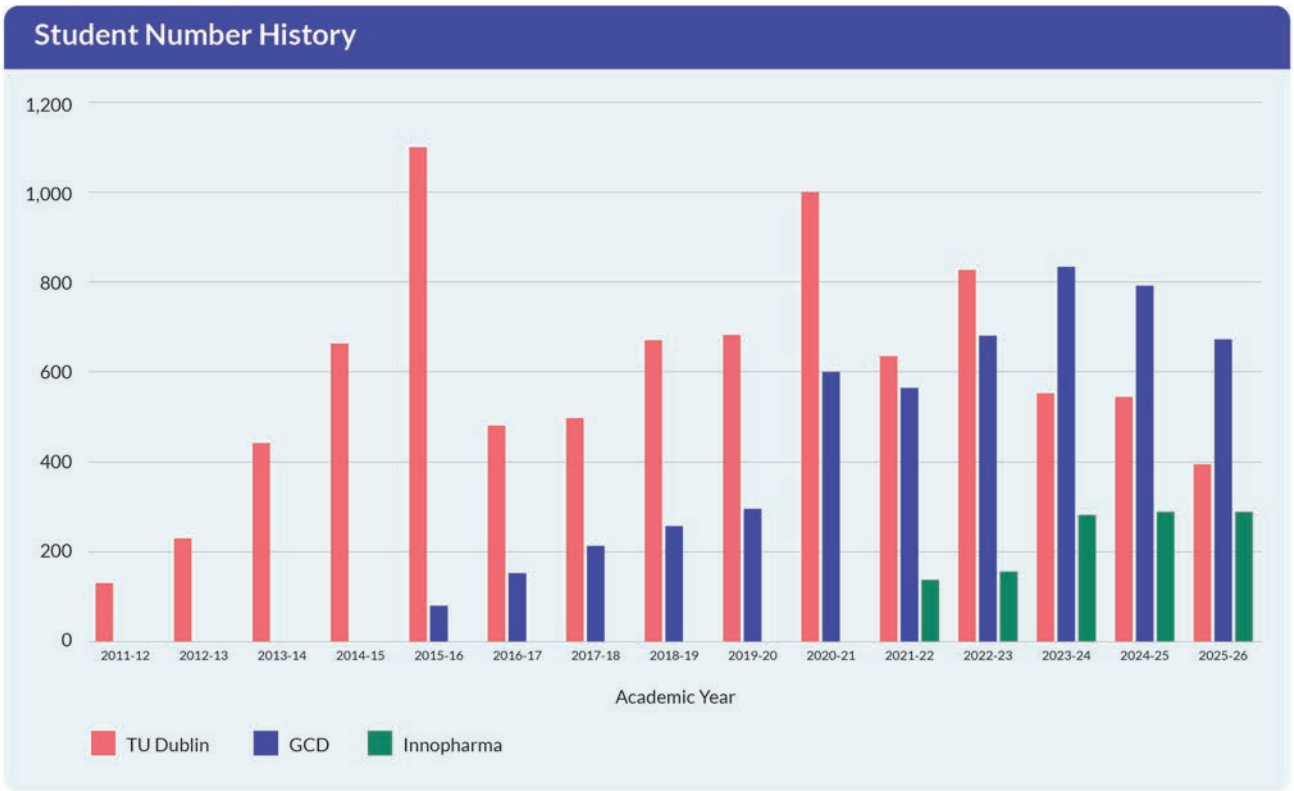


Figure 1.4 – History of Student numbers

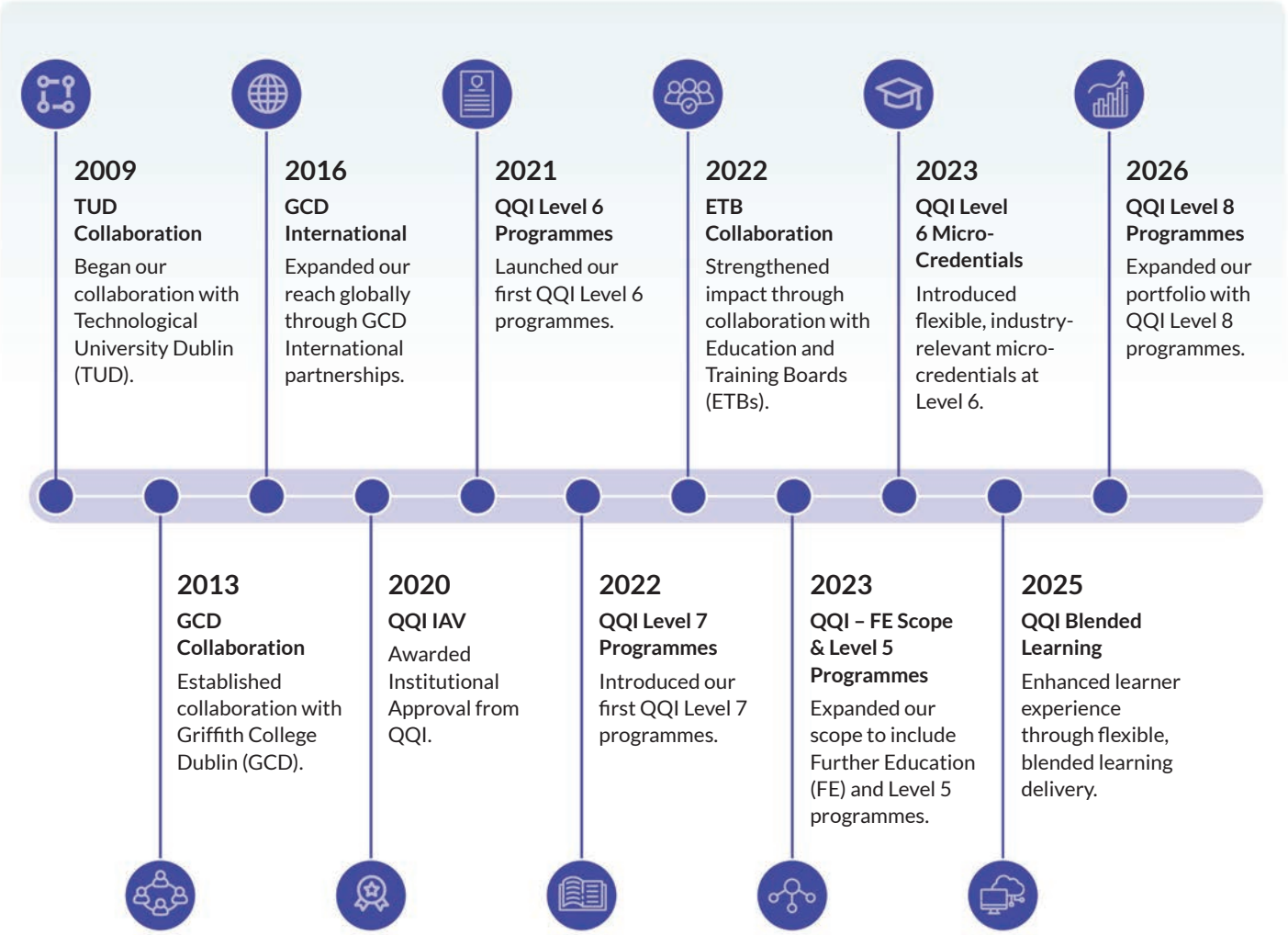
Innopharma Education has secured government-supported programme funding through initiatives including Springboard+, the Human Capital Initiative, the Learner Fee Subsidy and SOLAS. It has received Springboard+ funding since 2011 for programmes aligned with pharmaceutical, medical-device, food-science and digital-transformation skills needs. Demand remains strong: for January–October 2025 intakes, 2,073 applications were received for 830 places. Regular HEA monitoring also provides external oversight of compliance with applicable funding requirements.

1 Formerly IT Tallaght, which became part of TU Dublin following the merger of the Institutes of Technology in 2019. The collaboration with Innopharma Education continued after this merger.

In July 2023, Innopharma received significant investment from MML Growth Capital Partners Ireland Limited. The investment is being used as a platform for growth, innovation and the expansion of the institutions' range of industry and career focused education provision. It also facilitated the transition of the institution from an owner managed to an executive led institution. As a result, a newly constituted BOD was created comprising an independent chairperson, a non- executive director, three investment directors and two executive directors. It was also agreed that as part of the institutional management and governance structure, that the board would meet a minimum of 6 times a year.

Innopharma Education
Our Journey to Date

Over a decade of growth, collaboration and innovation in education – building partnerships, expanding provision and creating impact.



Our Commitment

We are committed to delivering high-quality, industry-aligned education that empowers learners, strengthens partnerships and drives positive impact in the communities and industries we serve.

Figure 1.5 – Innopharma Educations Journey to Date

Partnerships with TU Dublin and Griffith College

Innopharma Education's longstanding partnerships with TU Dublin and Griffith College have supported the creation and delivery of accredited, industry-aligned learning pathways from NFQ Level 6 to NFQ Level 9 programmes. The TU Dublin partnership has produced more than **9,000** graduates across pharmaceutical, medical-device and food programmes. The Griffith College partnership, established through the Griffith Innopharma Faculty of Science, has produced more than **5,000** graduates, including a growing international postgraduate cohort. These collaborations combine the principal providers' academic governance and quality-assurance frameworks with Innopharma Education's industry-focused curriculum design and delivery expertise.

The table below summarises Innopharma Education's scope of provision by NFQ level, indicating award type, delivery mode and whether provision is accredited by the College or delivered collaboratively with TU Dublin or Griffith College.

NFQ Level	Award types offered	Delivery mode	Delivered under	Provision type
5	**Special Purpose Certificates;** • Certificate in Essentials for Pharmaceutical Manufacturing • Certificate in QA Essentials – Pharmaceutical Manufacturing • Certificate in Pharmaceutical Chemical Processing • Certificate in Pharmaceutical Bioprocessing Operations	Blended	Innopharma Education	Validated with QQI
6	**Major award;** • Higher Certificate in Process Digitisation **Minor awards;** • Certificate in Operational Excellence for Process Digitisation/ Certificate in Information Technology for Process Digitisation **Special Purpose Awards;** • Certificate in Operational Excellence, Certificate in Supply Chain • Certificate in IT and Automation • Certificate in Data Visualisation • Certificate in Transversal Skills	Blended	Innopharma Education	Validated with QQI
6	**Major Award;** • Higher Certificate in Process Technology **Minor Awards;** • Certificate in Pharmaceutical & Medical Device Operations • Certificate in Food Science & Technology	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with TU Dublin

NFQ Level	Award types offered	Delivery mode	Delivered under	Provision type
7	**Major award;** BSc in Process Digitalisation **Minor Awards;** • Certificate in Operational Excellence and Sustainability in Supply Chain • Certificate in Automation and Data Analytics for Process Control	Blended	Innopharma Education	Validated with QQI
7	**Major award;** BSc in Process Technologies	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with TU Dublin
7	**Major award;** • BA in Pharmaceutical Business Operations	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with Griffith College
8	**Major award;** • BSc Honours in Process Digitalisation **Minor awards;** • Certificate in Digitalisation and AI • Certificate in Digital Business Excellence • Certificate in Sustainability Practices for Digital Transformation	Blended	Innopharma Education	Validated with QQI
8	**Major award;** • Higher Diploma in Food Science and Technology • Higher Diploma in Bio-Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Manufacturing	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with TU Dublin
8	**Major award;** • BA Honours in Pharmaceutical Business Operations	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with Griffith College
9	**Major Awards;** • MSc in Medical Device Technology and Business • MSc in Pharmaceutical Business and Technology • MSc in Digital Transformation • MSc in Pharmaceutical Quality Systems Validation and Technology **Post Graduate Diplomas;** • Medical Device Technology and Business • Pharmaceutical Business and Technology • Digital Transformation • Pharmaceutical Quality Systems Validation and Technology **Special Purpose Awards;** • Certificate in Pharmaceutical Quality Systems Validation • Certificate in Pharmaceutical Technology Certificate in Operational Excellence and Data Analytics • Certificate in Science in Advanced Manufacturing Strategy	Blended	Collaborative partnership	Validated with Griffith College







Provision leading to QQI awards under Innopharma Education's own approved scope of provision (Levels 5–8 above) operates under the College's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF) and associated academic governance structures. Collaborative provision with Griffith College and TU Dublin is delivered within the respective principal provider's academic regulations and quality assurance requirements, while Innopharma retains oversight of the academic and operational responsibilities assigned to it under each partnership arrangement. Innopharma's own QA and governance arrangements have evolved to support these interfaces, including clarification of roles and responsibilities, programme oversight, reporting and escalation routes, while ensuring that partner-specific requirements are applied where appropriate. This enables the College to maintain institutional oversight across its full portfolio while managing the distinct requirements associated with each pathway.

The collaborative partnerships remain an important source of institutional learning. Working within established TU Dublin and Griffith College frameworks exposes Innopharma to different approaches to academic governance, programme management, assessment and quality enhancement, informing reflection on the continued development of its own QQI provision.

Expansion of Blended Learning

QQI approved Innopharma Education's blended-learning policies and procedures in September 2026 following panel review in October 2025. Provision now includes synchronous and asynchronous modes, supporting flexible participation by working professionals. The resulting digital learning environment underpins the College's approach to teaching, learning and assessment described under Objective 3.

Mission, Vision and Strategic Direction

Innopharma Education's mission is to contribute value to society through the re-skilling, up-skilling and life-skilling of learners, with a vision of acting as "agents of transformation." This is currently carried forward through the College's second Strategic Plan (2026-2030), built on five priorities: Our Learners, Our Quality, Our Delivery, Our Engagement with Industry, and Our People and Structures.

Governance and Management Structures

Governance is exercised through a clear separation of corporate governance (BOD) and academic governance (an independently-chaired AC), with day-to-day management delegated to the Executive Management Team, supported by a committee structure reporting to AC.

Approach to Quality

The College's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF) and QA Manual are described under Objective 1. They reference QQI statutory, sector-specific and blended-learning guidelines and ESG 2015, and provide the framework for academic governance, programme development, teaching, assessment and learner support.



Staff Profile

Innopharma Education's staffing model reflects the specialist and industry-focused nature of its provision and comprises a combination of academic, programme management, learner support, quality assurance and professional services staff. At the time of preparation of the SER, 80 teaching staff contribute to programme delivery across Innopharma Education's provision (including TU Dublin and Griffith College programmes). Seventeen teaching staff are directly associated with Innopharma Education's own academic provision. Teaching provision is supported by 40 programme, administrative and professional services staff, encompassing programme management, academic administration, quality assurance, teaching and learning, learner and career support, library and research, assessment and examinations, IT and other institutional functions.

The staffing model enables the College to draw on a broad pool of academic and industry expertise while maintaining dedicated programme management and learner-support capacity. This is particularly relevant to Innopharma Education's learner profile, where many learners are adult, part-time and professionally engaged and benefit from accessible programme management, academic and learner-support structures alongside their teaching provision.

This table summarises the teaching staff by highest level of qualification:

Highest Qualification	% of Staff
Level 10	29%
Level 9	57%
Level 8	14%
Level 7	0%
Level 6	0%
Level 5	0

This table is a summary of Innopharma's full-time staff by highest level of qualification:

Highest Qualification	% of Staff
Level 10	9%[2]
Level 9	55%
Level 8	22%
Level 7	6%
Level 6	9%
Level 5	0

2 There are currently 2 additional employees undertaking their PHD research

Since Innopharma QQI programmes began enrolling learners in 2021, 1,032 individuals have registered across Innopharma Education's QQI-validated/accredited programmes, of whom 322 have completed more than one programme. Learners are predominantly mature adults entering with existing qualifications and professional or industry experience, a profile reflected in the College's approach to admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

These programmes serve domestic learners. At this time, Innopharma Education have not sought to market or recruit international students residing outside of Ireland for its own programmes, but has extensive experience of catering for the needs of international students through its collaborative programmes with Griffith College.

Learner Profile

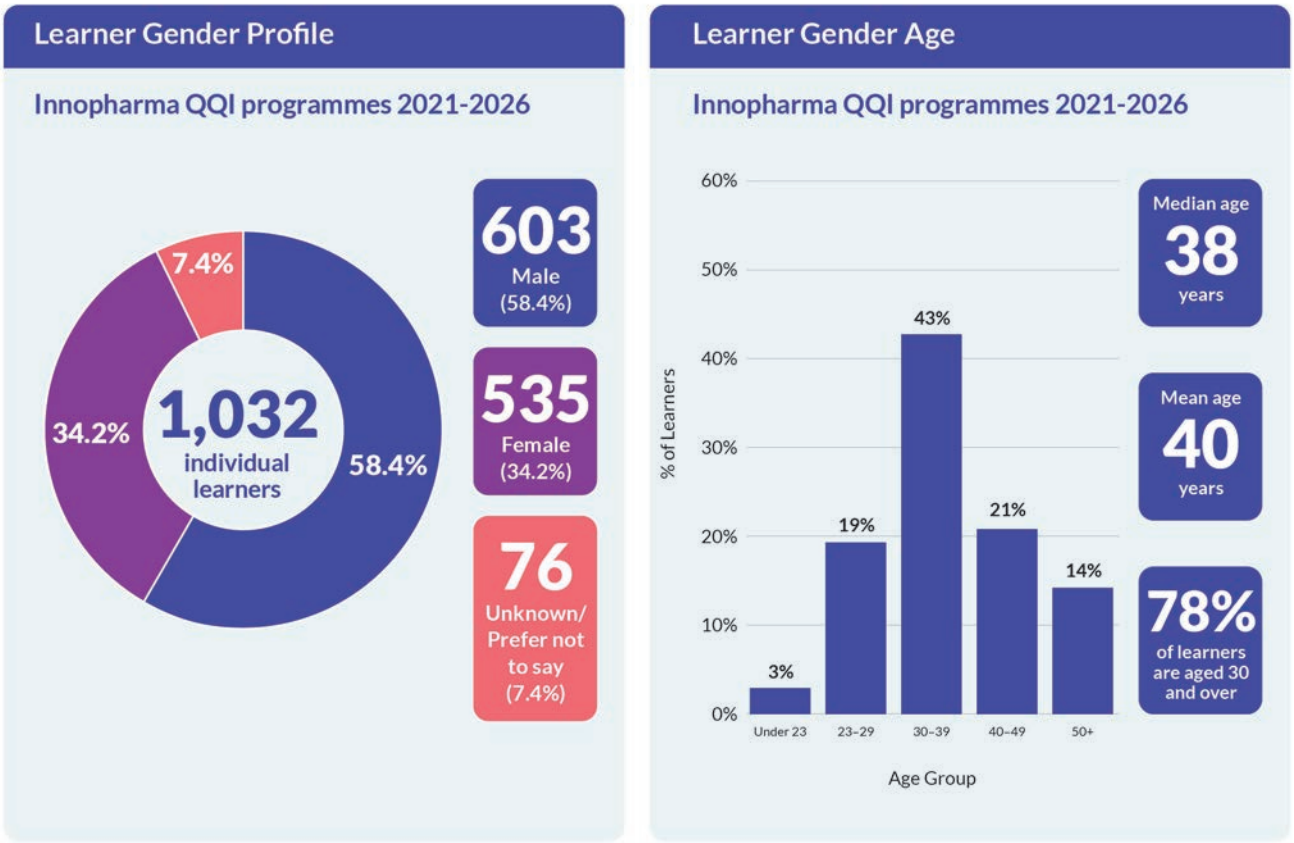


Figure 1.6 – Learner Profiles – Innopharma Education QQI validated Programmes

Programme Registrations by Programme
2021 – 2026

1,354
TOTAL REGISTRATIONS
across 12 programmes

2021/22
EARLIEST INTAKE
first independently validated programmes enrolled learners

12
PROGRAMMES
across Levels 5, 6 & 7

Programme	Intake Year	Total registrations	% of Registrations
Certificate in Information Technology for Digitisation (L6)	2021/22	219	16%
Certificate in Operational Excellence for Digitisation (L6)	2021/22	177	13%
Higher Certificate in Science in Process Digitisation (L6)	2021/22	105	8%
Micro Credential in Operational Excellence (L6)	2023/24	134	10%
Micro Credential Supply Chain (L6)	2023/24	100	7%
L7 BSc Process Digitalisation (L7)	2023/24	179	13%
L7 – Embedded Cert. Operational Excellence & Sustainable Supply Chain (L7)	2023/24	71	5%
Certificate in QA Essentials for BioPharma Manufacturing (L5)	2024/25	147	11%
Micro Credential Transversal Skills (L6)	2024/25	34	3%
Certificate in Principles and Practice of Bioprocessing (L5)	2025/26	125	9%
Certificate in Best Practices of Chemical Processing (L5)	2025/26	44	3%
Level 5 Specific Purpose Cert. in Essentials of Pharmaceutical Manufacturing (L5)	2025/26	18	1%

Figure 1.7 – Registrations by Innopharma QQI Validated Programme

Note: These figures relate to Innopharma programmes validated by QQI. The total number of learners across all programmes, including collaborative partnerships, exceeds 14,000.

Innopharma education

Objective 1 Governance and Management of Quality



Objective 1 Governance and Management of Quality

1.1 Innopharma Education Mission and Strategy

Description

Innopharma Education's mission is to contribute value to society through re-skilling, up-skilling and life-skilling learners, with a vision of acting as 'agents of transformation'. These commitments inform its flexible, industry-led model and its focus on learner and career development.

The mission is reflected in flexible learning pathways, industry-responsive curriculum design, learner support and engagement with employers and sector stakeholders across life sciences, manufacturing and digital transformation.

Mission delivery is considered through programme and learner outcomes, progression, employer engagement and continuing relevance to national and sectoral skills needs.

The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 is organised around five priorities: Our Learners, Our Quality, Our Delivery, Our Engagement with Industry, and Our People and Structures. Oversight rests across the Executive Management Team, AC, BOD and President within their respective responsibilities.

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered the extent to which the College's mission, vision and strategic priorities are reflected in institutional activity and remain relevant to the needs of learners, industry and other stakeholders. Development of the strategic plan considered feedback received from various stakeholders, including a number of Education Training Boards (ETB's), with which the College has had many interactions with over the past three years, including AMTCE (Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence) in Dundalk, Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB, Donegal ETB, Tipperary ETB, Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB and Laois, Offaly ETB. Additionally, it was informed by an internal SWOT analysis with senior management and departmental staff members focusing on key pillars of the business along with a number of strategy planning days. Skills reports have also been considered to focus on gathered as part of an industry survey.

Innopharma Education has adopted a staged approach to expanding its provision across NFQ Levels 6–8. Following approval of its scope of provision, the College progressed sequentially from a Level 6 Higher Certificate to a Level 7 Bachelor's degree and subsequently a Level 8 Honours Bachelor's degree, enabling it to build institutional experience and capacity at each level. Additionally, scope of provision was extended to include provision at NFQ Level 5 and the college is now progressing towards provision at NFQ Level 9.

