Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and Qualifications Ireland

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS OF IRELAND

Royal College of Physicians of Ireland

CINNTE Self-Evaluation Report 2026



Section 1
Introduction

Foreword

by Audrey Houlihan, CEO
and Professor Maeve Doyle, Dean of Education and Academic Programmes.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training in Ireland. A core function of QQI is to ensure that the quality assurance procedures established by institutions are effective, robust and aligned with national and European standards.

The CINNTE review process forms a key component of Ireland's external quality assurance framework and provides an important opportunity for institutions to demonstrate their commitment to quality, continuous improvement and accountability.

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) welcomes participation in the CINNTE review process as an important milestone in our ongoing quality journey. As Ireland's leading postgraduate medical training and professional development body, RCPI is committed to delivering high-quality education, training and assessment experiences that support the development of excellent physicians and healthcare professionals throughout their careers.

Quality underpins every aspect of our work, from curriculum design and assessment to programme delivery, learner support, governance and continuous improvement.

This review provides an opportunity to reflect critically on our quality assurance and enhancement systems, to assess their effectiveness, and to demonstrate how these systems support continuous improvement and the achievement of our mission and strategic objectives. Through the preparation of our Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER), engagement with stakeholders, and collaboration with the external review panel, RCPI has sought to present an evidence-based account of our commitment to excellence in medical education.

RCPI views quality assurance not simply as a compliance requirement, but as a fundamental enabler of educational excellence, innovation and public trust. In a rapidly evolving healthcare and educational environment, we recognise the importance of continually reviewing and strengthening our processes to ensure that they remain responsive to the needs of learners, trainees, patients and healthcare services.

We are grateful to the review team for their time, expertise and constructive engagement throughout this process. We also wish to acknowledge the significant contribution of RCPI

staff, learners, trainees, faculty members, Council, committees, members, fellows and external stakeholders whose insights and commitment have informed our self-evaluation.

The findings and recommendations arising from this review will provide valuable guidance as we continue to strengthen our quality systems, enhance the learner experience and advance our mission of improving patient care through excellence in medical education, training, clinical leadership and quality improvement.

Audrey Houlihan, CEO

Professor Maeve Doyle, Dean of Education and Academic Programmes



Contents

Section 1: Introduction **7**

- Introduction 7
- Mission, Vision and Strategic Direction 7
- Governance and Management Structures 7
- Organisational Culture 8
- Summary of Learner Profiles and Patterns 9
- Key Trends in Organisational Data and their Implications 9
- SER Process and Methodology 10

Section 2: Provider Profile **12**

- Context of RCPI 13
- Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals 13
- Governance and Management Structures 14
- Quality Assurance System 14
- Staff and Learner Profiles 15

Section 3: Self-Evaluation **17**

- Objective 1: Governance and Management of Quality 18
- Objective 2: Access, Transfer and Progression 24
- Objective 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment 29
- Objective 4: Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review 34

Section 4: Overall Conclusions **38**

Glossary

Academic Board - The body responsible for academic governance, quality assurance and academic standards across RCPI educational programmes.

ATP - Access, Transfer and Progression. Policies and processes governing learner admission, movement through programmes and opportunities for progression.

Blended Learning - Combination of online and face-to-face (in-person/ synchronous) learning activities.

Brightspace - A Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used to deliver online learning and educational resources.

Canvas - A Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) used to deliver online learning and educational resources.

Clinical Faculty - Practising healthcare professionals who contribute to teaching, assessment, curriculum development or programme governance.

Collaborative Provision - Educational provision delivered jointly between RCPI and another organisation under agreed governance arrangements.

Connect Project - RCPI's institution-wide digital transformation programme designed to improve integration of systems, processes and data.

CPD - Continuing Professional Development. Ongoing learning undertaken by professionals after completion of formal qualifications.

Curriculum - The structured framework that brings together learning outcomes, educational content, teaching and learning activities, assessments, and learner progression pathways into a coherent programme of study designed to achieve defined educational and professional outcomes.

Fellow / FRCPI - Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland; a senior professional membership category within RCPI.

Generative AI - Artificial intelligence tools capable of creating content such as text, images or code.

HSE - Health Service Executive. The public healthcare system in Ireland.

Learner Representative - An elected or nominated learner who represents learner views within programme governance structures.