The evidence demonstrates alignment between the College's strategic priorities and developments undertaken during the review period. The expansion of independent provision, expansion across NFQ levels, enhancement of blended learning arrangements, increased academic governance and continued engagement with industry provide examples of strategic priorities translating into institutional activity. For example, the Colleges journey to extend its scope of provision to NFQ Level 5 was informed by engagements with the Biopharma Chem Ireland (BPCI) Skillnet group. In this instance, BPCI identified a need for an NFQ Level 5 programme from their client companies, this programme was subsequently designed, developed and validated by Innopharma Education through QQI and then delivered to BPCI Skillnet clients. The College's journey to develop a suite of Level 6 microcredential programmes was also informed by an AMTCE need to provide stackable, microcredential programmes at this level. These examples illustrate how the College's mission, vision and strategy have been realised through the development of programmes that are meeting industry needs.

Industry engagement is particularly relevant to the College's mission as a specialist provider. The Industry Advisory Board provides a formal mechanism through which senior industry representatives can contribute external perspectives on emerging skills requirements, programme relevance and future institutional direction. The board is chaired by an external consultant, who was former chairperson of BioPharma Chem Ireland with many years of experience in the Life Science manufacturing sector. Other external members come from food, medical device and pharmaceutical companies, and as it is developing, the membership is being expanded. Feedback on programme development can be gathered through this mechanism – for example, at a meeting earlier in 2026, the Director of Postgraduate Programmes and Research utilised the expertise of the group to gather feedback on an MSc programme in Digital Transformation which led to further actions and development of a stakeholder survey based on feedback at this meeting. Although the Industry Advisory Board is in its infancy, it has been endorsed by its chair as a valuable mechanism for formal stakeholder engagement for Innopharma Education.

Overall, the self-evaluation found evidence that the College's mission and strategic direction are reflected in programme development, quality assurance enhancement, industry engagement and institutional development. The colleges strategy to expand its delivery provision has been evidenced through a 2025 gap analysis on blended learning standards and achievement of approval following a QQI appointed panel to advance to the next stage of blended delivery to include asynchronous. However, evidence of strategic implementation is currently distributed across different institutional processes and systems. While individual initiatives and developments can be demonstrated, the College does not yet have a consolidated institutional framework through which progress against strategic objectives can be systematically measured and reported over time.

3 The Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence is a premier national training facility, operated by the Louth and Meath Education Training Board. It is a National Centre of Excellence built specifically to lead the state's national training strategy for Industy 4.0 and advanced manufacturing.

As Innopharma Education expands its scope of provision and institutional responsibilities, more systematic use of measurable strategic indicators would strengthen the ability of AC, the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the BOD to assess progress, identify emerging risks and priorities, and evaluate the impact of strategic decisions. The EMT have responsibility for the attainment of the Colleges strategic objectives and meet on a weekly basis. More systematic strategic indicators and reporting would strengthen the ability of AC, EMT and the Board to evaluate progress and impact. EMT reviews strategic focus areas cyclically through its weekly meetings, providing a basis on which a more formal annual review can be developed.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Institutional capacity has developed alongside expansion of academic governance, QA and blended-learning arrangements.
- The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 provides a stakeholder-informed framework for institutional development.
- Approved blended-learning arrangements extend the College's capacity for flexible provision.
- Regular EMT review supports cross-functional oversight of strategic priorities.
- The Industry Advisory Board provides a formal source of external industry perspective.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Introduce an annual strategic review process linked to institutional priorities and emerging external requirements.
- Develop measurable strategic KPIs to support governance evaluation of progress and impact.
- Develop an integrated institutional performance dashboard linking strategic, academic, learner and operational indicators.



1.2 Structures and Terms of Reference for Governance and Management of Quality

Description

Governance distinguishes corporate, academic and executive responsibilities. The Board oversees strategic, financial and corporate matters; AC governs academic standards and academic decision-making; and the Executive Management Team manages day-to-day implementation. AC is supported by committees and project groups aligned to defined areas of academic activity.

The QAEF defines the relationship between strategy, policy, procedure, standard and resource, supporting a shared institutional understanding of how QA documentation is developed, approved, implemented and reviewed. Approval requirements are routed to the BOD, AC, or both, according to domain. The documented approach emphasises consultation, evidence, internal and external expertise and consistency across policies.

Collaborative programmes operate within the QA and academic regulations of the relevant principal provider, with designated Innopharma teams managing assigned academic and operational responsibilities. Partnership activity is reported through Innopharma's AC, maintaining institutional oversight while preserving the authority of the principal provider's framework.

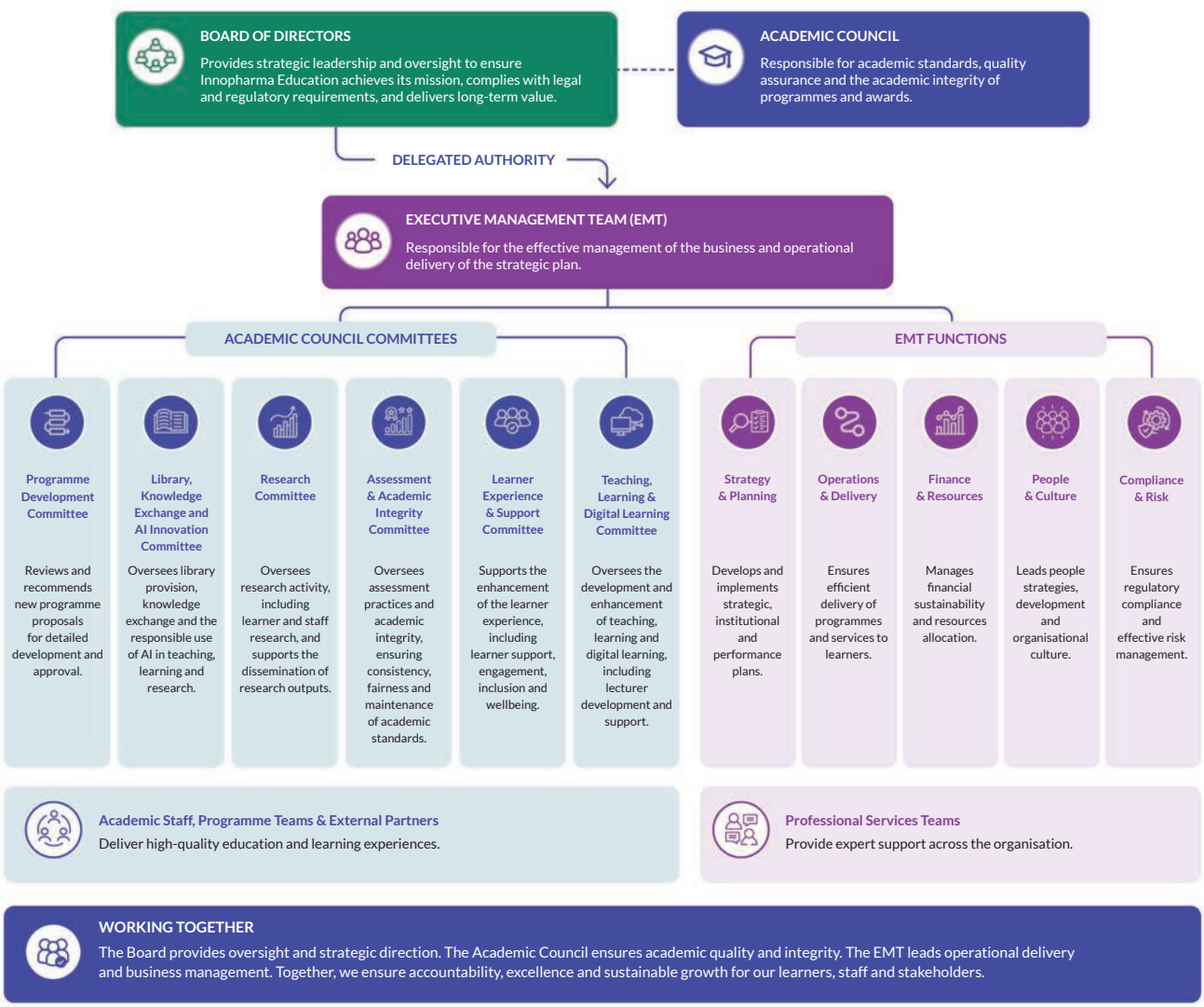


Figure 1.8 – Governance Systems at Innopharma Education

Evaluation

Evidence considered in evaluating the structures and terms of reference for governance and the management of quality included the AC Terms of Reference, academic reports which are submitted to the BOD, committee agendas and minutes, policy-approval pathways, AC membership and externality, collaborative-partnership reporting, and CINNTE consultation findings.

The self-evaluation examined whether the College's governance arrangements provide the appropriate oversight of quality, clarity of decision-making responsibility and sufficient separation between academic, executive and corporate governance.

The review found that the distinction between corporate, academic and executive governance provides an appropriate framework for decision-making and separation of academic and commercial considerations. AC has an independent Chair and external expertise from education consultants from the Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) sectors. The review also identified two areas for development: FE matters should be more explicitly visible on the standing agenda, and learner participation at AC requires strengthening.

It was further identified that an annual review of the governance bodies would determine compliance with relevant policies and terms of reference, and would be useful in evaluating committee effectiveness going forward.

Evidence of governance in practice has been identified as part of this evaluation and several examples of the approvals process in action were seen with some examples below:

Meeting date	Decision / approval	Category	Source minute
12 Mar 2021	Policy for Approval, Review and Monitoring of Programme Delivery Venues approved	Policy	AC Minutes March 2021
18 Jun 2021	Policy for Managing Group Assessment adopted	Policy	AC Minutes June 2021
25 Feb 2022	Teaching and Learning Committee formally adopted	Governance	AC Minutes February 2022
22 Apr 2022	Programme schedule change approved	Programme schedule	AC Minutes April 2022
29 Nov 2022	L7 programme concept approved for external academic review and onward Board consideration	Programme development	AC Minutes Dec 2022
25 Aug 2023	AI statement approved for inclusion in Quality Manual	Policy	AC Minutes August 2023
Oct 2024	External Authenticator candidate approved	External appointment	AC Minutes October 2024
25 Apr 2025	External examiner term extension approved	External examiner	AC Minutes April 2025
25 Apr 2025	Proposal for an external examiner	External examiner	AC Minutes April 2025
Sept 2025	Changes to blended learning chapter approved	Policy	AC Minutes September 2025
Sept 2026	Agreement to proceed with establishing a programme development team for L9 programme development	Programme Development	AC Minutes September 2026

An academic report is provided for each meeting of the BOD with updates on validation/revalidation activity, QQI correspondence, key academic and quality projects and recent AC minutes. AC retains authority for academic decisions; matters requiring corporate or resource approval are referred to the BOD. This reporting route enables corporate oversight without displacing academic authority – some examples of programme development activities which require approval by the BOD are outlined below;

Oct 2023	Confirmation from BOD to proceed with development of L8 BSc programme
May 2024	Request to approve the submission of L5 programme prior to submitting to QQI
May 2026	The Board approved the proposal from AC to proceed with the submission for QQI validation of 3 new micro-credential programmes at L6 and L7 of the NFQ.

The academic report has formalised the process of reporting upwards to the BOD and this process was established over the last three years.

The employee staff day which took place in July, 2026 as part of the College's preparations for the CINNTE review, provided valuable feedback regarding governance and management.

Staff identified AC as the central forum for academic quality assurance, highlighting its external membership, learner representation, formal decision-making processes and separation from the BOD as important strengths. Participants also identified the accessibility of QA documentation through EduConnect (the Colleges centralised information hub), regular communication of policy and procedural changes, and the College's ability to respond and implement improvements in a timely manner as positive features.



Key Institutional Strengths

- A clear distinction between corporate and academic governance, supporting the independence of academic decision-making and protecting academic standards.
- An established AC with responsibility for academic standards, further strengthened by independent externality – this externality has grown as the College extended its scope of provision to NFQ Level 5, and the commencement of its plan to extend to NFQ Level 9.
- A documented QAEF, publicly accessible, aligned with QQI statutory guidelines, blended learning guidance, assessment standards and ESG 2015.
- Clear, domain-appropriate approval pathways for policies and procedures through the BOD and/or AC.
- Enhanced governance structures during the review period, including reviewed Terms of Reference, agenda structures, external expertise and supporting committees, reflecting increasing institutional maturity.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Introduce a formal annual governance effectiveness review, covering membership, attendance, agenda coverage, reporting lines, decision tracking and impact across AC, subcommittees and management groups.
- Strengthen the learner representation on governance structures to include L5 and L9 learner representatives.



1.3 Documented Approach to Quality Assurance

Description

Innopharma Education's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework and associated QA Manual govern the principal areas of academic and institutional activity, including programme development and review, teaching and assessment, Access Transfer and Progression, RPL, learner support, academic integrity, staff development, information management, public information and blended learning. Approval authority is assigned to AC, the BOD or both according to the nature of the matter. The QA Manual is publicly available, while staff and learners access relevant operational information through the College's digital platforms.

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered the QAEF and QA Manual, governance and approval arrangements, QQI validation-panel feedback, staff consultation feedback and the arrangements through which QA information is made available to staff and learners. The review considered both the completeness of the documented framework and the extent to which there is evidence that it is understood and used in institutional practice.

The review found that the College has established a documented QA framework covering the principal academic and institutional activities associated with its provision. Defined approval pathways provide a documented relationship between QA policy and academic and corporate governance, while public availability of the QA Manual provides stakeholders with access to the policies and procedures governing the College's provision. External scrutiny provides an additional source of evidence: QQI-appointed validation panels have acknowledged the quality and clarity of the College's QA Manual and associated documentation.

External review provides corroborating evidence. The 2026 BSc (Honours) in Process Digitalisation validation found programme governance, management and QA coherent and aligned with Innopharma's approved procedures. The 2025 Blended Learning Extension-of-Scope review also recognised the development of the QA system and the contribution of collaborative provision to institutional learning.

Staff consultation undertaken as part of the CINNTE self-evaluation provided some evidence of how the Framework is experienced in practice. Participants in the All-Employee Day identified the QA Manual and the College's central information systems as sources of QA information and confirmed that policies are updated and communicated as institutional practice develops. An Staff survey tested awareness of the Quality Manual and policies and procedures relating to staff roles with over 90% responding that they know where to access this information.

Regular academic and staff meetings were also identified as mechanisms through which policy changes and quality matters are communicated. These findings provide evidence of staff awareness and engagement with the QAEF; however, the self-evaluation recognises that consultation with participating staff does not, in itself, demonstrate consistent awareness or application across all staff groups or programmes.

Evidence of learner access to QA information is less systematic. Although the QA Manual is public and relevant information is available through learner-facing platforms, a single comprehensive document can make specific procedures difficult to locate. The review therefore distinguishes between the strength of the documented framework and the need to improve accessibility of individual learner-facing policies and procedures.

As the College's provision develops, a formal policy-review schedule and central QA tracker would enable AC and relevant policy owners to monitor policy currency, ownership, approval status, scheduled review dates and resulting actions more systematically. This would move the College beyond demonstrating that policies are in place towards providing clearer evidence that they remain current, are reviewed as intended and result in identifiable implementation or enhancement activity.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Established documented QA framework. The QAEF provides a structured institutional framework covering the principal areas of academic and quality-assurance activity and defines relevant governance and approval pathways.
- External scrutiny of QA arrangements.
- Evidence of staff awareness and engagement. CINNTE staff consultation provides evidence that participating staff recognise and use institutional QA documentation and communication mechanisms as part of day-to-day practice.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Systematic policy review to ensure they remain current and fit for purpose.
- Accessibility of QA information for learners on a chapter by chapter basis.

Case Study

Case Study - EduConnect: Centralising and Strengthening the College's Documented Approach to Quality

1.4 Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

Description

Staff recruitment and development are governed through the QA framework and support a staffing model combining academic qualifications, subject expertise and current industry practice. Induction, programme engagement and QA processes support staff understanding of academic and institutional responsibilities.

New staff are supported through a structured induction and onboarding process – this is led by the HR Manager and Head of Teaching and Learning. Development opportunities include formal qualifications, professional training, and attendance at, and participation in, conferences and webinars, Teaching and Learning workshops, Communities of Practice and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.

The College's wider staff-management infrastructure has developed during the review period in response to institutional growth. This has included the introduction of Healthbox HR which is a software system for the recording and management of employee records, the development of an Employee Handbook and, more recently, the appointment of a dedicated HR Manager. These developments provide clearer institutional ownership and a more structured basis for staff information, HR processes, policies and staff support. External insights on staff engagement / performance can be evidenced through QQI validation panels and external examiner feedback.

Source	Comment / Evidence
QQI / Validation Panel 2023	The Panel commends the staff of Innopharma Education on the presentation of high-quality programme documentation submitted as part of the evaluation process.
QQI / Validation Panel 2023	The Panel noted the constructive engagement of the provider representatives with the evaluation process.
QQI / Validation Panel 2025	The panel commends Innopharma Education on its learner-centered approach.
QQI / Validation Panel 2025	You are a learning organisation in every sense of the word. What you are doing is already excellent.
External Examiner/ Authenticator 2025	Excellent practice of Internal Verification with good evidence available.
HEA Provider Site Visit 2026	The HEA appreciates the time made available by management and staff during the monitoring site visit, and the sharing of knowledge and feedback.
External Examiner/ Authenticator 2024	I have reviewed students work that was scanned and shared with me through SharePoint. The quality of the scanned material has always been appropriate and easy to read. This sets an example other institutes would do well to follow.

Evaluation

Recruitment and development arrangements have supported the delivery of industry-relevant, learner-centred provision. The use of industry-experienced academic and teaching staff is a particular strength, enabling learners to engage with current practice and workplace challenges. There is a strong blend of academic lecturers and lecturers who are working in industry in large pharmaceutical and medical device multi-nationals and lecturing part-time.

Staff development includes formal qualifications, National Forum for Teaching and Learning digital badges, professional training, conferences and webinars, Teaching and Learning workshops and Communities of Practice. Examples include Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and RPL badges and development in project management, research supervision, knowledge management and neurodiversity. Further information on staff CPD can be reviewed in Appendix 3. A revised performance-management process will also identify development needs and will be rolled out for the 2026 performance appraisal cycle.

A Generative AI upskilling initiative provides a closed-loop example of staff development: an initial needs survey informed targeted development and follow-up feedback indicated increased confidence and use. Weekly Communities of Practice and Teaching and Learning workshops provide additional peer-learning opportunities.

The self-evaluation found, however, that the recording of evidence is not yet consistently available across all staff-development activity. Training, professional updating and CPD take place across the College, but participation, identified development needs and subsequent impact are not currently brought together within a single institutional framework. Consequently, the College can demonstrate substantial development activity but has less systematic evidence with which to evaluate its overall coverage, consistency and impact.

The review therefore identified an opportunity to connect the College's developing HR infrastructure more closely with academic and quality enhancement. Building on Healthbox HR and the appointment of the HR Manager, more systematic recording and review of induction, CPD participation and development needs would enable the College to identify institutional priorities, monitor engagement across different staff groups and evaluate whether development activity is contributing to teaching, assessment, learner support and wider strategic objectives.

The College also engages with AHEAD, including participation in the WAM (Willing Able Mentoring) programme, supporting inclusive recruitment and staff development.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Industry and professional expertise within the staffing model.
- Developing institutional infrastructure for staff management.
- Evidence-led staff development where systematically applied. The Generative AI initiative demonstrates an established example of using staff needs analysis, targeted development and subsequent evaluation to assess impact.

Opportunities for Enhancement

Develop a more systematic institutional framework for staff development and CPD, building on Healthbox HR and the dedicated HR function, through which induction, participation in professional development, identified development needs and relevant impact evidence can be recorded and periodically reviewed.

Case Study

Case Study - Building Staff AI Confidence Through Weekly Staff Meetings







1.5 Programme Development, Approval and Submission for Validation

Description

The College's documented Policy for Development, Approval and Validation of Programmes is aligned with ESG expectations, requiring that programmes be designed to meet stated objectives, contain appropriate intended learning outcomes, and lead to qualifications clearly specified against the relevant NFQ level. Rigorous processes for programme approval, validation, monitoring and review ensure programme relevance, appropriate academic standards and continued quality over the life of an award, rather than only at the point of initial validation.

Programme development responds to identified learner, industry and skills needs across life sciences, manufacturing and digital transformation. Since gaining access to QQI validation, Innopharma has progressively expanded its own provision across NFQ Levels 5–8 and is now preparing for Level 9.

Programme development is informed in a number of ways:

Industry Engagement

From January to October 2026, the Education team recorded 45 confirmed external industry and careers engagements across Ireland. This included 33 direct company/site engagements involving 21 companies, together with 12 wider careers, recruitment, networking, and industry events. Activity extended across 12 counties and included repeat engagement with several major life-sciences employers such as Stryker, Boston Scientific, Edwards Lifesciences, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Amgen, West Pharma, Grifols, Amneal amongst others. The activity demonstrates sustained engagement across Ireland's pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and MedTech sectors through company visits, onsite canteen and career events, careers fairs and wider industry networking.

Structured Sectoral Enagement

Innopharma Education's has a long history of ongoing engagement with relevant sectoral bodies and industry networks, including BioPharmaChem Ireland, Irish Medtech and sector-specific groups and working forums within Ibec. Participation in these networks provides access to current industry perspectives on emerging skills needs, workforce developments, technological change and sector priorities. This intelligence, together with direct employer engagement and other labour-market evidence, informs consideration of new programme opportunities and the ongoing relevance of curriculum content.

Responding to National , Government and Sectoral Skills Priorities

Programme development is informed by national policy priorities, identified skills shortages and Government-supported funding initiatives designed to address workforce and economic needs. The College monitors relevant Government strategies, national and sectoral skills reports, labour-market intelligence and funding calls, including Springboard+ and the Learner Fee Subsidy (LFS), where programme funding is targeted towards areas of identified skills demand. Responding to these calls requires the College to consider how its existing and proposed provision aligns with identified national and regional skills requirements, target learner groups and intended employment or upskilling outcomes.

Programme proposals undergo a series of internal development and review stages before submission to QQI for validation. Depending on the nature and scale of the proposal, this includes input from programme developers, academic staff, subject-matter experts, Quality Assurance department, Teaching and Learning department, learner-support functions and senior management. Internal review and mock validation activity provide opportunities to test programme rationale, curriculum structure, assessment strategy, staffing, resources and QA arrangements, with AC providing formal academic scrutiny and approval within the College's governance framework.

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered programme-development and validation documentation, QQI validation outcomes and panel reports, AC oversight, internal review arrangements, subject-matter and industry input and the College's accumulated experience of developing programmes. The review considered not only the College's ability to progress programmes successfully through validation, but also how internal development and scrutiny processes support academic standards, strategic alignment, industry relevance and institutional learning.

Since 2021, the College has progressively developed its own validated portfolio across NFQ Levels 5-8. Nineteen programmes have progressed through QQI validation, with a further three currently progressing towards validation. Initial provision was concentrated in process digitisation and operational excellence, with subsequent development extending into supply chain, information technology, automation and digitalisation. This progression demonstrates an incremental approach to portfolio development, enabling the College to build programme-development capability and institutional experience progressively rather than expanding simultaneously across multiple disciplinary areas.

Programme proposals are challenged through multidisciplinary development, subject-matter expertise, QA and Teaching and Learning input, learner-support, internal review and mock validation. Sample assessments are reviewed for alignment between learning outcomes, assessment methodology and award standards, with AC providing formal academic scrutiny. The following flow chart depicts the formal process for the programme development process.

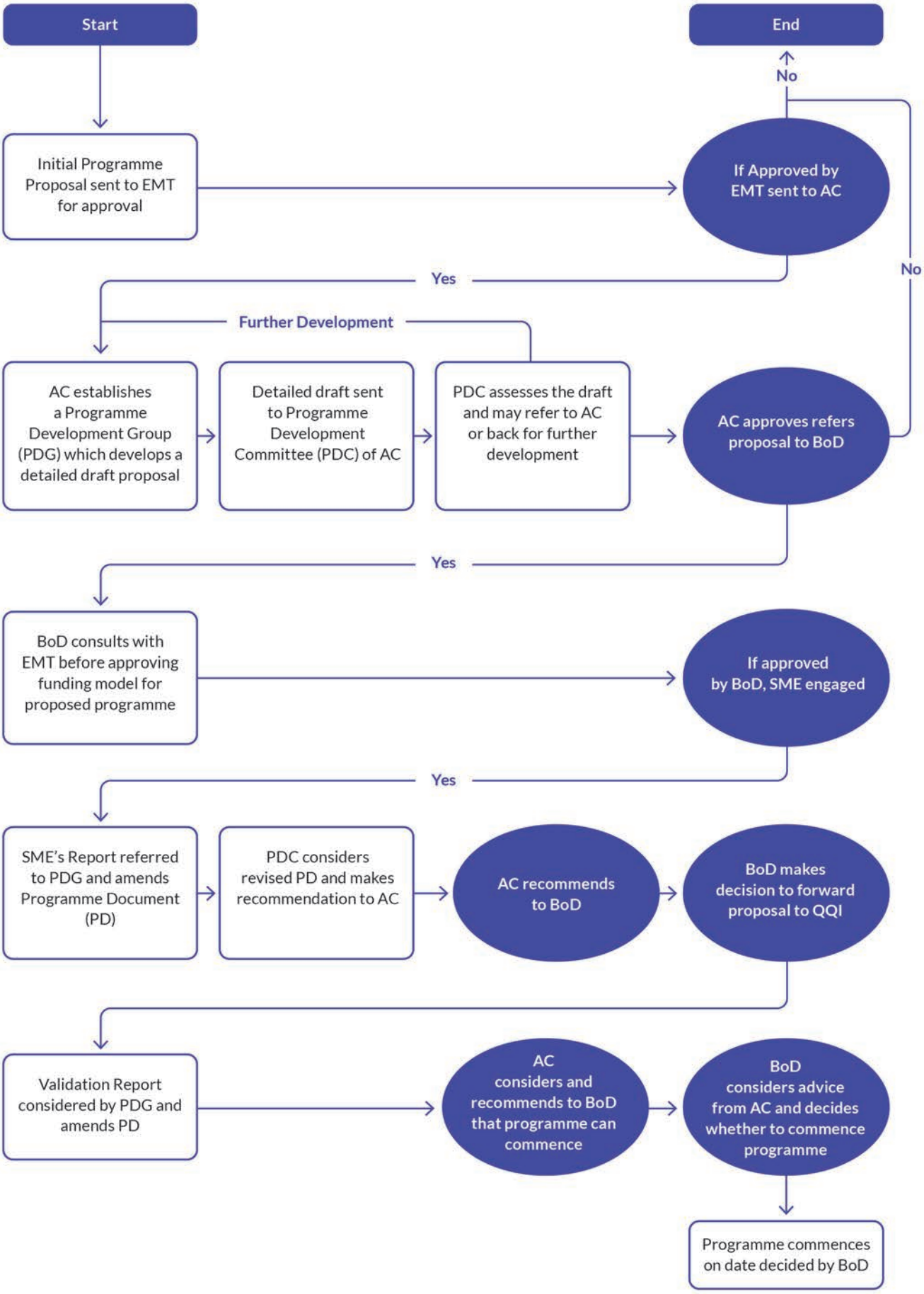


Figure 1.9 - Flowchart of Programme Development Process

Successive QQI validation processes provide an additional and independent source of evidence through which programme-development practice can be evaluated. Conditions, recommendations and observations arising from validation panels are addressed in relation to the programme concerned and, where relevant, inform subsequent programme development. The College's experience across successive validations has therefore contributed not only to the development of individual programmes but also to refinement of programme documentation, internal scrutiny, assessment design, resource planning and preparation for external validation.

Industry relevance is considered through subject-matter experts, employer engagement and sector relationships. However, evidence from consultation is not captured consistently across programme-development activity, and learner participation at the design stage is limited. A standard record of stakeholders, evidence considered and resulting changes would strengthen the approval evidence base.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Strong industry and subject-matter expertise embedded in programme design, with subject-matter experts testing curriculum relevance and technical currency ahead of validation.
- Specialist pedagogical expertise to programme and assessment design, supporting staff through workshops and development activities.
- A collaborative, institution-wide approach to validation preparation, involving programme developers, academic staff, subject-matter experts, QA, teaching and learning, learner support, librarian and research specialist and EMT as a shared institutional responsibility.
- Effective use of internal review and mock validation panels, testing programme rationale, curriculum, assessment strategy, resources and QA arrangements ahead of external validation.
- Assessment design supported by sample-assessment review and academic scrutiny, testing the relationship between learning outcomes, assessment methodology and NFQ award standards.
- Clear governance oversight, with AC providing academic scrutiny of proposals and appropriate BOD oversight within the College's wider governance framework.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Maintain a standardised record of employer consultation, Industry Advisory Board input, labour market data and stakeholder feedback for each programme proposal.
- Develop a standardised programme development business case template addressing strategic alignment, learner demand, industry need, resourcing, risks, financial sustainability, QA requirements and progression opportunities.
- Strengthen the systematic use of labour market intelligence, graduate outcomes, and learner and employer feedback in programme development and review.
- Strengthen the role of current learners, graduates and alumni in programme programme design.

Case Study

Case Study - Responding to industry need through partnership – BiopharmaChem Skillnet and Innopharma Education

1.6 Information and Data Management

Description

Information and data are managed across a number of platforms, including Zoho for recruitment and admissions, Innoskills for programme delivery, Themis for learner records and assessment, and Microsoft 365, OneDrive and SharePoint for document and records management. Integration supports continuity across the learner lifecycle, while programme teams and governance bodies use recruitment, engagement, assessment, completion and qualitative QA evidence for monitoring and decision-making. Role-based access, multi-factor authentication, encryption, security monitoring, backup and recovery arrangements support confidentiality, integrity and availability, with Data Protection Officer (DPO) oversight and formal incident-management procedures providing institutional assurance.

Our Information Systems

Supporting the Learner Lifecycle

A suite of integrated systems enables the secure collection, management and use of data across the learner journey, supporting administration, learning, assessment, quality assurance and evidence-informed decision-making.

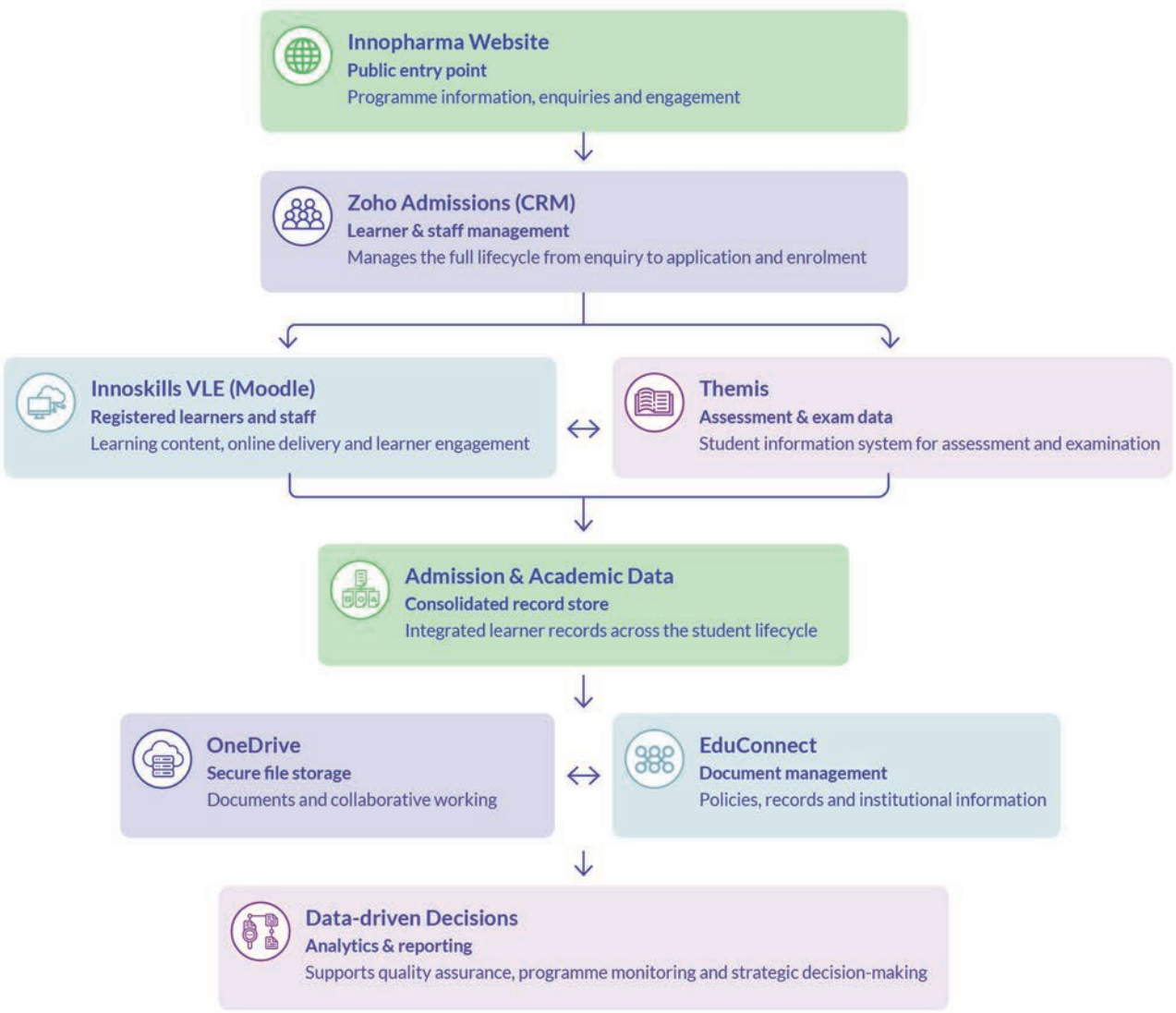


Figure 2.0 Information Systems

Evaluation

The evaluation considered information-security governance, incident management, staff awareness, external technical review, institutional systems and the use of data for QA. Evidence indicates that security arrangements operate beyond policy through DPO oversight, staff training and incident-management processes. Mandatory annual awareness training and analysis of incident trends provide an example of monitoring informing subsequent action.

Information-security arrangements are also subject to external technical scrutiny, with an external assessment completed in 2026 and further penetration and vulnerability testing planned. This provides an additional source of assurance beyond internal monitoring and supports the identification and remediation of technical risk.

Institutional data on recruitment, learner profile, retention, achievement, RPL, completion and employment outcomes are increasingly considered alongside learner and lecturer feedback, External Examiner findings and programme discussion in monitoring and annual review.

The review identified limitations arising from the distribution of information across all the software platforms used. While each platform supports different operational requirements, information currently needs to be drawn together from different sources for some institutional-level analysis. The proposed development of institutional reporting and QA dashboards arises directly from this finding.

The self-evaluation also identified opportunities to strengthen information governance through review of the institutional data-retention schedule, independent external review of wider data-protection arrangements and migration of the Zoho CRM environment to EU-based hosting. These actions represent the next stage in strengthening institutional assurance around data governance, regulatory compliance and organisational resilience.



Key Institutional Strengths

- Established information governance structures and DPO oversight supporting institutional accountability.
- Learner-lifecycle information spanning multiple systems, from initial enquiry through enrolment, learning, assessment, completion and graduate outcomes, with institutional knowledge increasingly centralised through EduConnect.
- Information security and resilience, through role-based access, MFA, backup and recovery, and incident-management processes.
- Increasing evidence-informed decision-making, with learner, programme, RPL and employment-outcome data increasingly used alongside qualitative QA evidence.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Develop more integrated institutional reporting and QA dashboards for consistent oversight of key learner and programme indicators.
- Review and update the institutional data-retention schedule to ensure continued alignment with legislative, operational and QA requirements.
- Commission an independent external data-protection review to provide additional assurance and identify further enhancement opportunities.
- Migrate the Zoho CRM environment to EU-based hosting as part of continued information-governance development during the planned downtime phase of Zoho in December 2026.

Case Study

Case Study - Information Security in Practice – Awareness, Response and Continuous Improvement



1.7 Public Information and Communication

Description

The College uses its website, Client Relationship Management (CRM) system ZOHO, social media and programme materials to communicate with prospective and current learners and other stakeholders. Programme webpages provide core information on NFQ level, delivery, duration and entry requirements, with enquiries captured through Zoho CRM and directed to relevant programme personnel.

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered the College website and programme pages, programme information and digital collateral, CRM-supported enquiry and applicant communications, social-media activity and the processes through which public information is developed and maintained. The review considered particularly whether public information enables prospective learners to understand programme content, entry requirements, delivery arrangements and the commitment involved before making an application and meets the requirements of Section 67 of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012.

Review of programme information identified a consistent structure across programme webpages, including information on NFQ level, delivery mode, location, duration and programme-specific requirements. This consistency is particularly relevant to the College's predominantly mature learner population, for whom clear information about programme suitability, entry requirements, delivery arrangements and the practical demands of returning to education supports informed decision-making. Integration between programme webpages and the CRM-supported enquiry process also enables prospective learners to seek individual clarification before application, supplementing published information where necessary.

The self-evaluation identified, however, an opportunity to strengthen assurance around the continuing accuracy of public programme information. While operational responsibility for maintaining and publishing website content is established, periodic academic verification of programme-specific information is not yet formalised as a consistent institutional process. As the College's portfolio expands across different award types and NFQ levels, a defined academic review and sign-off process would provide stronger assurance that programme webpages, brochures and applicant information remain aligned with current validated programme documentation and academic requirements.

The review also identified an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of public information more systematically. Website, CRM, enquiry and social-media data are available, but these sources are not yet routinely brought together from a quality-assurance perspective to identify patterns in information needs or recurring areas of prospective-learner uncertainty. More systematic analysis of this evidence, supplemented by learner feedback, could identify where programme information requires clarification, where navigation presents difficulties, or where additional learner-focused information would support informed decision-making.

As the programme portfolio continues to develop, the College also recognises the need to maintain clear navigation across NFQ levels and award types and to broaden the visibility of learner and graduate experience, research, applied project activity and institutional information alongside programme recruitment content. Changing patterns of online information discovery, including AI-supported search, will form part of the College's ongoing consideration of the accessibility and discoverability of public information.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Structured digital programme information and prospective-learner communication. Standard programme-page structures, digital programme materials and CRM-supported communications provide a consistent information pathway from initial enquiry through application and admission.
- Integration of public information with the learner journey.
- Broadening institutional communication. Alongside programme information and recruitment communications, channels such as Innopharma Insights provide visibility of staff and learner research and applied project activity.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Academic verification of public programme information to formalise periodic academic review and sign-off of programme webpages, brochures and other public programme information to ensure continuing alignment with validated programme documentation and QA requirements.
- Learner-centred information and navigation to review website navigation and programme information as the portfolio expands, with particular attention to helping prospective learners distinguish between NFQ levels, award types, entry requirements, progression opportunities and delivery arrangements.
- Evaluation of public-information effectiveness to develop a more systematic approach to using website, CRM, enquiry and stakeholder-feedback data to evaluate whether public information is accessible, understandable and meeting prospective and current learner information needs.

Case Study

Case Study - Innopharma Insights: Making Learner and Staff Research Visible

Innopharma education

Objective 2
Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP)









Objective 2
Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP)

2.1 Admissions Policy and Procedures

Description

ATP reflects Innopharma's predominantly mature, professionally focused learner profile and portfolio of short, special-purpose, minor and one-year major awards. The emphasis is therefore on appropriate entry, RPL and experience, and educational and career progression rather than a traditional multi-year undergraduate pathway.

Admissions requirements are defined at programme level. Admissions interviews[4] and RPL allow qualifications, professional experience and readiness for study to be considered against validated entry requirements. Admissions decisions are documented and applicants requiring RPL are assessed through the relevant process.

Progression opportunities vary by award type and include progression within Innopharma's own portfolio, through collaborative provision and to external programmes. Career progression is also significant for the College's professionally engaged learner population.

RPL

RPL recognises relevant learning acquired through formal, non-formal and experiential routes. Applicants are assessed against programme entry requirements using documented evidence and, where appropriate, structured interview and academic judgement.

4 The structured interview is not to determine eligibility, but acts as a career discussion with applicants to ensure that they are doing the right programme to meet their career goals, the time commitment required along with other considerations such as IT, availability for the blended nature of the programme.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
Procedure

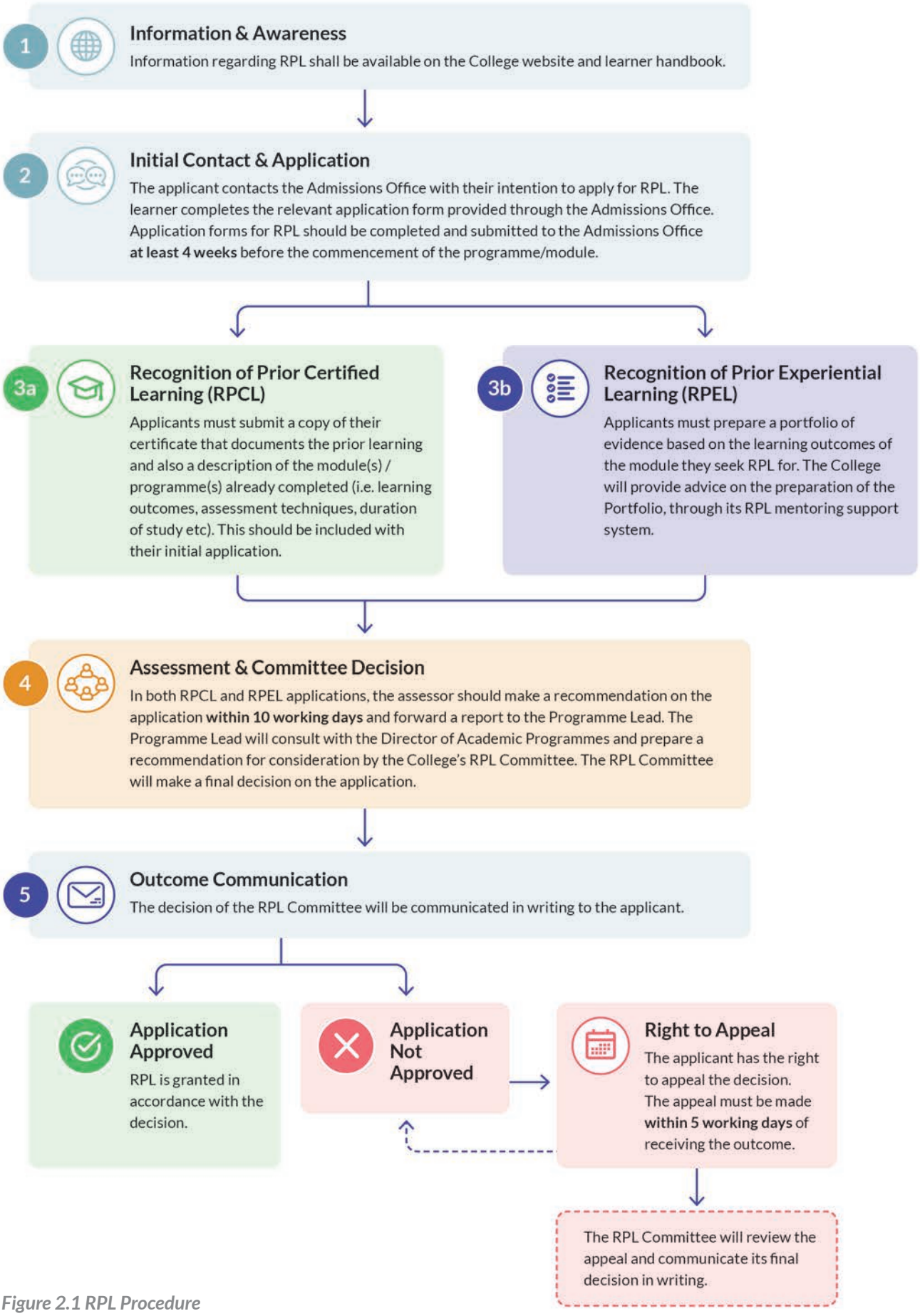


Figure 2.1 RPL Procedure

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered admissions and RPL policies and procedures, programme entry requirements, admissions practice, RPL applications and outcomes, learner progression and employment data, the Pathway Finder initiative, learner-facing information and staff development in RPL. The Pathway Finder toolkit is a software programme that considers prior qualification, sector, work area, employment status, residency status and Springboard history and generates programme and progression options for discussion with applicants. As the tool is newly introduced, since July 2026, evidence of its impact on admissions consistency and subsequent learner outcomes is not yet available; this will require evaluation as its use becomes established.

The evaluation considered not only whether ATP arrangements are documented, but whether there is evidence that they operate in practice and support appropriate learner entry and progression.

The College's admissions model is closely aligned with the profile of its predominantly mature and professionally experienced learners. Programme-specific entry requirements, admissions interviews and RPL provide routes through which academic background, professional experience and preparedness for study can be considered before admission.

RPL operates as an active access pathway. For example, analysis of the Level 7 BSc in Process Digitalisation shows that 50 of 145 applicants entered through RPL; 41 had successfully completed the programme at the point of analysis, while the remaining cases included learners who are still engaged with the programme but have outstanding components to complete. This provides programme-level evidence of both access and subsequent outcomes while indicating the need for continued monitoring. There is further evidence of RPL at NFQ Level 6 programmes, and as the first intake on the College's Level 8 programme is underway at the time of this SER being developed, that data is not yet fully available.

The College's RPL practice also shows alignment with the National RPL Project's five-stage model of Information, Identification, Documentation, Assessment and Certification/Recognition. Two staff involved in RPL have completed the National Forum for Teaching and Learning Digital Badge in RPL, supporting institutional capability in the application of RPL procedures.

Applicant, admissions, RPL, retention, completion and progression information is available through existing systems and programme processes, but these indicators are not yet routinely consolidated and reported as a defined institutional suite of ATP measures across all independently validated provision. The detailed Level 7 analysis demonstrates the value of bringing this data together and provides a model that can be extended across the portfolio.