Learner Support - The range of academic, administrative, technical, wellbeing and accessibility services provided to learners throughout their educational journey

Lifelong Learning - Continuous professional and personal learning undertaken throughout a career.

LID - Learning, Innovation and Development. RCPI's specialist team responsible for learning design, educational technology and programme development.

LXD - An educational specialist who designs, develops and improves curriculum, learner-centered educational programmes, assessments and learning experiences using evidence-based educational and digital learning practices.

Medical Council - The statutory regulator of medical education and medical practitioners in Ireland.

Online Learning - Learning activities delivered entirely through digital platforms.

Postgraduate Medical Training - Education and training undertaken by doctors after completion of their primary medical qualification and internship

Programme Board - The governance group responsible for oversight, monitoring and enhancement of an individual programme.

Programme Monitoring - Ongoing review of programme performance using data, stakeholder feedback and governance processes.

QA - Quality Assurance. Processes designed to maintain academic standards and quality.

QE - Quality Enhancement. Activities designed to improve educational quality beyond minimum assurance requirements.

QEO - Quality Enhancement Office. The RCPI unit responsible for coordinating quality assurance and enhancement activities.

Specialist Medical Training - A structured postgraduate training pathway undertaken by qualified doctors who are developing the advanced knowledge, skills and competencies required for independent practice in a specific medical specialty

Reasonable Accommodation - Adjustments or modifications made to learning, assessment or educational processes to support learners with disabilities, long-term health conditions or other identified needs.

TELL - Training, Education and Lifelong Learning. The RCPI function responsible for delivering educational provision.

Trainee - A doctor enrolled in a postgraduate specialist medical training programme.

Training site - A healthcare organisation, hospital, clinic, healthcare facility, or other approved practice setting where learners or trainees undertake supervised workplace-based learning and apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world professional environment.

UDL - Universal Design for Learning. A framework for designing learning experiences that are accessible and inclusive for all learners.

Validation - The formal approval process for a new programme before delivery begins.

VLE - Virtual Learning Environment; an online platform used for teaching, learning and assessment.

Workplace-based learning - A structured approach to learning that takes place within a real work environment.

Workplace Assessment - Assessment conducted in a real work environment to evaluate a learner's performance, application of knowledge, professional behaviours and achievement of programme or training outcomes within authentic professional practice settings.

Introduction

The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) is Ireland's largest and longest established postgraduate medical training and education institution. Founded in 1654, operating under Royal Charter, By-Laws, Standing Orders and the Charities Act, RCPI's core purpose is to advance health through training, education and leadership by supporting doctors and healthcare professionals throughout their careers in Ireland and internationally.

RCPI comprises 6 faculties:

- Faculty of Occupational Medicine
- Faculty of Paediatrics
- Faculty of Pathology
- Faculty of Public Health
- Institute of Medicine
- Institute of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists

Mission, Vision and Strategic Direction

RCPI's purpose is to advance health through training, education and leadership. As Ireland's largest postgraduate medical training and education institution, RCPI supports 15,000 doctors and healthcare professionals throughout their careers, from entry (following Medical School and Internship) to specialist training through to continuing professional development.

RCPI's strategic direction, supporting continuous learning, reflects its dual role as a postgraduate medical training body and provider of higher education. Priorities include supporting specialist medical training, lifelong professional development, healthcare leadership, quality improvement and innovation in medical education. Through these activities, RCPI seeks to strengthen the medical workforce and improve patient care in Ireland and internationally.

Governance and Management Structures

RCPI operates within a governance environment that reflects its multi-faceted roles in medical training and education. RCPI is an institution governed by Royal Charter, a postgraduate specialist training body accredited by the Medical Council, a QQI validated provider of higher education, a professional membership body and an international education organisation. Its governance structures therefore operate across multiple regulatory and professional contexts, supporting alignment between educational quality assurance, professional standards and healthcare workforce needs.

Council is the governing body of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. It sets mission, vision and strategic direction, and approves general policies. Council also ensures the accountability of RCPI by monitoring and supporting the implementation of policies, directives and general functions.

Reporting directly to Council and chaired by the Dean of Education and Academic Programmes, the Academic Board is responsible for academic standards, quality assurance and quality enhancement arrangements related to education. Individual Programme Boards (GOV-TOR-008) report to the Academic Board (GOV-ToR-003).