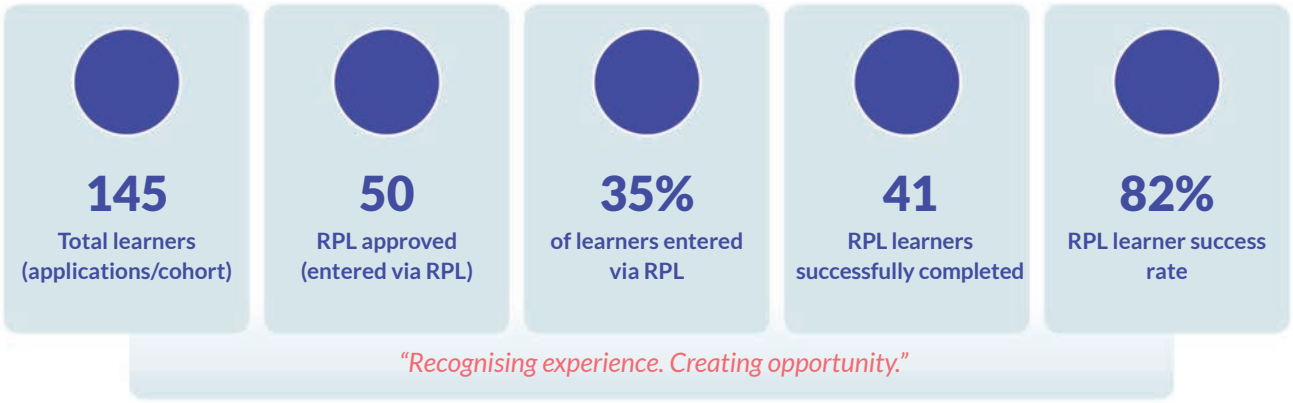
RPL in Practice

Widening Access. Recognising Experience. Supporting Success.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an established and important route to access at Innopharma Education. It enables experienced professionals to gain recognition for their prior learning and to pursue a formal qualification, while maintaining academic standards and ensuring learner success.

Level 7 BSc in Process Digitalisation

RPL Learner Journey (3-year period)



The Value of RPL at Innopharma

Many of our learners are experienced professionals with significant industry knowledge and skills. RPL provides a flexible and fair route to access higher education, recognising the value of learning gained through workplace experience, professional development and prior study.

RPL Supports Our Strategic Aims

- **Widening Participation** — Creating opportunities for experienced professionals
- **Building Workforce Capability** — Supporting upskilling and career progression in key industry sectors
- **Meeting Skills Needs** — Aligning education with real-world industry requirements
- **Advancing Lifelong Learning** — Recognising and valuing learning at all stages of a career

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Approximately 35% of learners on the Level 7 BSc in Process Digitalisation entered through RPL.
- ✓ More than four in five RPL learners successfully completed the programme (82% success rate).
- ✓ RPL provides a meaningful and effective route to access for experienced industry professionals.
- ✓ The positive outcomes of RPL learners demonstrate that the College's RPL process supports appropriate entry decisions and learner success.

Figure 2.2 – RPL in Practice

2.2 Structured Pathways, Articulation and Advanced Entry

The ATP policy provides for direct and RPL-supported advanced entry where prior learning is demonstrably equivalent to the relevant stage requirements. In practice, advanced entry is considered programme by programme and remains less prominent than standard entry and RPL within the current portfolio.

These arrangements sit alongside the structured progression pathways enabled through Innopharma's partnerships with TU Dublin and Griffith College, which allow learners to progress from certificate to master's level across the two institutions' provision.

The programme roadmap below, outlines all the pathways available to learners:

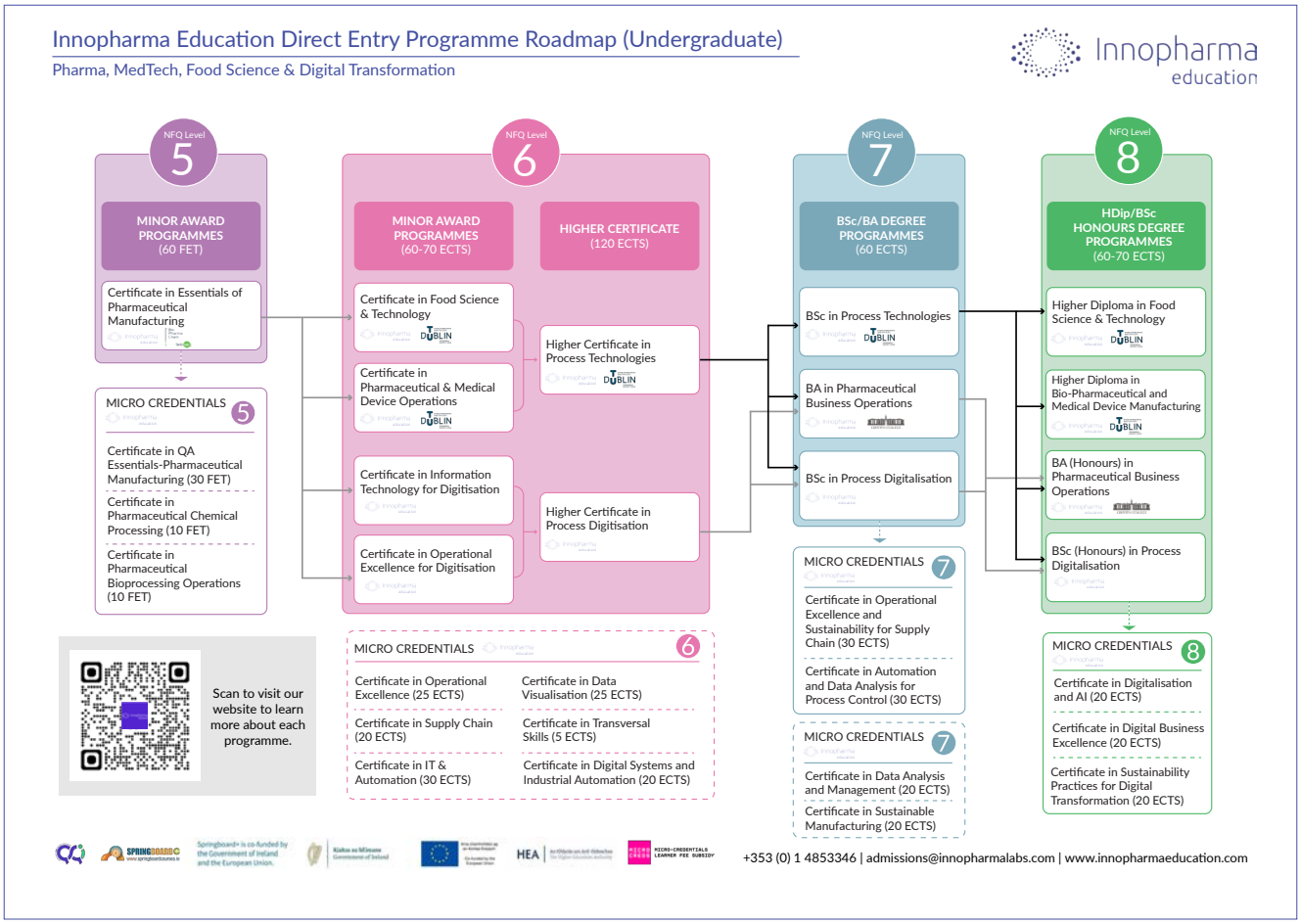


Figure 2.3 Innopharma Education Programme Roadmap, showing the College's programme portfolio from NFQ Level 5 to Level 8 by award type and micro-credential, and indicating where each pathway is delivered independently by Innopharma Education or jointly with TU Dublin or Griffith College.

Evaluation

The breadth of Innopharma's own and collaborative portfolio provides multiple progression routes. However, progression destinations are not yet systematically consolidated, limiting institution-wide evaluation of how learners move between awards or into further study.

The College has also introduced progression webinars to provide learners with information at points in the semester when it is likely to be most useful. The evaluation identified an opportunity to strengthen this further by systematically capturing educational progression destinations, including movement within Innopharma's portfolio, through collaborative provision and, where known, to other providers. This would allow the College to evaluate the use and effectiveness of available progression pathways rather than relying principally on the existence of mapped opportunities.







2.3 Learner Information Provision

Description

Applicants receive programme information on learning outcomes, entry requirements, delivery, duration, fees, commencement dates and assessment before enrolment, supported by direct contact with programme personnel. Induction and learner-facing platforms provide further information after registration.

Evaluation

The review found broad pre- and post-entry information provision but less systematic evidence of how learners experience its clarity and accessibility across the full journey. As the portfolio expands, greater consistency and learner feedback on ATP and RPL information would strengthen assurance.

The review also identified value in providing progression information during the learner journey rather than only at programme completion. The progression webinars already introduced provide a basis for this approach and can be evaluated and refined through participation data and learner feedback.

Conclusion

Overall, ATP arrangements align with the learner profile through flexible admissions, active RPL and multiple progression routes. The principal limitation is that admissions, RPL, retention, completion and progression evidence is not yet consolidated across the portfolio; systematic monitoring and clearer pathway information would strengthen evaluation over time.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Flexible admissions model aligned to the learner profile.
- RPL operating in practice with measurable programme-level outcomes. RPL is an active access pathway in the College.
- Developing pathway and progression infrastructure. The programme roadmap, progression webinars and Pathway Finder support informed programme choice and progression discussions.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Establish systematic institutional ATP monitoring.
- Strengthen progression tracking and pathway information.
- Strengthen the visibility and evaluation of ATP and RPL information.

Case Study's

Case Study - The Conversational Pathway Finder: One Consistent Answer for Every Applicant

Case Study - The Innopharma Way – Supporting Meaningful Career Progression

Innopharma education

Objective 3
Teaching, Learning and Assessment



Objective 3
Teaching, Learning and Assessment

3.1 The Learning Environment

Description

Innopharma Education provides a blended, learner-centred learning environment designed to support the needs of its predominantly adult and professionally-focused learner population. The College's approach combines physical and digital learning environments, specialist facilities, academic and learner-support resources and flexible modes of delivery. The balance of face-to-face and synchronous online learning is determined at programme and module level, having regard to the intended learning outcomes and the learning needs of the relevant cohort.

The learning environment is underpinned by the College's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF), Teaching, Learning and Assessment policies and procedures, and quality assurance arrangements for blended learning. Teaching and learning is informed by constructive alignment and a learner-centred approach, supporting the development of discipline-specific knowledge and skills alongside transversal capabilities including critical thinking, problem-solving and independent learning.

Physical Learning Environment

The Sandyford campus provides teaching, study and communal spaces and specialist pharmaceutical process laboratory facilities. Teaching rooms support face-to-face and synchronous participation, while specialist facilities enable practical demonstration and simulation of contemporary manufacturing processes, including Process Analytical Technology.

Virtual Learning Environment and Learning Resources

Innoskills (Moodle) and Zoom provide the core digital learning environment, supporting live delivery, recordings, learning materials, assessment information, communication and learner resources. This digital environment is supplemented by specialist systems and online library resources.

The wider Innoskills environment includes dedicated Learner, Career and Class Representative Hubs, bringing together information and resources relating to academic and learner support, employability and professional development, and learner representation. A dedicated Teaching Hub provides lecturers with practical guidance, induction and planning materials, assessment and feedback resources and professional development materials relating to inclusive practice, academic integrity, Generative AI, educational technology, Turnitin, Open Educational Resources and sustainability.

Teaching Practice and Lecturer Development

Programme and module design is informed by constructive alignment, with intended learning outcomes developed with reference to the National Framework of Qualifications and applicable award standards. Learning activities and assessment are designed to enable learners to develop and demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and competences.

Teaching approaches reflect the differing professional, educational and experiential backgrounds of learners and may include lectures, facilitated discussion, collaborative learning, case studies, practical demonstrations, problem-solving, independent learning and synchronous online activities.

The specialist and industry-focused nature of the College's provision enables teaching to draw extensively on contemporary professional practice. Industry practitioners and subject matter experts contribute current knowledge, practical experience and industry examples to the learning environment.

Teaching staff are supported through structured induction, Innoskills training, Programme Lead engagement and pre-semester preparation. The Teaching, Learning & Digital Learning Committee provides an institutional forum for teaching enhancement, lecturer development, blended and digital learning, accessibility and inclusive practice, educational technology and the sharing of effective practice.

Library and Information Resources

The College provides a digital library service with e-books, journals and curated open-access resources aligned to the portfolio, supplemented by the Trinity Information Service for document supply and specialist requests. The Librarian and Research Specialist supports learners and staff with information literacy, referencing, research and resource access. Resource requirements for proposed Level 9 provision are being considered as part of institutional planning.

Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered student survey and class representative feedback over the past 5 years, staff survey data, programme monitoring reports, teaching and learning enhancement activity, recent programme validation findings and the 2025 QQI evaluation of the College's quality assurance procedures and capacity for blended learning. Taken together, the evidence supports the suitability of the blended and applied model for learners who are frequently combining study with employment and other commitments.

External scrutiny provides current corroboration of the learning environment. The 2026 BSc (Honours) in Process Digitalisation validation found the blended, learner-centred model appropriate for a predominantly part-time professional cohort and positively recognised learner-management and support structures. The 2025 blended-learning review identified good practice in teaching, assessment and staff development.

Learner evidence corroborates these findings. A recurring theme through class representative feedback and testimonials include learners highlighing the accessibility of Innoskills, the importance of recorded lectures in enabling participation alongside employment, the availability of learner resources, knowledgeable lecturers and the industry relevance of programme content. Another recurring theme throughout class representative feedback shows that 94% of respondents indicated that they would recommend their programme to a friend. Below is some feedback provided by learners:

"I choose Innopharma because I was searching through the Springboard courses and the name stood out to me, the course title and the modules really caught my eye. I wanted to learn something to increase my blind spont regarding information technology ….. I was really amazed to find out you can work and still receive this kind of education for free. I really enjoyed it. I have to say it is very manageable if you try, don't expect to do nothing and understand the material. But with a little curiosity and effort you will do well, learn a lot and find it interesting"

Feedback form a Level 6 Learner

Describing the experience of the course and Innopharma team, one learner said:

"From start to finish the whole Innopharma team was amazing. No problem too big or small and always available to chat. Brilliant people" –

Feedback from a Level 5 Learner

" I must say it was an excellent course and the lecturers were extremely knowledgeable and always there to help. It helped me to appreciate also that I had transferable skills from my past careers which can be helpful in this Industry. I know that the course modules will be of great benefit to me in my pursuit of a job in the Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Industries. I have enjoyed the course so much that I am now applying for the new Level 7 course for a BSc in Process Technologies. This is something I would have never contemplated prior to getting involved with Innopharma Education!"

Feedback form a Level 6 Learner

"The people at Innopharma Education have been my rock and I couldn't speak highly enough of them. Because I already have just completed studies with them I have absolute faith in them and know the level of care and support they provide for their students will ensure I will successfully complete this programme"

Feedback from a Level 6 learner, progressing to Level 7

"I have really enjoyed the experience as I have not been in college for many years. I was impressed with how the course was digitized e.g. portal access with all relevant course material. Recording the classes helped me as I travel often and could catch up outside of the planned lectures. The lecturers having industry experience was what stood out for me as we talked about really world challenges and were very interactive. It was great to have a lecturer respond outside of the course if you have specific work-related queries"

Feedback from a Level 7 learner

The College's experience of blended provision has resulted in a digital environment that extends beyond the provision of online teaching materials. Innoskills provides an integrated point of access to programme delivery, assessment, communication and learner support, while induction and ongoing technical support help learners and lecturers participate effectively in the digital environment.

The review identified learner-centred, inclusive, applied and industry-informed teaching practice, supported by UDL engagement, accessibility arrangements and industry-experienced teaching staff. However, evidence of effectiveness is stronger at programme and initiative level than through systematic institution-wide analysis.

Library provision is established, but its use and sufficiency should be evaluated more systematically as the portfolio develops. The library and knowledge exchange group provides a mechanism for this work, including consideration of resources required for Level 9.

The review also identified an opportunity to strengthen the institutional analysis of teaching and learning evidence. While learner feedback, programme monitoring and academic oversight provide considerable information regarding the effectiveness of provision, bringing this evidence together more systematically would enable the College to identify cross-programme trends, evaluate teaching and learning approaches and disseminate effective practice more consistently.

The self-evaluation also identified scope to strengthen peer-to-peer learning among teaching staff. While pre-semester and mid-semester meetings provide opportunities for collaboration, a more structured approach could support ongoing knowledge exchange, sharing of effective practice and collaborative professional development throughout the academic year.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Blended and applied learning model supported by physical, specialist and digital resources, with recent external scrutiny confirming the suitability of the model for the current learner profile.
- Industry-informed teaching and authentic learning approaches that connect theoretical learning with professional practice.
- Learner evidence showing strong value placed on flexibility, recordings, Innoskills, lecturer expertise and learner support, while also providing constructive challenge.
- Evidence that learner feedback leads to practical changes in the digital learning environment, communication and learner support.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Strengthen institutional analysis of teaching and learning evidence, enabling cross-programme trends, effective practices and areas requiring attention to be identified more systematically.
- Further develop structured mechanisms for sharing effective teaching practice across programmes and disciplines.
- Introduce a developmental approach to the review of teaching practice, such as peer observation or structured reflective review.
- Establish terms of reference for the library and knowledge exchange group.
- Review the scope and usage of the Trinity Information Service subscription, and the wider resources needed to support NFQ Level 9 research, as part of the work of the library, Knowledge Exchange and AI Innovation Group.

3.2 Assessment of Learners

Description

Assessment is governed by the College's Assessment Policies and Procedures and Marks and Standards, covering design, conduct, marking, moderation, verification, examinations, academic integrity, accommodations, results and appeals. Programme-level assessment strategies and schedules are intended to align assessment with learning outcomes and manage learner workload.

Academic Integrity and Generative AI

Academic integrity is supported through College policy, learner guidance, lecturer development, online plagiarism dedication and academic integrity services such as Turnitin and reference-management tools, alongside formal procedures for investigating suspected academic misconduct.

The College has developed its own approach to generative AI, informed by NAIN and HEA guidance and operating within the College's QQI-approved quality assurance framework as the implications for teaching, learning and assessment have evolved. The Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale (AIAS) provides a structured framework through which different levels of permitted AI use can be communicated for individual assessments. Learners are required to comply with the requirements specified for each assessment and to acknowledge permitted AI use where required. Human academic judgement remains central to assessment and grading.

The Assessment & Academic Integrity workflow group provides an institutional forum for the ongoing development of assessment and academic-integrity practice, complemented by collaboration with the AI Research & Productivity workflow group.





Evaluation

The self-evaluation considered assessment policies and processes, learner feedback, External Examiner/Authenticator evidence, programme monitoring, validation findings and the QQI blended-learning evaluation. The evidence indicates that assessment is generally applied and industry-relevant, but also identifies some recurring challenges that require thematic rather than solely programme-level analysis.

The QQI blended-learning panel in 2025 recognised assessment as integrated with teaching and learning and noted the use of varied and workplace-related approaches. External Examiner and Authenticator reports provide further scrutiny of standards, marking and assessment practice.

Learners receive assessment schedules, briefs, marking criteria and submission requirements in advance.

There is also evidence that external scrutiny contributes to enhancement rather than functioning solely as a compliance mechanism. For example, external review of a Level 5 Quality Assurance assessment identified consistently high learner performance and the need for greater academic challenge, resulting in review of the assessment design. Additional tutorials have similarly been introduced where evidence identified particular learner challenges, including within technically demanding modules such as Introduction to Programming on a Level 6 programme.

The College's response to generative AI demonstrates a further area of evolving practice. The development of AIAS (AI Assessment Scale), supported by learner guidance, lecturer development and assessment-design resources, provides a structured mechanism for communicating expectations regarding AI use. The College recognises, however, that the rapid evolution of generative AI will require continued review of assessment design and academic-integrity practice.

The self-evaluation also identified an opportunity to make greater institutional use of the evidence generated through assessment. Assessment outcomes, External Examiner and External Authenticator reports, learner feedback and programme monitoring provide a substantial evidence base for greater thematic analysis across programmes and would strengthen the College's ability to identify recurring challenges, evaluate assessment effectiveness and demonstrate how external feedback results in enhancement.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Established internal and external scrutiny across the assessment lifecycle
- Applied and professionally relevant assessment design relevant for the learner profile
- Structured assessment information to support learner readiness for assessment and exams
- An evolving institutional response to Generative AI through AIAS, academic guidance, lecturer development and collaborative working groups.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Strengthen systematic institutional analysis of assessment practice and learner outcomes, using available evidence to identify cross-programme patterns and enhancement priorities.
- Assessment in the context of Generative AI – continue the development of authentic assessment design and academic integrity practice.

3.3 Supports for Learners

Description

Innopharma Education provides a range of academic, accessibility, pastoral, wellbeing, career, digital and transition supports designed to reflect the needs of its learner population. The College recognises that many learners are returning to education while balancing employment, family and other commitments and may enter programmes with differing levels of previous educational experience, confidence and familiarity with further and higher education. Learner support is therefore designed to be accessible and responsive throughout the learner journey, from initial induction and transition through programme participation, assessment and progression.

Induction, Transition and Academic Support

All learners receive College and programme induction covering the learning environment, programme and assessment information, academic expectations, key policies and available supports. Additional transition and academic-skills provision is targeted according to learner need.

Academic support continues throughout the learner journey through academic-skills and examination-preparation sessions, library support in areas including academic writing, referencing, information literacy and academic integrity, and individual or targeted support where required.

Disability, Accessibility and Individual Learner Support

Learners with disabilities or additional learning needs may engage confidentially with Learner Support. Where formal individual arrangements are required, an Individual Learner Support Plan (ILSP) is developed in consultation with the learner and identifies appropriate supports and reasonable accommodations. Depending upon individual need and programme requirements, accommodations may include additional examination time, assistive technology, alternative examination arrangements or appropriate equipment and arrangements for practical activities.

Individual arrangements are complemented by a broader commitment to inclusive teaching and learning. UDL principles, engagement with AHEAD and accessibility resources available through the Teaching Hub support lecturers in considering accessibility within programme delivery.

Pastoral, Wellbeing and Engagement Support

Programme Managers provide a consistent first point of contact for learners throughout their programme, complemented by Programme Leads and Learner Support. Attendance and engagement are monitored, enabling proactive contact where potential disengagement or barriers to participation are identified. Where learners experience academic, personal or wellbeing difficulties, staff work with the learner to identify available options and supports. Confidential external counselling and wellbeing services are available alongside pastoral support and referral to other appropriate services where required.

Career and Professional Development

As a pioneer in providing career-focused learner supports, Innopharma Education places employability and professional development at the heart of the learner experience. Learners have access to the dedicated Career Hub and associated career-development resources, workshops and individual support relating to career planning, CV development, interview preparation, job searching and professional development. The College's strong relationships with industry complement these supports through exposure to contemporary professional practice, guest speakers and sector expertise, enabling learners to actively consider and progress their career ambitions alongside their academic studies.

Learner Voice and Representation

Each cohort nominates a class representative who provides a formal communication channel between learners and the College. Class representatives are supported through the Class Rep Hub and have access to NStEP training. Programme Leads explain the role of the Class Representative, and typically a learner volunteers for this role. The Learner Support Coordinator provides training for the Class Rep which is designed based on NStep resources to ensure best practice. Learner representation is complemented by mid-semester check-ins and end-of-course surveys. Feedback is reviewed and used to inform enhancement activity, providing multiple opportunities for learners to contribute to the development of their learning experience.

Digital and Information Support

The Learner Hub provides a central point of access to learner and programme information, academic and disability supports, wellbeing resources and guidance. The digital library and IT support services ensure learners can access academic resources and technical assistance across delivery settings. During each lecture, live dedicated IT support is available for the learner and the lecturer.

Evaluation

Evidence considered included class-representative feedback, the 2026 staff and learner surveys and feedback, programme monitoring, support-service activity and external review. Together these sources show extensive support provision and high accessibility, while also identifying the need for stronger evaluation of impact.

The 2026 staff survey provides a second perspective. Across 36 responses, learner support was repeatedly identified as an institutional strength, with staff referring to individualised support, accessibility of programme teams, support for learners returning to education and continuity of support across the learner journey. This does not substitute for learner evidence, but it corroborates the learner feedback and the external findings.

> *Innopharma Education demonstrates a high level of commitment to learner support. Students are provided with accessible resources, responsive assistance, and clear guidance throughout their learning journey. The engagement with industry professionals and subject matter experts. This helps ensure that programme content remains relevant, up to date, and reflective of real-world practices and emerging trends* ***(Survey Respondent)****.*

> *Innopharma provide quality programmes, relevant programmes, student welfare, student centred ethos, student facing processes, agility to respond quickly to needs* ***(Survey Respondent)****.*

> *Learner support, going the extra mile for the student from the lead to graduation on an individual level. Industry engagement – lecturers are industry experts and on trend with innovations and continuous improvement. Alumni work and engagement post-completion of courses, building up a network within the industry and support with career progression* ***(Survey Respondent)****.*

> *Admission process and aligning student career goals to programmes, best advice culture* ***(Survey Respondent)****.*

> *Development of industry specific programmes informed by industry and government needs. Understanding our learning profile and supporting them as appropriately* ***(Survey Respondent)****.*

A review of Learner feedback, also demonstrates the support provided ot learners:

> *The course attracted me because of its structure and particularly the employment opportunities and support which this course could provide for me after completion. My learning and social experience on the course was fantastic! I am really impressed with the quality of the material, skills and practical knowledge of the lecturers* ***(Level 8 Learner)***

> *I would highly recommend this course to anyone. The support, general guidance and advice received throughout the course cannot be rivalled* ***(Level 6 Learner)***

> *The support is there if you feel you are struggling. The lecturers also have a very open approach to learning, they always consult the class on what works best for us as a group.* ***(Level 8 Learner)***

> *I really enjoyed the course and for me it really bridged the gap since I graduated. The CV, interview & networking skills and general advice throughout the course was also of huge benefit to me. I feel that networking is probably the best course of action for finding employment now. A huge thanks to you for all the help and support* ***(Level 7 Learner)***

> *The support and practical advice and guidance offered by the Innopharma staff and lecturers, was outstanding. The industry knowledge and practical experience of staff was invaluable. It offered me a bridge to a new industry which had been eluding me up to then.*

> *After returning to college after a long time away, I found the experience enjoyable and well-organized with supportive staff and lecturers* ***(Level 7 Learner)***

External evidence is positive. The 2026 BSc (Honours) in Process Digitalisation validation commended learner-management and support structures, while the blended-learning review recognised the range of learner guidance and support available through the digital environment.

Learner feedback from programme and module surveys and class representatives is reviewed through programme monitoring. Recurring strengths include lecturer knowledge and support, industry relevance and practical application; enhancement themes include more practical and interactive learning, clearer assessment guidance and timely feedback. A centralised learner-feedback dashboard is being introduced to support more systematic cross-programme analysis and action tracking.

Returning to education and that transition to study has been supported, initially focusing on Level 6, was extended to Levels 7 and 8 after feedback showed that preparedness depends on prior experience and circumstances as well as NFQ level; introductory support has also been developed for Level 5. Impact evidence remains uneven, however, and more systematic analysis of participation, outcomes and learner feedback is needed to evaluate effectiveness across the support portfolio.

The review also identified an opportunity to develop learner partnership beyond established representation and feedback mechanisms. Class representative structures and surveys provide effective channels for learner voice; the next stage is to explore opportunities for learners to participate more actively as partners in the development and enhancement of aspects of the learner experience.

Key Institutional Strengths

- A strong institutional culture of accessible, responsive and personalised learner support.
- A consistent first point of contact through Programme Managers, complemented by specialist academic, accessibility, pastoral, library, career and IT support.
- Differentiated transition and academic support that has evolved in response to learner feedback and changing learner needs.
- Inclusive provision combining individualised reasonable accommodations with wider application of UDL and accessible teaching practice.
- External evidence supporting the comprehensiveness and accessibility of learner-support arrangements

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Strengthen evaluation of the impact of learner support, drawing more systematically on participation, engagement, learner feedback and outcomes to inform future provision.
- Further develop transition to education support, with clearer communication of both what learners can expect from the College and what is expected of them as further and higher education learners.
- Continue to develop learner partnership beyond representation and feedback, exploring opportunities for learners to contribute more actively to enhancement of the learner experience.
- Introduce acentralised learner-feedback dashboard to support more systematic cross-programme analysis and action tracking.

Case Studies

Case Study - Innoskills Academy – Creating a Supported Blended Learning Environment

Case Study - Developing and Introducing Innopharma Education's Generative AI Policy

Case Study - Reframing Access: Embedding Academic Confidence Across All NFQ Levels

Innopharma education

Objective 4
Self Evaluation, Monitoring and Review



Objective 4
Self Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Innopharma
Quality Enhancement Cycle

A continuous cycle of evidence, reflection and action that drives improved learner outcomes and an enhanced learning experience.

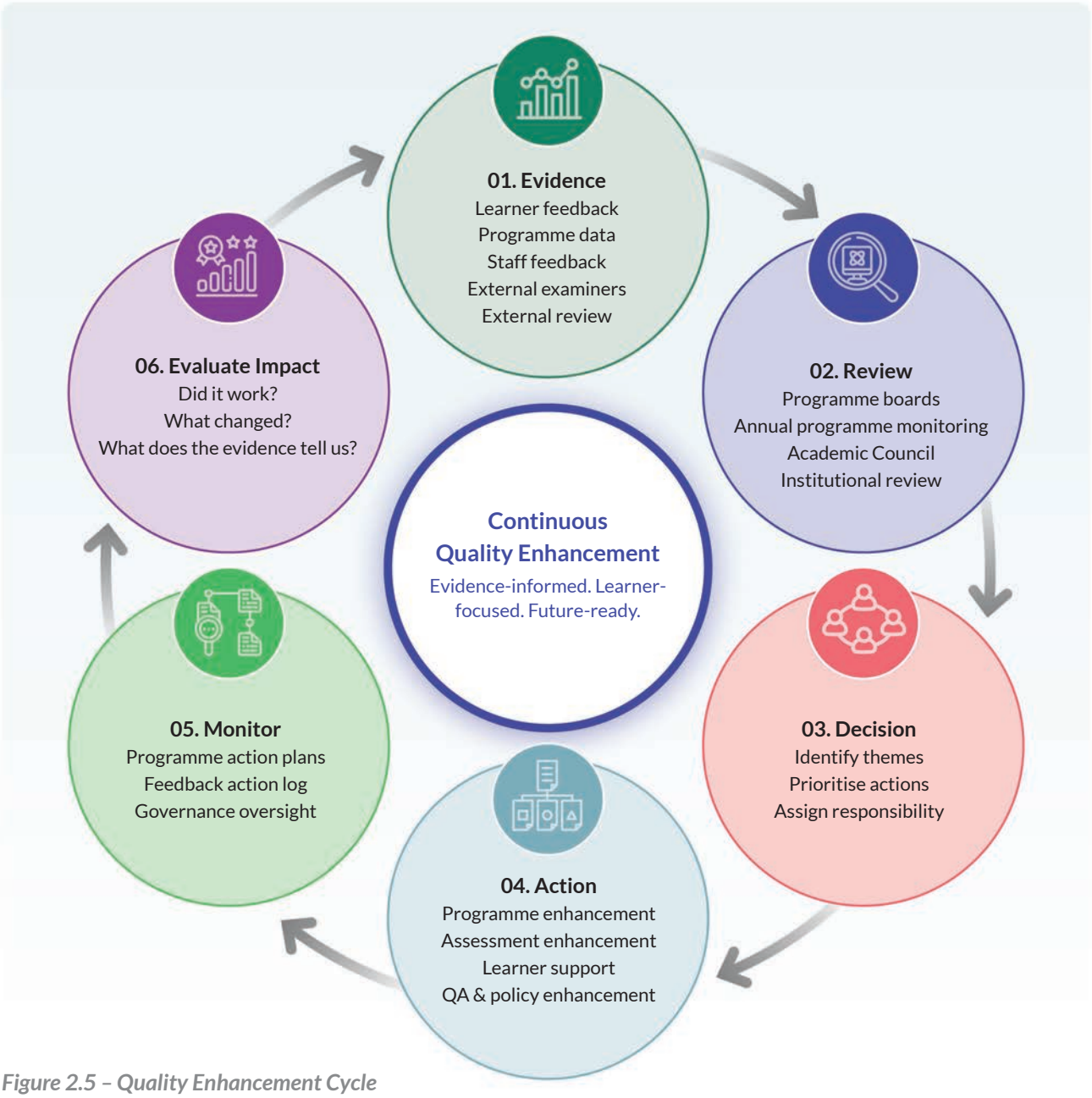


Figure 2.5 – Quality Enhancement Cycle

4.1 Institutional Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Description

Self-evaluation, monitoring and review are embedded in Innopharma Education's quality assurance framework. Evidence is generated through learner and stakeholder feedback, programme monitoring, admissions and engagement data, assessment outcomes, retention, completion and progression information, and external academic scrutiny. AC oversees review of the QA Manual, informed by College functions, regulatory requirements and external review.

Annual quality reporting supports reflection on quality assurance and enhancement activity. At programme level, Programme Boards, Annual Programme Reports and Programme Action Plans review evidence, identify actions and, where necessary, escalate External Examiner and External Authenticator findings through governance structures. Although not required to submit a full Annual Quality Report to QQI, the College voluntarily participates in QQI's annual quality reporting process by submitting case studies of quality assurance and enhancement activity, using the process to reflect on developments during the reporting period.

External review provides independent evidence through programme validation and revalidation, External Examiner and External Authenticator scrutiny, engagement with QQI and specialist reviews. During the review period, evaluation of the extension of scope for asynchronous blended learning informed documented arrangements for learner analytics and engagement monitoring. Other reviews covered data protection, Zoho and IT platforms, programme validation and blended-learning gap analysis, with resulting actions incorporated into relevant procedures or enhancement activity.

Stakeholder feedback is gathered throughout the learner journey. Alongside formal mechanisms, learners have direct contact with staff from admission onwards, A recent staff survey described the College's strength as: "Our connection with students. We know them by name and really care about them, they're not just a number. We are very available to them." This illustrates the value placed on learner relationships, while formal feedback remains the principal basis for evaluating learner experience.

Evaluation

CINNTE is Innopharma Education's most extensive institution-wide self-evaluation since Initial Access to Validation in 2020. The self-evaluation found established mechanisms for gathering evidence and identifying enhancements through programme monitoring, learner feedback, external academic scrutiny, and validation reviews. The principal opportunity is not to create further mechanisms, but to strengthen institutional synthesis, thematic analysis, governance oversight and follow-through on actions arising from existing processes.

Thematic Review of QQI Validation Conditions

As part of CINNTE, Innopharma reviewed validation conditions across its independently validated provision at NFQ Levels 5–8 to identify recurring themes and institutional learning. Individual themes included ATP and RPL, assessment and grading, programme documentation and delivery, industry connectivity and programme coherence. One theme relating to assessment and exams is common as outlined below:

NFQ Level	Example of external condition	Institutional learning
Level 5	Marks associated with award grades to align with QQI FET-sector requirements.	Assessment and grading arrangements must reflect the requirements of the award level and context.
Level 6	Repeat-assessment opportunities and arrangements to be clearly documented and communicated.	Assessment regulations must be clear, accessible and consistently communicated to learners.
Level 8	Explicit assessment of programme learning outcomes and consistent MIPLO/MIMLO/ assessment mapping; standardised marking criteria and honours-degree grade bands.	As provision develops, institutional oversight must support constructive alignment and consistency of academic standards across programmes.

Previously, responses to validation findings were managed at programme level without systematic collation across the portfolio. Through the SER process, we have identified a need to collate and review recurring and emerging institutional themes arising from QA and validation activity.

Overall, evidence demonstrates established mechanisms for self-evaluation, programme monitoring, stakeholder feedback and external scrutiny, supported by direct learner contact and formal governance routes. The College has identified the need for more systematic and thematic analysis of evidence, together with clearer tracking of action impacts.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Multiple sources of evidence inform review and enhancement.
- External scrutiny is actively used as a source of institutional learning.
- Direct learner contact supports responsive programme-level monitoring.
- The CINNTE process has broadened institution-wide participation in self-evaluation.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Formalise institutional thematic analysis of quality assurance evidence.
- Strengthen closed-loop tracking of enhancement actions.

4.2 Programme Monitoring and Review

Description

Programme monitoring and periodic review operate within Innopharma Education's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework and its Policy for Monitoring, Review and Re-validation of Programmes, aligned with ESG Standard 1.9. The policy requires programmes to remain fit for purpose, responsive to learner and societal needs and subject to continuous improvement, with actions communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Implementation evidence for independently validated provision relates mainly to ongoing and annual monitoring because this provision began in 2021/22 and no programme has yet completed revalidation. The SER therefore evaluates implemented monitoring arrangements separately from documented revalidation procedures that remain untested through a full cycle. However, Innopharma have demonstrated extensive experience of revalidating programmes with its collaborative partners TU Dublin and Griffith College.

Programme Boards are the principal forum for ongoing monitoring, considering admissions, engagement, assessment, retention, completion and progression data; withdrawals and deferrals; learner feedback; and External Examiner or External Authenticator findings. Annual Programme Reports and Programme Action Plans consolidate this evidence and identify actions maintained by Programme Leads between cycles.

Learner feedback from surveys and class representatives is considered alongside programme data and external academic evidence within programme monitoring.

External Examiner and External Authenticator findings contribute independent evidence on academic standards, assessment and delivery.



Evaluation

Evidence in the self-evaluation that programme monitoring combines programme data, learner voice and external academic scrutiny to assess learner experience and academic performance. Annual Programme Reports and Programme Action Plans consolidate findings into programme priorities. Implementation evidence is strongest for annual monitoring; revalidation effectiveness cannot yet be assessed because no independently validated programme has completed that cycle.

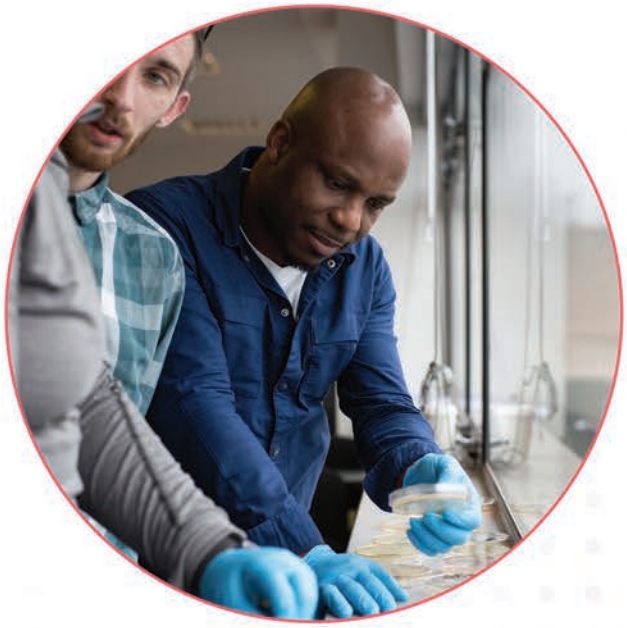
The self-evaluation identified two related needs: systematically consolidate evidence across monitoring cycles and track actions beyond completion to demonstrate impact. These changes would strengthen annual monitoring and readiness for periodic review and revalidation.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Evidence-informed programme monitoring.
- Learner voice integrated into monitoring. Module and programme surveys and Class Representative structures provide recurring opportunities for learner feedback to contribute to programme review and enhancement.
- Independent academic scrutiny contributes to enhancement. External Examiner and External Authenticator findings form part of the monitoring evidence base and can lead to changes in assessment and delivery.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Prepare systematically for the first revalidation cycle.
- Strengthen closed-loop monitoring of programme actions.



4.3 Oversight, Monitoring and Review of Relationships with External Third Parties

Description

Innopharma has long-standing collaborative partnerships with TU Dublin and Griffith College across NFQ Levels 6–9. As collaborating provider, it contributes programme development, academic leadership, staffing, learner support and operational delivery within responsibilities defined by the principal provider's QA and governance framework.

Innopharma remains responsible for the quality of its delivery and the effectiveness of each partnership. Memoranda of Understanding and related documentation define responsibilities and escalation routes, while liaison and steering structures address academic, operational, learner and quality matters jointly and refer issues to the awarding provider where required. AC maintains institutional oversight of collaborative provision through a standing agenda item covering partnership activity, emerging issues, programme developments and matters requiring attention. This preserves visibility of Innopharma's responsibilities while respecting the awarding provider's academic and quality assurance authority.

Separately from these academic partnerships, the College holds a subscription to the Trinity Information Service, an external service arrangement that supports document supply and specialist information requests. The service sits outside the collaborative provision governance described above and is managed by the College Librarian & Research Specialist.

Additionally for the past number of years there has been a long standing collaboration between Innopharma Education and Trinity College Dublin's School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences to support industry-focused learning within the fifth year of TCD's MPharm programme. A suite of six e-learning resources developed by Innopharma, covering areas including pharmaceutical manufacturing, GMP and quality assurance, process validation, facilities and cleanrooms, Process Analytical Technologies and clinical research, is integrated into TCD's Industrial Pharmacy module. The collaboration provides an opportunity to connect academic learning with contemporary industry practice. This is further supported through an annual industry case study developed by Innopharma, through which learners work in groups on a real-world industry scenario and develop the strategies, protocols and plans that would be expected in a professional pharmaceutical environment. The collaboration demonstrates how Innopharma's industry expertise and learning resources are used within third-party academic provision to support applied, practice-based learning.

Evaluation

The partnerships with TU Dublin and Griffith College are an institutional strength, giving Innopharma substantial experience within established academic governance and quality assurance frameworks. They have developed capability in programme design and delivery, assessment, external examining, learner support, governance, monitoring and review.

Effective collaborative provision depends on clear roles and accountability. Innopharma is responsible for academic and operational delivery, while programmes remain governed by the awarding provider's quality assurance policies, academic regulations and oversight. This externality supports consistent academic standards and quality assurance across collaborative provision. Innopharma's governance structures oversee its partnership responsibilities through regular liaison, steering arrangements and AC reporting. This dual model—compliance with the awarding provider's framework and internal oversight of Innopharma's performance—supports timely identification and resolution of academic, operational and learner matters.

As Innopharma matures as an independent private provider offering QQI-validated/accredited programmes, it intends to pursue membership of the Higher Education Colleges Association to broaden sectoral engagement beyond its collaborative partnerships. Membership would support peer learning, benchmarking, sharing of good practice and participation in sector-wide quality assurance and teaching and learning developments. This would broaden and systematise Innopharma's engagement with peers across the independent higher education sector.

Key Institutional Strengths

- Established and mature collaborative partnerships: Innopharma Education has long-standing relationships with TU Dublin and Griffith College, providing substantial institutional experience in the delivery and management of collaborative higher education provision across NFQ Levels 6–9 with over 14,000 learners across both institutes.
- Clear quality assurance accountability: Collaborative programmes operate within the approved quality assurance and academic governance frameworks of the respective awarding provider, ensuring clarity regarding academic standards, regulatory requirements and ultimate responsibility for the programme and award.
- Strong academic and operational contribution: Innopharma contributes significant subject-matter expertise, academic leadership, teaching resources, learner supports, practical facilities and, where applicable, dissertation supervision, while operating within the governance requirements of the awarding provider.
- Established partnership governance mechanisms: Formal agreements, steering arrangements and regular engagement provide mechanisms for monitoring programme delivery, addressing emerging issues and escalating matters through the appropriate governance structures.
- Internal institutional oversight: Collaborative partnerships are a standing agenda item at Innopharma AC, ensuring that the College maintains oversight of its responsibilities, partnership activity and matters requiring institutional consideration.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- Introduce a more systematic institutional review of collaborative provision to develop a periodic review mechanism through which AC considers the collective effectiveness of collaborative arrangements, including partnership performance, learner experience, emerging risks, governance effectiveness and continuing strategic alignment.
- Broaden externality and sectoral engagement: Progress Innopharma Education's intention to seek membership of HECA, providing further opportunities for peer engagement, benchmarking, sharing of good practice and participation in wider developments across the independent higher education sector.

Case Study

Case Study - Building Student Demographic Dashboards for Annual QA Reports

Case Study - Strengthening Learner Feedback and Programme Monitoring

Case Study- Strengthening Oversight and Integration of Collaborative Provision

Innopharma education

Overall Conclusion



Overall Conclusion

Innopharma Education's first CINNTE self-evaluation has provided an opportunity to consider the College as a whole institution at an important point in its development. Since approval of its quality assurance procedures in 2020, the College has expanded its independently validated provision across NFQ Levels 5–8, developed its blended-learning capability, strengthened academic governance and continued to operate substantial collaborative provision with TU Dublin and Griffith College. The self-evaluation has therefore considered not only whether appropriate quality assurance arrangements are documented, but how effectively those arrangements operate in practice as the scale and complexity of the College's provision develops.

The process has drawn together evidence that was previously considered through a range of programme, governance and operational processes. Staff and learner consultation, governance records, programme monitoring, External Examiner and External Authenticator findings, QQI validation and review outcomes, collaborative provision and engagement with industry and other external stakeholders have provided different perspectives through which the College has evaluated its practice. CINNTE has consequently been valuable not simply as a review of compliance, but as an opportunity to identify recurring institutional themes across these different sources of evidence.

The self-evaluation has confirmed a number of characteristics that are central to Innopharma Education's identity and educational model. These include a clear distinction between academic and corporate governance; a documented Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework; close engagement with industry and professional practice; flexible and applied provision designed around a predominantly mature and professionally engaged learner population; accessible learner support; and significant experience gained through long-standing collaborative relationships with TU Dublin and Griffith College. The review has also demonstrated the contribution of external scrutiny to institutional learning, including through QQI validation and review, External Examiners and External Authenticators, collaborative partners and wider sectoral engagement.

Importantly, the self-evaluation has also identified a consistent next-stage development across the four CINNTE objectives. The College generates considerable evidence through its existing quality assurance arrangements; the principal opportunity is now to bring that evidence together more systematically at institutional level to identify trends, evaluate impact and inform decision-making. This is reflected in the enhancement priorities arising throughout the SER, including stronger performance measurement, closed-loop tracking of actions and decisions, thematic analysis across programmes and external reports, formalised review cycles and more systematic use of learner, progression, outcome and stakeholder evidence.

This finding represents an important outcome of the CINNTE process. The College does not consider that its next stage of quality enhancement requires the creation of multiple additional processes. Rather, the priority is to strengthen the connections between existing processes, evidence and governance so that institutional learning is more readily identified, shared, acted upon and evaluated. In this respect, the self-evaluation has helped Innopharma Education move from considering quality predominantly through individual programmes and activities towards a more integrated institutional view of quality and enhancement.

The enhancement priorities identified through the review have been mapped to the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 so that they form part of the College's wider institutional development. This alignment provides a basis for assigning responsibility, monitoring implementation and evaluating impact through the College's established governance and management structures.

Innopharma Education therefore enters its first CINNTE review with evidence of substantial institutional development since Initial Access to Validation in 2020, while recognising that continued growth brings a corresponding responsibility to ensure that governance, quality assurance, evidence systems and organisational capacity continue to develop. The College welcomes the independent, external perspective that the CINNTE review will provide and will use the findings of the review alongside its own self-evaluation to inform the next stage of institutional development.





Key Institutional Strengths

Drawing on the evidence and evaluation presented across the four review objectives, the self-evaluation identified a number of recurring themes that represent areas of strength and effective practice across Innopharma Education.

Theme	Supporting Statement
Clear, Maturing Governance Structures	A clear distinction between corporate governance (BOD) and academic governance (an independently chaired AC, strengthened by growing external membership) protects academic decision-making, supported by the Strategic Plan 2026-2030 and defined approval pathways for policies and programmes.
Documented, Externally Scrutinised Quality Assurance Framework	The Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF) provides a structured, publicly accessible institutional framework aligned with QQI statutory guidelines and ESG 2015, and has been positively informed by QQI validation feedback and staff engagement identified through CINNTE consultation.
Industry-Informed, Applied Provision	An independently chaired Industry Advisory Board, industry-experienced staff, and subject-matter expert review of programme design and assessment keep provision closely aligned to the skills needs of the pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical, medical device and related sectors.
Robust Programme Development and Validation Practice	A collaborative, institution-wide approach to validation preparation, including internal review and mock validation panels, sample-assessment scrutiny and AC oversight, is reinforced by evidence of organisational learning from QQI validation conditions and observations.
Learner-Centred ATP	A flexible admissions model, active use of RPL with measurable programme-level outcomes, and developing pathway tools such as the programme roadmap and Pathway Finder reflect the needs of Innopharma Education's predominantly mature, professionally engaged learner population.
Embedded Culture of Learner Support	A consistent first point of contact through Programme Managers, complemented by specialist academic, accessibility, pastoral, library, career and IT support, underpins a strong institutional culture of accessible, responsive and personalised learner support, corroborated by external evidence.
Multi-Source, Externally-Informed Self-Evaluation	Institutional review and enhancement draw on multiple evidence sources, including learner and stakeholder feedback, External Examiner and External Authenticator findings, and QQI validation and review outcomes, with the CINNTE process itself broadening participation in self-evaluation across academic, professional, governance and learner groups.
Established, Well-Governed Collaborative Partnerships	Long-standing collaborative relationships with TU Dublin and Griffith College operate within clearly defined quality assurance accountability and governance mechanisms, with collaborative provision a standing agenda item at AC.

Enhancement Priorities and Alignment with Strategic Plan 2026–2030

The enhancement priorities arising from the self-evaluation have been mapped against Innopharma Education's Strategic Plan 2026–2030 to ensure integration into wider institutional planning rather than progressed as a separate quality assurance workstream.

CINNTE Enhancement Theme	Strategic Objective(s)	Strategic Plan Objective	Contribution to Strategy	Time Line[5]
Systematic Performance Measurement	Objectives 2.3 and 5.4	Further develop processes of self-evaluation, monitoring and review; enhance systems, infrastructure and organisational processes.	Developing strategic and governance KPIs and an integrated institutional performance dashboard will provide a more systematic evidence base for monitoring performance, evaluating progress and supporting governance decision-making. This supports the Strategic Plan commitment to stronger institutional data collection, integration and analysis and systematic self-evaluation.	Medium Term
Formalised Review and Revalidation Cycles	Objectives 2.3 and 5.1	Further develop processes of self-evaluation, monitoring and review; strengthen governance and organisational structures.	Formal governance-effectiveness reviews, programme review and revalidation scheduling, and periodic review of collaborative arrangements will strengthen cyclical institutional review and provide clearer evidence that governance and programme oversight remain effective as provision expands.	Short Term
Closed-Loop Tracking of Actions and Decisions	Objectives 2.1, 2.3 and 1.2	Embed an institution-wide culture of quality, evidence-informed enhancement and shared accountability; further develop self-evaluation, monitoring and review; strengthen learner voice and representation.	Strengthened action logs will create a clear evidence trail from feedback or review finding, through decision and implementation, to subsequent evaluation of impact. This also supports the commitment to respond to learner feedback and communicate actions taken.	Medium Term
Thematic Analysis of Institutional Evidence	Objectives 2.1 and 3.2	Embed an institution-wide culture of quality, evidence-informed enhancement and shared accountability; enhance teaching, learning and assessment through evidence-informed learning design and continuing staff development.	Periodic thematic analysis of validation findings, External Examiner and External Authenticator reports, programme monitoring and learner feedback will enable recurring issues and good practice to be identified across programmes rather than considered only at programme level.	Medium Term

5 Short Term = Within 6 months; Medium Term = Within 12 months

CINNTE Enhancement Theme	Strategic Objective(s)	Strategic Plan Objective	Contribution to Strategy	Time Line[5]
Systematic Use of Outcome and Labour Market Data	Objectives 4.1, 4.3 and 1.1	Strengthen structured engagement with industry to inform programme development, review and strategic decision-making; strengthen the connection between education, practical experience and positive employment outcomes; equip learners with in-demand industry-specific skills.	More systematic use of labour-market intelligence, graduate destinations, progression data and learner and employer feedback will strengthen the evidence base for programme development and review and demonstrate whether provision continues to meet learner, employment and workforce needs.	Short Term
Strengthened Information Governance and Digital Infrastructure	Objective 5.4	Enhance systems, infrastructure and organisational processes to improve efficiency, accountability and the learner experience.	Reviewing data retention, undertaking an independent data-protection review and migrating of CRM hosting - the Strategic Plan commitments to secure, scalable technology, improved data management and appropriate controls for data protection and cybersecurity.	Short Term
Accessibility and Consistency of Public and Learner-Facing Information	Objectives 1.2 and 5.4	Provide comprehensive learner support services; enhance systems, infrastructure and organisational processes.	Academic sign-off of programme information and a clearly defined QA area within the Learner Hub will improve learners' access to accurate, consistent and accessible information while strengthening institutional processes for communication and learner support.	Short Term
Broader Staff Development, Learner Partnership and Sectoral Engagement	Objectives 5.3, 1.2 and 4.1	Support, develop and evaluate staff and associate faculty through structured induction, CPD and performance enhancement; strengthen learner voice and representation; strengthen structured engagement with industry.	A more systematic CPD framework supports staff development; deeper learner and graduate participation supports the strategic commitment to learner voice; and wider sectoral engagement, including HECA membership, will provide additional opportunities for externality, peer learning, benchmarking and institutional collaboration.	Medium Term

Strategic integration

This alignment provides a direct link between the findings of the self-evaluation and the College's existing strategic objectives. In particular, the proposed performance measurement enhancement supports the Strategic Plan's implementation framework, which envisages defined actions, milestones, performance indicators, accountable owners, oversight routes and reporting frequencies. Embedding these enhancement priorities within this framework will support ongoing governance oversight and enable progress and impact to be evaluated over the 2026–2030 strategic period.

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Appendices









Appendix One
Glossary of Abbreviations

Innopharma Education – CINNTE Self-Evaluation Report 2026

Abbreviation	Meaning
AC	Academic Council
AHEAD	Association for Higher Education Access and Disability
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIAS	Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale
AMTCE	Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
ATP	Access, Transfer and Progression
BOD	Board of Directors
BPCI	BioPharmaChem Ireland
CA	Continuous Assessment
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRM	Client Relationship Management
DIS	Dissertation Information System
DOAB	Directory of Open Access Books
DOAJ	Directory of Open Access Journals
DPO	Data Protection Officer
EA	External Authenticator
EC	Ethics Committee
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EE	External Examiner
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EMA	European Medicines Agency
EMT	Executive Management Team
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
ETB	Education and Training Board
EU	European Union
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FE	Further Education
FET	Further Education and Training
FSAI	Food Safety Authority of Ireland

Abbreviation	Meaning
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practice
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HECA	Higher Education Colleges Association
HPRA	Health Products Regulatory Authority
IAV	Initial Access to Validation
ICH	International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use
ILSP	Individual Learner Support Plan
IRIS	Innopharma Research Information System
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information Technology
LFS	Learner Fee Subsidy
MFA	Multi-Factor Authentication
MIMLO	Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcome
MIPLO	Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcome
NAIN	National Academic Integrity Network
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
OAPEN	Open Access Publishing in European Networks
OATD	Open Access Theses and Dissertations
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
QA	Quality Assurance
QAEF	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SME	Subject-Matter Expert
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
T&L	Teaching and Learning
TU Dublin	Technological University Dublin
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
WAM	Willing Able Mentoring

Appendix Two
Case Study Evidence

Case Study
EduConnect: Centralising and Strengthening the College's Documented Approach to Quality

Registrar and Head of Exams and Assessment with Data Analysis Coordinator & Programme Administrator

As the College grew, the documents, templates and know-how that staff needed were spread across email chains, Teams conversations, shared drives and personal OneDrive folders. EduConnect, a SharePoint-based platform with role-based access, was developed to give every member of staff one place to store, find and apply organisational knowledge. It supports the College's Information and Data Management Policy and its aim is that relevant information is collected, shared and used to support quality enhancement and informed decision-making. A key design principle was usability: intuitive navigation and a consistent structure help staff find what is relevant to their role.

EduConnect has two main areas. The Knowledge Hub is the organisation-wide source of truth, with specialist areas including the AI Hub, Quality Hub, Marketing Hub and Communities of Practice. It holds guidance documents, presentations, meeting recordings, student feedback, annual-report information and other resources that support institutional learning. A series of Workspace Hubs supports day-to-day collaboration for TU Dublin, Innopharma, Griffith College and ETB programmes. Staff work on shared documents and live spreadsheets in a controlled location, which keeps a single version of each document, allows work to continue when a colleague is away and allows teams to collaborate across departments within appropriate access controls.

For quality assurance, the value is consistency. Staff can reach the current versions of policies, reporting templates, programme documentation, governance records and review procedures in the same place, so the same procedures are applied in the same way across programmes and teams. EduConnect also gives the College a structured base for annual-report evidence, synthesis of student feedback, Executive Management Team discussion and Academic Council outputs, and it has reduced the practice of embedding links in emails and Teams chats that are difficult to find later.

EduConnect has also become the place where tacit knowledge is captured. Expertise that once sat with individual staff or departments is now written up as process guides, standard operating procedures, staff-developed resources, good practice examples, training materials and frequently asked questions, and shared through communities of practice and the training hubs. This makes the College less dependent on individual knowledge holders, saves time spent searching and duplicating work, and gives staff easier access to professional development resources.

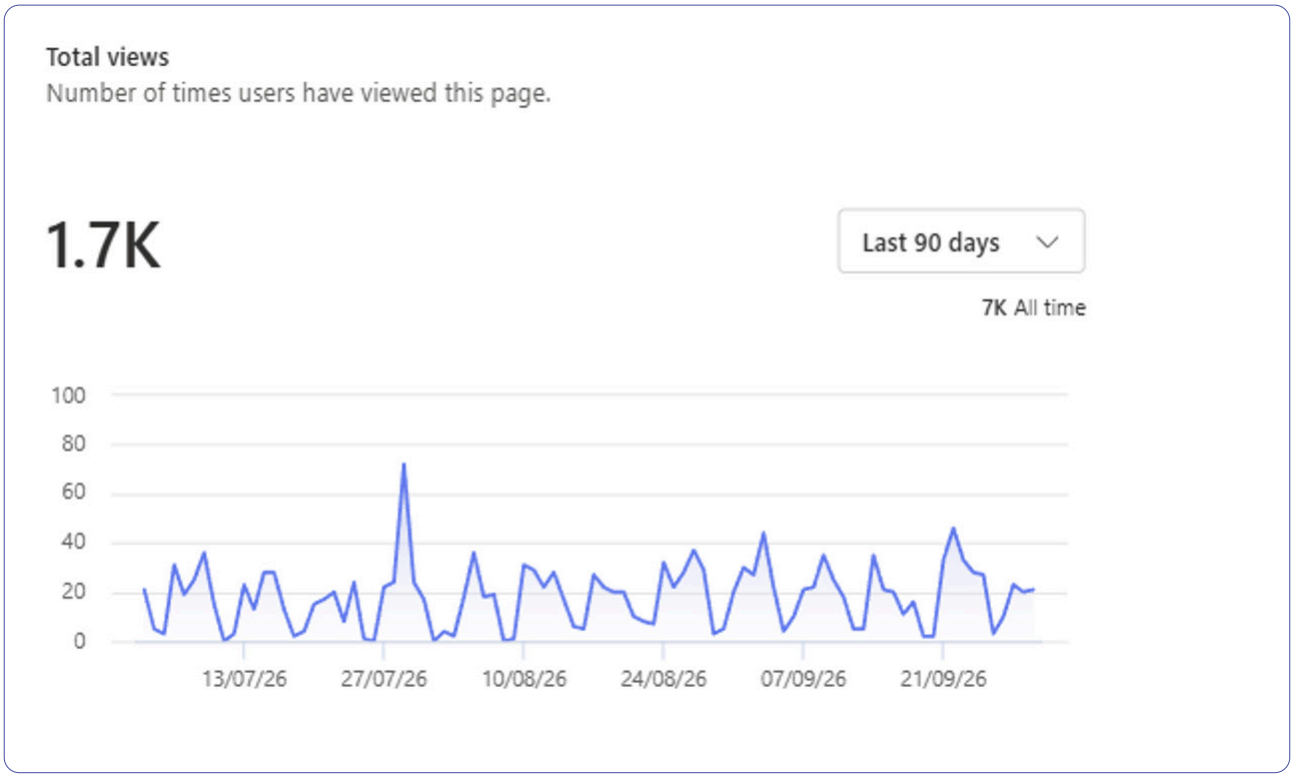
Usage over the most recent 90-day reporting period shows the platform is in regular use:

- 1,700 visitors to EduConnect.
- 682 visitors to the Knowledge Hub (40% of all visitors).
- An average of about eight minutes per user in the Knowledge Hub.
- Peak traffic in July, a month with a lot of annual leave, which suggests that staff found what they needed themselves while colleagues were on leave.

Staff at the July 2026 All-Employee Day identified access to QA documentation through EduConnect as a positive feature of the College's approach.

> *"Collaborating on shared documents knowing there is only one version is so reassuring."*
> ***Member of staff***

> *"EduConnect has allowed me to piece together the pieces of the Innopharma jigsaw which has improved my assimilation to the workforce."*
> ***New member of staff***



EduConnect page visits, most recent 90-day reporting period

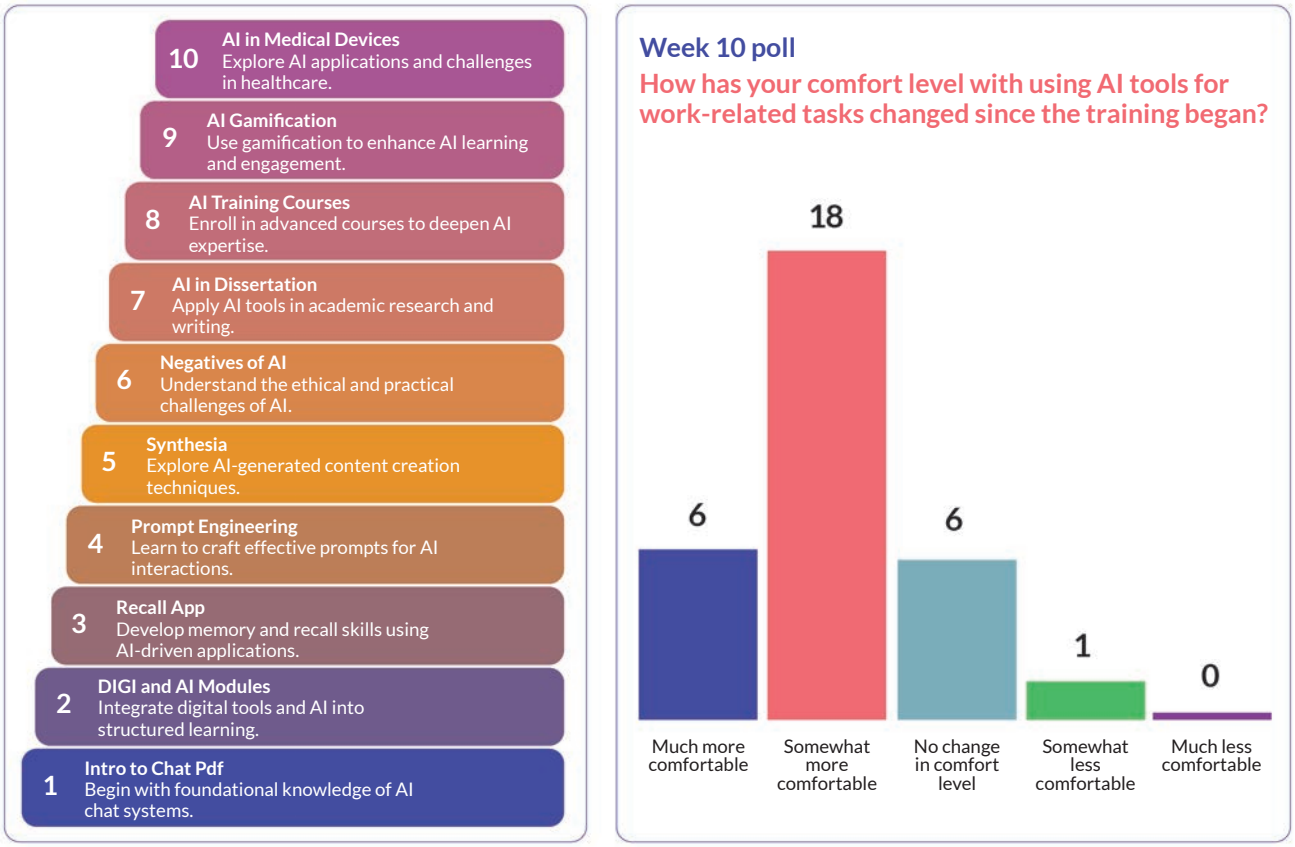
Case Study
Building Staff AI Confidence Through Weekly Staff Meetings

College Librarian and Research Specialist

As generative AI became increasingly integrated into teaching, assessment, research and administration, we found that staff at Innopharma had differing levels of comfort, familiarity and expertise in using it. In regulated sectors such as pharmaceuticals, medical devices and food science, digital and AI literacy also supports data integrity and quality assurance, so the College wanted every member of staff to build practical skills and stay current with industry. An anonymous staff survey in early 2025 asked about comfort with AI tools, frequency of use, concerns and training preferences. It showed that only a small share of staff felt confident using AI, raised concerns about accuracy, data privacy and job security, and showed an appetite for training in administrative tasks and data analysis.

The College responded in the first quarter of 2025 with an institution-wide upskilling initiative led by the AI Research & Productivity Workflow Group, whose members come from academic programmes, research, library services and administration. Its aims were to upskill staff, develop relevant policy and improve efficiency through AI.

Earlier optional and lunchtime training had low attendance, so the group built a ten-minute AI segment, followed by ten minutes of questions, into the weekly staff meeting. A baseline poll in Week 1 gauged staff comfort, knowledge and use of AI, and a second poll in Week 10 assessed the impact. The first ten sessions moved from AI chat tools and prompt engineering through recall and synthesis tools to AI in dissertations, AI gamification and AI in medical devices. Later sessions, shaped by staff feedback, covered Custom GPTs, AI in recruitment, automation, industry trends, local language models and creating presentations.



The ten-session programme (left) and the Week 10 poll on comfort with AI tools (right)

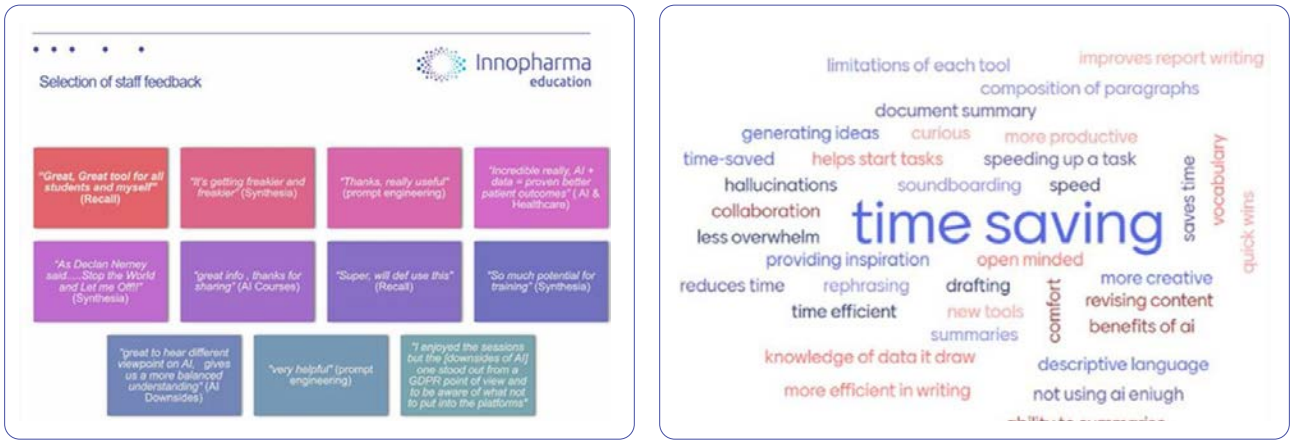
The design relied on colleagues teaching one another. Any member of staff could lead a session and share their own discoveries, and several volunteered to present, while many others shaped the programme informally through comments after sessions. Every presentation was archived in a shared folder for colleagues who could not attend. A colleague with a sceptical view of AI was invited to set out its drawbacks and ethical challenges, so that AI was not presented uncritically and discussion stayed open and safe for everyone. Attendance, tool use, learning outcomes and feedback were all monitored, and participation across the staff group was close to complete.

Follow-up feedback after the first ten sessions showed:

- The number of staff reporting that they did not use AI fell to zero.
- In the Week 10 poll, 24 of 31 respondents (77%) felt more comfortable using AI for work-related tasks: 6 much more and 18 somewhat more. Six reported no change, one felt somewhat less comfortable and none felt much less comfortable.
- Staff described practical gains in summarising documents, writing reports, getting started on tasks and creative thinking, and "time saving" was the most common theme in their comments. Some described less task overwhelm and anxiety.
- Teaching staff began to bring AI into the curriculum, including an AI-based assignment in the Digital Communications module on the Level 6 Operational Excellence programme.
- Staff agreed on the need for formal governance, which led to the Generative AI Policy approved by Academic Council in August 2025. The same work informed the College's Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale.

"Great to hear a different viewpoint on AI. It gives us a more balanced understanding."
Staff member, session feedback

"I enjoyed the sessions, but the downsides of AI one stood out from a GDPR point of view and what not to put into the platforms."
Staff member, session feedback



Selection of staff feedback (left) and word cloud of staff comments (right)

The initiative was presented with colleagues from Teaching and Learning and Academic Programmes at the EdTech Conference in Waterford in May 2025 and was shortlisted at the 2026 Education Awards. The AI Hub on EduConnect now gives staff a permanent home for AI guidance and resources.

Case Study
Responding to industry need through partnership – BiopharmaChem Skillnet and Innopharma Education

Programme Lead, FE Programmes

Identifying and Responding to an Industry Need

Innopharma Education's collaboration with BioPharmaChem Skillnet provides a practical example of how sectoral engagement can inform programme development and targeted workforce support. BioPharmaChem Skillnet works directly with employers across Ireland's biopharmaceutical, pharmaceutical, chemical and related manufacturing sectors to identify emerging workforce and skills requirements. This industry insight, together with Innopharma Education's curriculum-development expertise, informed the development of the QQI Level 5 Certificate in Essentials for Pharmaceutical Manufacturing.

The programme was designed as an accessible entry and reskilling pathway for people who may have valuable transferable workplace experience but lack formal pharmaceutical qualifications or experience of working in a regulated GMP environment. Delivered part-time through blended learning, it develops scientific, technical, regulatory, digital and professional skills relevant to pharmaceutical manufacturing.

Supporting Workforce Transition

The relevance of this model became particularly evident following the closure of a pharmaceutical company in Co. Limerick. A group of employees facing redundancy participated in the programme, with eligible employees supported through full Skillnet funding. The programme enabled participants to build on their existing manufacturing experience while developing pharmaceutical-specific knowledge in areas including GMP, quality assurance, documentation, cleanroom operations and regulated manufacturing.

Learner Experience and Applied Learning

The programme combines academic learning with practical and workplace-relevant activity. Learner feedback highlighted the value of the industry-based approach and its contribution to understanding the requirements of the pharmaceutical sector. One participant affected by the company closure described how returning to education initially appeared daunting, but that completing the programme increased his confidence to pursue further upskilling and new career opportunities.

Institutional Learning and Strategic Relevance

The collaboration illustrates the strategic value of Level 5 provision within Innopharma Education's portfolio. It provides an accessible route into regulated manufacturing for learners who may not initially hold higher-level STEM qualifications, while supporting reskilling, career transition and progression. It also provides a concrete example of the College's approach to using external sectoral engagement to inform programme development and maintain alignment with changing workforce needs.

The programme and partnership have also received external recognition, having been shortlisted for a BioPharmaChem Ireland award. This provides an additional opportunity to disseminate the model and the learning arising from the collaboration.

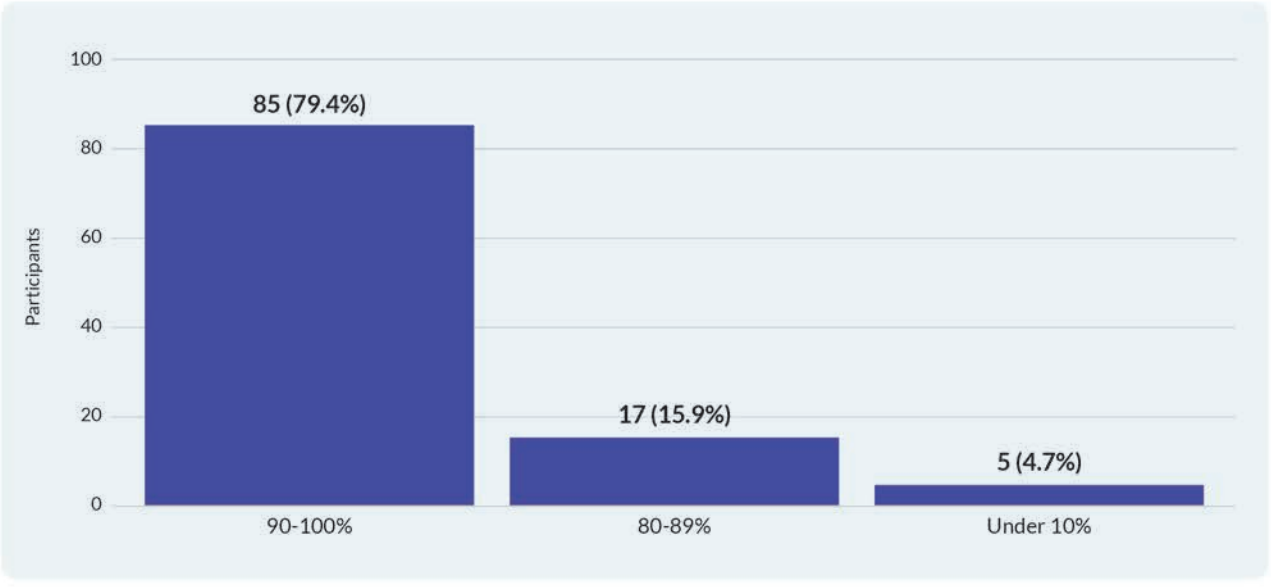
Case Study
Information Security in Practice – Awareness, Response and Continuous Improvement

Registrar and Head of Exams and Assessment

The College holds learner, staff and organisational information across a number of software platforms such as Zoho, Innoskills, Themis and Microsoft 365. Role-based access, multi-factor authentication, encryption and backup protect this information technically. Everyday behaviour, such as recognising phishing or handling personal data, depends on every member of staff, not only IT, so the College also invests in awareness.

The Information Security Awareness Programme runs through an Information Security Hub on Innoskills, the Colleges Virtual Learning Environment, which holds policies, guidance, awareness resources and mandatory training. Training content is reviewed and updated every year and released to all staff for completion. Completion is monitored against deadlines, reminders are issued, and outstanding training is escalated through line managers so that everyone holds current knowledge. Between annual cycles the Information Security Committee sends communications through the VLE and at staff meetings on emerging threats, phishing risks, data protection responsibilities and practical guidance, which keeps security part of everyday work.

The most recent round shows how well this works. Of the 107 staff who took part, 102 (95.3%) scored 80% or above. Of these, 85 (79.4%) scored between 90% and 100% and 17 (15.9%) between 80% and 89%. The five participants (4.7%) who scored under 10% are required to retake the training.



Information security training results (107 participants)

The programme also uses the College's own data. The Committee reviews incident and breach data to identify trends and periods of higher risk, and uses the findings to target awareness campaigns, training updates and preventative messages. Between October 2020 and May 2025, 16 data protection incidents were recorded and assessed:

- Fourteen of the 16 were assessed as no, very low or low risk, one as medium and one did not state a rating.
- Seven (44%) were email-related, which is why phishing and email handling feature so regularly in staff communications.
- The speed at which the Data Protection Officer was notified of issues is typically within 4 hours. The result is a feedback cycle in which training is delivered, completion is monitored and escalated, incident data is reviewed, and the next round of awareness activity is adjusted. It sits within wider governance: Data Protection Officer oversight, an Information Security Steering Group, formal recording and risk assessment of incidents, an external assessment of information security completed in 2026, and penetration and vulnerability testing planned for later in 2026.







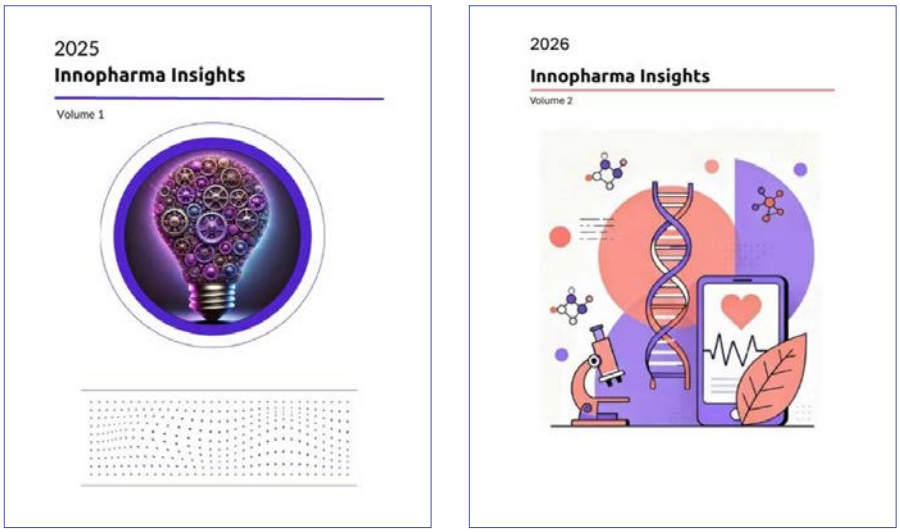
Case Study

Innopharma Insights: Making Learner and Staff Research Visible

College Librarian and Research Specialist

Most of the College's public information is programme information for prospective learners. Innopharma Insights, the College's open-access research journal, adds a different kind of public information: the research, applied project work and professional thinking of its learners, graduates and staff. Learners complete dissertations, capstones and applied projects of real quality, but that work usually stays inside the assessment process. Many mature, part-time learners also see academic publishing as unfamiliar and not meant for them. The journal was created to build a supportive bridge from assessment to public impact.

The journal launched in January 2025 and publishes annually. Its first two volumes, Volume 1 (2024/25) and Volume 2 (December 2025), contain 20 articles across digital transformation, pharmaceutical business and technology, medical devices, food science and sustainability, and Volume 3 is planned for December 2026. Contributions come from Level 6 to Level 9 and from staff. Volume 1 opened with a feature interview with the College's CEO and President, Orla Callan, and included four research articles adapted from Level 9 dissertations, a Level 6/7 capstone project, a book review and a Level 8 food product showcase. Volume 2 added research on vaccine hesitancy, antiviral drug discovery, clinical trial digitalisation, medical imaging access and psychobiotic nutrition, together with a practical guide for graduates entering biopharmaceutical manufacturing and a review of the 2025 BioPharmaChem Impact Conference.



Innopharma Insights, Volume 1 (2025) and Volume 2 (2026) covers

The College built the journal deliberately for authors who are new to publishing. The College Librarian acts as editor-in-chief, with an editorial team drawn from academic programmes, teaching and learning, programme management and the lecturing staff. A call for submissions went to all learners and staff, and dissertations were particularly encouraged because the research had already been done. Four recent graduates were invited, with their supervisors, to adapt their dissertations into articles. All four took part, supported step by step and by a bespoke guide from the Library on turning a dissertation into an article. Further guides, for opinion pieces and literature reviews, are in development. Staff contributed opinion and reflective pieces. Contributions are edited and peer reviewed, and the process is developmental, so authors learn as they revise.

All articles are open access under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence and are deposited in the College's institutional repository, so learners' work is freely available to employers, other institutions and the wider sector. The model is also light to run: a librarian-led editorial team and an institutional repository launched and host the journal without dedicated publishing staff.

Across the two issues, 13 contributions were led by learners. Authors responded warmly to being invited.

> *"I am so happy about this publication."*
> ***Learner author***

> *"I would be honoured to have my work contribute towards something bigger."*
> ***Learner author***

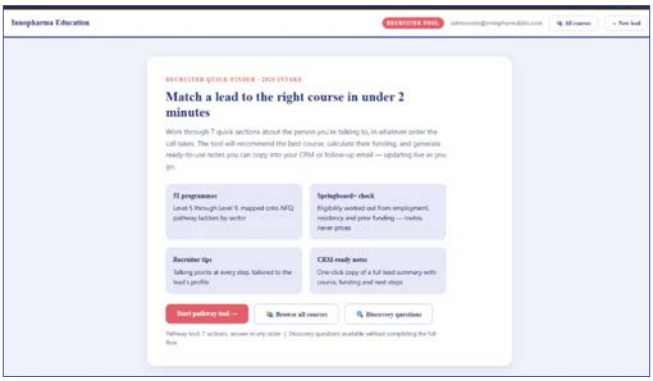
Several said that their articles now appear on their CVs and have been referred to in job interviews. The journal has given the College a visible record of applied, industry-relevant work, and it has been shared with peers in a poster and talks at the Academic and Special Libraries conference, CONUL and the HEA Open Education event in May 2026. The Library, Knowledge Exchange and AI Innovation Group, which reports to Academic Council, oversees the editorial pipeline, quality standards and annual publication cycle. Journal issues, articles published, repository deposits and author experience are its agreed success measures. Planned developments include assigning DOIs, a student seat on the editorial board and a Writing for Publication module in relevant programmes.

Case Study
The Conversational Pathway Finder: One Consistent Answer for Every Applicant

College Librarian and Research Specialist

Innopharma's portfolio runs from Level 5 certificates to Level 9 master's degrees across pharmaceutical, medical device, food science and digital transformation through its own programmes and with collaborative partners. Recommending the right programme to an enquirer takes more than knowing what the College runs. It depends on the applicant's starting qualification, target sector, area of work, employment status, residency and visa position and Springboard+ history. Across the portfolio this produces about 12.5 million combinations, and the rules sit in separate brochures, funding guidelines and visa restrictions, such as Springboard's limit of one funded course a year and the fact that most part-time programmes do not support a Stamp 2 study visa. The College wanted every applicant to receive the same accurate answer whichever adviser they spoke to, and wanted advisers to be able to rely on a live reference during a call instead of holding all of these rules in their heads.

The Pathway Finder was introduced in 2026 and developed through more than 20 versions. Each was tested with programme and admissions staff across the College, and their feedback changed the tool: confusing questions were reworded, missing sectors were added and recruiter tips were rewritten to match how a call really goes. Colleagues engaged with it enthusiastically, and the finished tool reflects how the team actually works an enquiry.



The tool works through seven sections: lead identification, starting qualification, sector, work area, employment status, residency status and Springboard+ history. They can be answered in any order, so it follows the conversation instead of making the adviser follow a form. As each answer is entered, a scoring engine ranks every course on level fit, sector match, role relevance and funding eligibility. It returns a primary recommendation, a same-sector progression ladder and a small number of distinct alternatives, with talking points for the adviser at each step. It holds no fees, because fees vary by intake and funding route, so pricing is always confirmed with admissions. Its recommendations are advisory and do not replace the adviser's own judgement.

The College's IT team built the tool into Zoho CRM as a "Pathway Tool" button on each lead record, so advisers never leave the record they are working from. It reads the CRM context and, with one click, writes a structured note to the lead record covering the applicant profile, recommended course, funding route, visa considerations and next steps. The note leaves a clear record of how each recommendation was reached, so any colleague can pick up a conversation where another left off.

For the admissions team, the tool turns a set of separate brochures and rules into one live reference. It reduces reliance on individual memory and length of service, shortens training for new advisers and carries embedded tips, such as guidance on RPL routes for applicants with a trade background or relevant experience but no formal award. Knowledge that once depended on an informal handover between colleagues is now part of the workflow. For applicants, the conversation is more consistent and better evidenced. The tool surfaces routes they might not think to ask about, such as stacking micro-credentials towards a full award, and flags funding or visa issues before an application is submitted instead of after.


RECOMMENDED PATHWAY FOR COLM

Higher Diploma in Biopharmaceutical & Medical Device Manufacturing

Level 8 · Higher Diploma · Dublin · Cork · Limerick · 12 months

✓ Springboard+ Funded Course

This programme is offered under Springboard+, and nothing in their profile blocks eligibility. The contribution depends on employment status and course level — **confirm the exact amount with admissions** rather than quoting it on the call. Applications go through springboardcourses.ie as well as directly to Innopharma.

Where it leads

The progression route from here, within Pharmaceutical & BioPharma:

LB MSc in Pharmaceutical Quality Systems Validation & Technology
Level 9 · MSc

Also worth putting to them

BSc in Process Technologies Springboard+ Core pathway
Level 7 · Degree · Dublin · Cork · Limerick · 11 months

BA (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Business Operations Springboard+
Level 8 · Honours Degree · Dublin · Cork · 12 months
Business route at Level 8.

Certificate in Science in Pharmaceutical Technology Springboard+
Level 9 · Micro-credential (25 ECTS) · Dublin · Cork · 6 months

Recruiter summary

Natural next step up from A Level 7 degree. Matched to Pharmaceutical & BioPharma. Directly relevant to manufacturing & operations. Springboard+ funded — confirm their contribution at application stage. This tool holds no fees: always route pricing to admissions.

In a short staff survey at the end of September and start of October 2026, ten advisers, with experience ranging from under six months to over three years, gave their views:

- All ten agreed or strongly agreed that it makes them more confident they are recommending the right programme.
- All ten found the structured CRM note useful.
- Nine agreed or strongly agreed that it reduces the time spent checking eligibility, funding and visa rules.
- Eight agreed that it helps them spot routes such as RPL and stacking micro-credentials, and eight that it helps them give consistent answers whichever adviser an applicant speaks to.
- Six agreed that it helps them flag funding or visa issues before an application is submitted.
- Eight agreed that it would have helped them get up to speed faster when they were new to the role, five of them strongly.

Advisers keep their own judgement, as the tool intends. Four never override a recommendation and six do so occasionally, for example when a programme is not currently running and a connected one can be offered, or when an applicant gives additional information. Advisers' suggestions, such as adding Level 9 APEL and master's progression routes, are being logged for the next version of the tool.

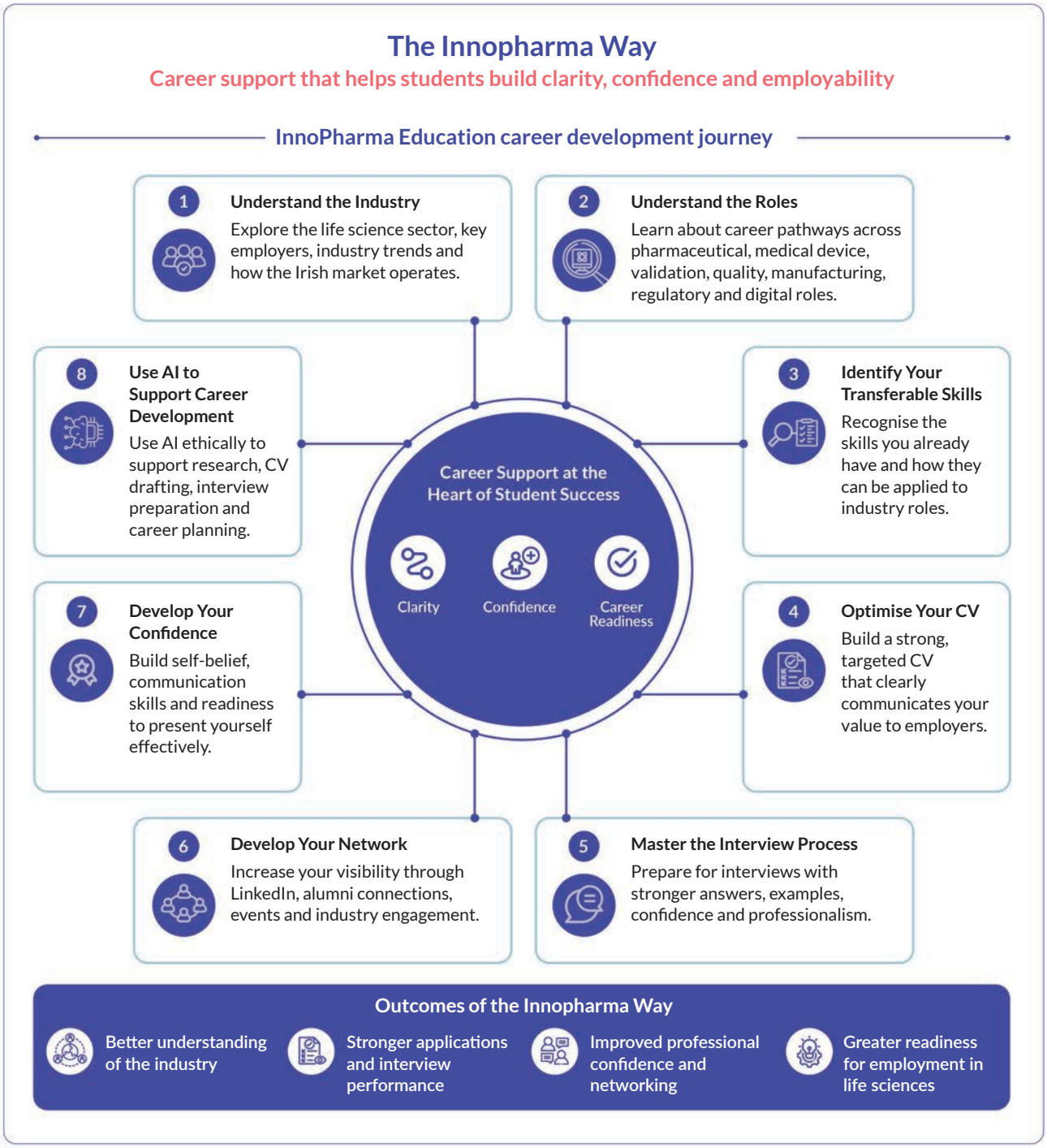
> *"It helps to standardise the process and we could avoid the common issues during the application process."*
> ***Admissions adviser***

Case Study

The Innopharma Way – Supporting Meaningful Career Progression

Director of Post Graduate Programmes & Research

Innopharma Education recognises that, for many learners, the purpose of returning to education extends beyond achieving an academic qualification. Learners may be seeking to enter the life sciences sector for the first time, move into a new functional area, progress within their existing organisation or translate experience gained in another industry into a new career. The **Innopharma Way** was developed to provide a structured approach to supporting this transition and to help learners connect their academic development with meaningful career outcomes.



The Innopharma Way – Career Development Pathway

The approach begins by helping learners understand the life sciences industry, the range of roles available and, importantly, where their existing knowledge, skills and experience may provide value. Many learners initially underestimate the relevance of experience gained in other sectors. Through career-development sessions and individual engagement, learners are encouraged to identify transferable competencies such as problem-solving, quality awareness, documentation, leadership, customer service, process improvement, data analysis and working within structured procedures. The objective is to help each learner understand their own value before attempting to communicate that value to a prospective employer.

This understanding is then translated into practical career preparation. Learners have access to structured sessions covering CV development, interview skills, job-search approaches, professional networking, psychometric testing and understanding recruitment processes within the life sciences sector. Particular emphasis is placed on helping learners describe their previous experience in language that is relevant to pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and medical-device employers, rather than simply listing previous job responsibilities.

Learners are further supported through mock interviews and individual coaching sessions, delivered face-to-face or online. These provide an opportunity to practise responding to competency-based and technical interview questions, receive personalised feedback and develop confidence in presenting their experience. Individual coaching also allows career guidance to be tailored to the circumstances, ambitions and previous experience of the learner rather than applying a single career pathway to all students.

The Innopharma Way therefore follows a progressive model:

Understand the Industry → Understand Your Value → Communicate Your Value → Prepare for Recruitment → Practise and Receive Feedback → Progress into a Meaningful Career

This approach reflects Innopharma Education's wider learner-centred and industry-focused mission. Career success is viewed not as an activity that begins when a programme finishes, but as part of the learner journey. Academic learning, industry understanding, career planning and professional development are brought together so that learners can make informed decisions regarding the roles and career pathways most appropriate to them.

The underlying ambition of the Innopharma Way is that learners leave Innopharma Education with more than an academic award. The College seeks to ensure that each learner better understands the industry they wish to enter, recognises the value they can contribute, and has the confidence and practical skills required to communicate that value effectively to employers.

The Innopharma Way demonstrates Innopharma Education's commitment to measuring learner success not solely through academic completion, but through progression, employability and the achievement of meaningful career outcomes.

Case Study
Innoskills Academy – Creating a Supported Blended Learning Environment

IT Manager &, Head of T&L and Learner Support

As a blended learning provider, Innopharma Education recognises that the quality of the digital learning environment is central to the learner experience. Innoskills, the College's Moodle-based Virtual Learning Environment, has therefore developed as more than a repository for learning materials. It provides a central point from which learners access their modules, timetables, live-class links and recordings, assessment information and submission points, grades and feedback, announcements and wider College supports.

Zoom is integrated directly with Innoskills, allowing learners to join scheduled online classes from the relevant module page. Recordings of each online lecture are automatically uploaded to the corresponding module, providing learners with continued access to their classes after the live session. This is particularly important within Innopharma Education's learner profile, where many learners are balancing their studies with full-time employment and other commitments, and supports the flexibility required within the College's blended model.

A key feature of the College's approach is the level of support provided alongside the technology. Learners are introduced to Innoskills and Zoom during induction and have access to ongoing technical support throughout their programme. During scheduled online lectures, live IT support joins for the duration of every online class allowing technical issues to be addressed as they arise in real time and reducing the risk that difficulties with technology become a barrier to participation. Lecturers are also supported through VLE training, guidance and ongoing technical and academic support.

Innoskills has continued to develop in response to learner needs and feedback. For example, learner feedback regarding access to online classes resulted in the Zoom Join function being made permanently visible within Innoskills, providing learners with a clearer and more consistent route into scheduled classes. More recently, learner questions during transition to education support highlighted that some learners required additional practical guidance in navigating Innoskills even after completing induction. This reinforced the importance of providing digital support beyond the initial onboarding period and has informed the development of additional learner drop-in support.

The wider Innoskills environment has also expanded to bring together academic and learner-support resources through the Learner Hub, Career Hub, Class Rep Hub and Digital Library, while the Teaching Hub provides lecturers with resources and guidance to support consistent and effective teaching practice.

The continued development of Innoskills reflects the College's wider approach to blended learning: combining appropriate technology with accessible support, learner feedback and ongoing enhancement. This provides a foundation for the future development of the College's blended provision, including the capacity to introduce asynchronous learning within newly validated and revalidated programmes following the extension of the College's approved scope.

Case Study
Developing and Introducing Innopharma Education's Generative AI Policy

College Librarian and Research Specialist

Background

Innopharma Education's Generative AI Policy and Assessment Framework was approved by Academic Council in August 2025. Its origins lie in an Innopharma Education Statement on Generative Artificial Intelligence issued in July 2023, only eight months after the public release of ChatGPT. That statement was necessarily cautious: it asked lecturers to familiarise themselves with the technology, encouraged assessment design that reduced reliance on essay-based work, and, reflecting the uncertainty of the moment, did not permit learners to submit AI-generated text at all. Importantly, though, it described itself as a position "as of July 2023" and committed the college to developing further guidance as the technology, and our understanding of it, matured. That commitment is what led, two years later, to a full policy and assessment framework built around how AI is actually being used in our classrooms.

Developing the Policy

Responsibility for developing the policy sat with two working groups: the AI Research & Productivity Workflow Group and the Assessment & Academic Integrity Workflow Group. Between them, the groups drew members from across the college and across functions, which mattered, because the two concerns at the heart of the policy - how AI can be used effectively, and how assessment integrity is protected - needed to be worked through together rather than in isolation. Lecturers were consulted directly on what workable AI guidance would look like in their own assessments, and feedback from learners on how they were already using AI in assignments was fed back into the working groups' discussions.We also looked outward. AI policies from other colleges and third-level institutions were studied, most directly Griffith College's AI in Learner Assessment policy, which our early drafts were adapted from and which is itself built on the Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale (AIAS) developed by Perkins, Furze, Roe and MacVaugh (2024). Guidance from the National Academic Integrity Network and, as work progressed into 2025, the Higher Education Authority's publications on generative AI in teaching and learning were consulted and are listed among the policy's references.

Iteration in Practice

The policy went through several iterations between an early May 2025 draft and the version approved in August. Consultation feedback and working group discussion changed real things, not just wording. The AI Assessment Scale's five levels were originally cumulative, so that permission at a higher level assumed permission at every level below it; by the final version this was reversed, and each level now stands alone and must be explicitly permitted, giving lecturers more precise control over what is and is not allowed in a given assessment. The review cycle, originally annual, was tightened to every semester -an acknowledgement that a policy in this space cannot sit still for a full year.

The Level 5 "Custom" Category

One feature we are particularly glad we included is Level 5. From the outset, we wanted the policy to reflect a simple principle: AI should give lecturers room to design assessments creatively, not constrain them. In the earliest drafts, following the source AIAS scale closely, Level 5 was labelled "Full AI" and described a fixed level allowing learners to use generative AI throughout an assessment, with no scope for lecturers to tailor it to the task at hand.

By the final policy it had become "Level 5: Custom – As Defined by Lecturer." That change was deliberate. Reviewing the other AI policies we consulted, we found that the great majority stopped at a fixed description of full AI use- or did not go that far at all. Very few offered lecturers a genuinely open, discretionary tier.

We saw this as a gap worth closing: without a discretionary tier, the scale risked either constraining innovative assessments or under-specifying what "full AI use" meant in practice. Innopharma's programmes span biopharma, medtech, food science and digital disciplines, each with a different professional relationship to AI tools, and a single fixed description of "full AI use" could not sensibly cover a scientific poster brief and a software development capstone in the same terms. Consistent with our guiding principle, we wanted AI to enable creative assessment design, not limit it.

The custom level lets a lecturer specify exactly which AI activities are permitted for a particular assessmentnaming tools, or permitting AI image generation for a scientific infographic, for example - while keeping the same underlying safeguards as every other level: the brief must state the terms explicitly, use must be declared, and human editorial oversight is expected. To stop that flexibility drifting into inconsistency, the final policy also requires lecturers to set a Level 5 brief in consultation with the Head of Assessment.

Alignment with Existing Policy

Throughout its development, the policy was written to sit inside our existing quality assurance architecture rather than beside it. It states plainly that the Academic Misconduct Policy (QA Manual 8.8) continues to apply to all cases involving AI, and any use outside a permitted level is handled through the same disciplinary process as any other misconduct case. The Innopharma Plagiarism Tariff already scores work generated in whole or in part by AI at its highest severity band, so undeclared AI use is treated with at least the same weight as conventional plagiarism. That consistency matters: staff are applying one integrated framework rather than reasoning about AI as a separate case.

Outcome

The policy was approved by Academic Council in August 2025 and now sits in the QA Manual as the Generative AI Policy and Assessment Framework, monitored by, and reported to, Academic Council, and reviewed each semester. What the process demonstrates, more than any single clause in the final document, is how the college wants to respond to fast-moving developments: through structured consultation with staff and learners, honest benchmarking against what other institutions are doing, and a willingness to keep redrafting until the policy actually reflects how AI is being used, rather than how we assumed it would be used when we started.

Innopharma Education Generative AI policy

Case Study
Reframing Access: Embedding Academic Confidence Across All NFQ Levels

Head of Teaching and Learning & Learner Support

Learner feedback and early engagement with Learner Support identified a recurring challenge among learners entering higher education: uncertainty about academic expectations, confidence in returning to study and understanding what was expected of them as third-level learners. While these challenges had traditionally been associated particularly with learners entering at Level 6, Innopharma Education identified similar experiences among learners entering directly at Levels 7 and 8. Many of the College's learners are adults returning to education while balancing employment, family commitments and, in some cases, a significant period away from formal study.

In response, Innopharma Education introduced Academic Skills for Success at Third-Level Education in September 2024. Initially developed to support transition into higher education, the initiative was subsequently extended across programmes and NFQ levels, recognising that academic readiness cannot be assumed solely on the basis of the level at which a learner enters a programme.

The live, interactive session is designed to make the expectations of third-level study explicit and to build learner confidence at an early stage of the academic journey. It addresses areas including managing time and competing commitments, understanding assessment expectations, academic integrity, research and referencing, independent learning and knowing when and how to access support. Anonymous interactive activities allow learners to share concerns and identify challenges in a supportive environment, while the message "Reach out, don't drop out" encourages learners to seek assistance before difficulties become barriers to continued participation.

Delivery is collaborative, bringing together Teaching and Learning, Learner Support and Library services. This provides learners with consistent information about academic expectations and available supports while also connecting them directly with the staff and services they may need during their studies. The approach has also been adapted for shorter programmes delivered in partnership with ETBs and funding bodies.

The initiative has contributed to a wider institutional shift in how learner transition is understood. Rather than treating access and transition as matters addressed only at admission or at lower NFQ levels, Innopharma increasingly recognises the need to support learners in developing confidence, autonomy and familiarity with academic expectations throughout their educational journey. Learner responses during the sessions have been strongly positive, while increased early engagement with Learner Support provides an additional indication that learners are becoming more willing to seek assistance proactively.

As part of its ongoing enhancement, Innopharma Education has identified opportunities to strengthen the formal evaluation of the initiative through more systematic attendance monitoring, learner feedback and longer-term consideration of engagement and retention indicators. This will allow the College to evaluate its impact over successive cohorts and continue adapting the intervention in response to learner need.

Case Study
Building Student Demographic Dashboards for Annual QA Reports

Head of Academic Programmes

Introduction

Educational institutions depend on accurate student demographic data to compile internal Quality Assurance (QA) annual reports that support compliance and strategic planning. Traditionally, these reports involved manually preparing Excel lists and producing static charts—a process that was cumbersome, time-consuming, and prone to error. To overcome these limitations, a project was launched to develop a dashboard for each programme - automating and modernising demographic data visualisation from a Learner Profile Form at registration. This initiative reflected a broader commitment to digitalisation, process improvement, and enhancing institutional QA workflows and was undertaken by the Data Analysis Coordinator as an outcome with the Head of academic Programmes on Continuous Improvement opportunities around the manual task of compiling annual reports.

Challenges Encountered

The manual process raised several issues:

- Inefficiency: Staff spent considerable time creating charts from raw Excel data for each reporting cycle, duplicating effort year after year.
- Error Risk: Manual data handling increased the chance of inconsistencies and inaccuracies, undermining data reliability.
- Limited Insight: Static Excel charts offered little interactivity or capacity for deep analysis.
- Fragmented Access: Data was siloed within teams, restricting transparency and collaboration across departments.

These challenges highlighted the need for a more agile, accurate, and transparent approach to managing demographic data within QA framework for the programme annul reports.

Solutions Implemented

The project introduced a student demographic dashboard using integrated visualisation capabilities on the student management system, with these key features:

- Automated Data Integration: Real-time data feeds from student records systems eliminated manual data entry and ensured up-to-date information from learner inputted date through learner profile forms.
- Interactive Visualisations: Users could dynamically explore data by gender, age group, regional distribution, programme, and other demographics, fostering richer understanding.
- Secure Access: Role-based permissions provided controlled, institution-wide transparency enabling wider data accessibility while maintaining data governance.

These improvements transformed demographic reporting from a static, manual task into a streamlined, insightful process.

Impact

The dashboard's deployment had far-reaching benefits on QA and institutional practices:

- Time Savings: Report preparation time was drastically reduced, freeing up staff to focus on analysis and improvement rather than manual data work.
- Enhanced Accuracy: Automated updates and standardised data models improved consistency and reliability of demographic insights across reports.
- Improved Decision-Making: The interactive format enabled deeper exploration of demographic trends, helping leadership identify equity gaps, target recruitment, and support diverse student needs effectively.
- Greater Transparency: Wider access facilitated data-driven conversations among departments, promoting cross-functional collaboration and continuous quality improvement.
- Cultural Shift: The dashboard symbolised a commitment to digitalisation and modernised QA, reinforcing the institution's embrace of technology to enhance operational excellence.

In summary, this case exemplifies how adopting digital dashboards for student demographics can revolutionise annual QA reporting by making processes more efficient, accurate, and strategically valuable for higher education institutions. It offers a concrete example of integrating technology to support quality assurance, continuous improvement, and data-informed decision-making.



Case Study
Strengthening Learner Feedback and Programme Monitoring

Head of Teaching and Learning & Learner Support

Learner feedback is an established part of Innopharma Education's programme monitoring and review processes and provides an important source of evidence on learners' experience of programme delivery, assessment, organisation and support. As the College's programme portfolio has grown, an opportunity was identified to strengthen how learner feedback is gathered, analysed and acted upon, and to provide a clearer connection between learner voice, programme-level monitoring and wider institutional enhancement.

During 2026, Innopharma Education began enhancing its Learner Feedback process alongside the development of a new Learner Feedback Dashboard. The work was designed to strengthen the existing feedback process by creating a more systematic approach to analysing feedback across programmes, identifying recurring themes and areas requiring attention, and recording and monitoring actions arising from learner feedback.

The Winter–Spring 2026 survey cycle provided an initial evidence base for this work. A total of 104 responses were received from 388 eligible learners across seven programmes, representing an overall response rate of 26.8%. While the feedback provided a substantial body of quantitative and qualitative evidence for analysis, participation varied considerably across programmes. Learner engagement with feedback mechanisms has therefore also been identified as an area for further enhancement, alongside strengthening how the feedback received is analysed and acted upon.

The new dashboard brings quantitative and qualitative feedback together at programme and institutional level. It enables programme results to be considered across areas including overall experience, organisation, learning outcomes and support, while module-level analysis provides more detailed insight into the learner experience. A priority watchlist identifies programmes and modules where evidence indicates that further consideration may be required, while cross-programme analysis allows recurring themes to be identified where a wider institutional response may be appropriate. Numerical results are considered alongside response numbers and qualitative learner comments, recognising the importance of context when interpreting feedback.

The dashboard also strengthens the connection between feedback and action. Opportunities for improvement identified through the survey cycle are recorded in a Feedback Action Log together with proposed actions and their status, providing a mechanism through which issues can be followed beyond the initial analysis of survey results. Programme teams can therefore move from learner feedback to analysis, action and subsequent monitoring, creating a clearer evidence trail of how learner voice contributes to programme enhancement.

The enhanced Learner Feedback process will formalise this approach within the College's quality assurance processes and clarify how feedback is gathered, analysed, communicated and followed through within programme monitoring structures. Together, the enhanced procedure and dashboard provide a more consistent and transparent approach to learner feedback, while the identification of participation as an area for further development demonstrates the College's commitment to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of its own quality assurance processes.

Case Study
Strengthening Oversight and Integration of Collaborative Provision

Director of Post Graduate Programmes & Research

Innopharma Education has maintained a collaborative relationship with Griffith College for approximately fourteen years. Over this period, the partnership has developed from a collaborative programme delivery arrangement into a more integrated academic relationship, supported by shared governance, embedded staff, established quality assurance processes and regular engagement across both institutions.

A significant feature of the partnership has been the establishment of the collaborative Faculty of Science within Griffith College. The Director of Postgraduate Programmes within Innopharma Education also serves as Head of this Faculty and participates in Griffith College Academic Council. This provides a formal mechanism through which the collaborative provision is represented within the wider academic governance of the College and creates regular engagement with other Heads of Faculty, programme leaders and colleagues responsible for teaching and learning, examinations, learner support, international education and other central academic and support functions.

Nine full-time Innopharma employees are based within Griffith College. These staff work directly within the College environment, interact regularly with Griffith staff and learners and use Griffith College systems and processes relating to quality assurance, registration, assessment, examinations and graduation. Innopharma staff also participate actively in assessment management, examination boards and graduation processes.

Approach to Oversight and Integration

Oversight of the partnership takes place at a number of interconnected levels. At strategic level, a joint steering committee meets regularly to review the development and performance of the collaboration. Matters considered include programme performance, quality assurance, commercial arrangements, future programme developments, resource requirements and opportunities for further collaboration.

This strategic oversight is complemented by regular academic and operational coordination within Innopharma. A weekly meeting brings together staff involved in the Griffith provision with colleagues from across the wider organisation, including programme leads and coordinators, dissertation support, senior academic management, teaching and learning, learner support, library and other relevant functions. The meeting provides a structured mechanism through which academic, learner and operational issues can be identified, shared, assigned and followed through.

Innopharma has increasingly used these structures to connect the Griffith-based provision with its wider academic operations. Particular areas of focus have included learner feedback, timetabling, academic resourcing and lecturer management. The development of a lecturer repository, for example, has increased visibility of lecturer expertise, teaching experience and availability across provision. This supports greater cross-lecturing and allows specialist academic and industry expertise to be deployed more effectively.

Evidence of Integration and Impact

The level of integration between Innopharma Education and Griffith College is demonstrated through Innopharma's participation across the full learner lifecycle. Innopharma staff contribute to programme delivery and learner support while also engaging directly with College processes for admissions and registration, quality assurance, assessment, examinations, progression and graduation.

Participation in Griffith College Academic Council and wider faculty structures ensures that the collaborative provision is connected to institutional academic discussion and decision-making. Equally, Innopharma staff working within Griffith College provide an important operational link between institutional policy and programme-level implementation.

Innopharma Education has also participated actively in Griffith College's CINNTE institutional self-evaluation process over recent years. Innopharma staff contributed to discussions, evidence gathering, reflection and the development of the CINNTE self-evaluation report, ensuring that the experience and perspective of collaborative provision were represented within the wider institutional review. This involvement reflects the extent to which Innopharma is embedded within the academic and quality culture of Griffith College and demonstrates that the partnership extends beyond programme delivery into institution-level evaluation, quality enhancement and continuous improvement.

The relationship has also generated wider academic benefits. Innopharma staff and learners participate in Griffith College conferences and research activities, including the presentation of posters and dissertation-related work. A number of these contributions have received awards, providing visible evidence of academic engagement and the development of a shared scholarly culture.

Closer coordination has also improved the College's ability to identify emerging learner issues, share feedback and coordinate responses across academic and learner-support functions. Greater visibility of timetabling and lecturer resources supports more effective planning and reduces the risk of fragmented decision-making across collaborative and directly delivered provision.

Learning and Continuous Improvement

A key learning from the partnership has been that effective collaborative provision requires more than clearly defined contractual and quality assurance responsibilities. Sustained integration depends on regular interaction between the people responsible for governance, programme delivery, learner support and operational processes.

The combination of representation within Griffith College governance, embedded Innopharma staff, regular strategic steering and weekly operational coordination has helped create multiple points of connection between the two organisations. This reduces reliance on individual relationships and provides greater organisational visibility of issues, responsibilities and emerging opportunities.

Participation in the CINNTE self-evaluation process has further reinforced the importance of collaborative provision being included within institution-wide reflection and quality enhancement. It has provided an opportunity for Innopharma to contribute directly to the evaluation of institutional practice, while also reflecting on its own role, responsibilities and contribution within the broader Griffith College academic environment.

The experience has also highlighted the value of two-way learning. Innopharma benefits from direct engagement with Griffith College's academic governance, quality assurance and institutional processes, while Innopharma contributes specialist academic, industry and programme-development expertise to the wider College environment.

Evaluation

The collaborative relationship has developed into a mature model in which oversight and integration operate at strategic, academic and operational levels. The current structures provide regular mechanisms for identifying and resolving academic, learner and operational matters while maintaining the respective responsibilities of Innopharma Education and Griffith College.

Innopharma's active involvement in Griffith College's CINNTE self-evaluation and report-development process provides further evidence that the relationship has moved beyond a transactional collaborative arrangement. It demonstrates participation in the wider quality culture of the institution and a shared commitment to reflection, evidence-informed improvement and enhancement.

The continuing focus is therefore not simply on maintaining the partnership, but on strengthening the connections between collaborative provision and the wider academic structures of both institutions. Greater integration of learner feedback, lecturer resources, timetabling, academic planning, scholarly activity and institutional self-evaluation provides a strong foundation for further continuous improvement and supports a consistent, high-quality learner experience across the collaborative provision.





Appendix Three Continuous Professional Development

The following provides a summary of some conferences and seminars attended by staff:

Examples of Conferences and publications

- QQI 10th Anniversary Confernece, October 2022: Director of Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Programmes (Enterprise and education in partnership. The Innopharma Way – Connecting programems and employability)
- QQI NFQ 20th Anniversary Conference, November 2023: Programme Lead (Micro-credentials and the pathway from further to higher education) and Rob Farrell (Digital skills pathways). The slides are also hosted by QQI.
- EdTech Annual Conference, Waterford, 29 May 2025: Librarian and Research Specialist, Head of Teaching & Learning and Learner Support , Head of Academic Programmes on AI upskilling for staff.
- Academic and Special Libraries Conference, March 2026, and CONUL, May 2026: the librarian-led model for research dissemination behind *Innopharma Insights*.
- HEA Open Education conference, Cork, 20 May 2026: the poster "From Assessment to Impact", which is held in the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's scholarship database as a peer-reviewed item.
- Irish Association for International Education conference, June 2026: Director of Postgraduate Programmes and Research on career resilience and peer portfolios, and College Librarian and Research Specialist on the digital library's support for international students.

Examples of Conferences / Training attended by staff include:

- AHEAD Conference: ALTITUDE Summit; March, 2026
- The Case for Multilingual Training: What Leaders Need to Know Now; June 2026
- HEA ESD Framework for Higher Education; September 2026
- HEA Teaching and Learning Conference; December 2025
- Navigating AI in Higher Education; Policies, Practices and Preparation; January 2025

Additionally:

- President & CEO, also took part in the BioPharmaChem Ireland panel "Firing up the talent engine" on 5 May 2026.
- Since 2023 QQI has published thirteen College case studies, including the institutional repository and on establishing *Innopharma Insights*.
- Two articles have also been published in *An Leabharlann*, the journal of the Library Association of Ireland: one on establishing the College library (2022) and one on academic integrity (2024).
- **Education Awards 2026**. Four College submissions were shortlisted: AI upskilling, BWG food innovation collaboration, the library team and the Academic Skills for Success access initiative.





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