Through the Senior Leadership Team, executive leadership is provided through management structures in the Training, Education & Lifelong Learning function and the Operations Department, along with the support of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Organisational Culture

Quality and excellence are embedded within RCPI's value statements and strategy. We maintain a mature quality assurance system in both training and education which is aligned with QQI requirements and supported by a set of policies, procedures, external review processes and continuous monitoring mechanisms.

In 2024, RCPI established a Quality Enhancement office (QEO) which recognises that while responsibility for quality is distributed across the organisation, a culture of continuous improvement is best supported through structured review processes, ongoing stakeholder engagement, evidence-informed decision making, and a strong tradition of accountability.



Summary of Learner Profiles and Patterns

RCPI has a diverse learner population comprising doctors in postgraduate specialist training, multi-disciplinary healthcare professionals undertaking education programmes, participants in professional competence and continuing professional development activities, and learners engaged in leadership, quality improvement and other lifelong learning programmes.

Our learners are primarily working professionals combining study with clinical practice. Provision is delivered through a blend of workplace-based, face-to-face, hybrid and online learning models, reflecting the needs of a geographically dispersed and professionally diverse learner population in Ireland and internationally.

Key Trends in Organisational Data and their Implications

As part of RCPI's CINNTE self-evaluation process, surveys were used to gather perspectives from learners, faculty and governance stakeholders, with the findings reviewed alongside focus group feedback and institutional evidence.

Survey respondents consistently identified the quality and expertise of faculty, strong professional relevance of programmes, and the supportive nature of learner and colleague relationships as key institutional strengths. This was reinforced by learner survey responses, which indicated strong confidence in teaching, learner support and overall programme experience, and by faculty and governance respondents, who reported high confidence in mission, strategy, quality assurance and governance arrangements. At the same time, respondents emphasised the importance of maintaining investment in digital systems, learner supports, communication and organisational coordination as we continue to evolve our offerings.

RCPI's learner population remains geographically dispersed and professionally diverse, reflecting both Ireland's healthcare workforce requirements and RCPI's continuing international engagement and global community of clinicians. While not all on the National Framework of Qualifications, online and transnational education, examinations and lifelong learning are a significant component of RCPI's overall activity and require governance, systems and learner support that can operate effectively across different locations, healthcare settings and learner needs. External developments are also influencing our education provision. Changes within the Irish health service, including the recent regionalisation of the Health Service Executive (HSE) underscore the importance of a responsive education model that supports learners throughout their professional careers while continuing to uphold academic standards and quality assurance.

These developments are leading RCPI to review the flexibility and accessibility of learning opportunities in a regionally structured healthcare system.

SER Process and Methodology

RCPI approached the CINNTE review as an institution-wide process of self-evaluation, reflection and quality enhancement. The review provided an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of RCPI's quality assurance arrangements, consider the experience of learners and stakeholders, and identify priorities for future enhancement.

The process was led by the Academic Board and coordinated by the Quality Enhancement Office and the Training, Education & Lifelong Learning function, with significant input from colleagues responsible for quality assurance, programme governance, curriculum and learning design, education delivery, learner support and institutional data.

A documented project plan was developed to coordinate activity, allocate responsibilities, manage evidence collection and support review by stakeholder and governance groups.

The review was structured around the objectives and areas of focus set out in QQI's handbook for independent and private providers. RCPI participated in QQI briefings and peer-learning activity before commencing the formal self-evaluation and maintained ongoing engagement with QQI as the process developed. This helped position the exercise as an enhancement-focused review examining the effectiveness of RCPI's quality assurance arrangements, rather than as a compliance exercise. The team focused on identifying strengths, areas requiring further attention and practical opportunities for enhancement.

Evidence for the SER was drawn from several sources:

- RCPI Policies and Procedures and QA Manual
- Academic Board and Programme Board documentation
- Existing Learner feedback and programme data
- 2025/2026 academic year Alumni and Graduate Outcomes Survey
- Specific CINNTE Review stakeholder engagement survey
- CINNTE Review focus group meetings

Survey findings were used to inform stakeholder focus groups involving programme leads, learner representatives, faculty and staff. The focus groups were structured around the principal areas of the SER, including governance and management of quality, access, transfer and progression, teaching, learning and assessment; and learner supports.

Learner engagement was a central feature of the process. Emphasis was placed on understanding learner perspectives on programme quality, learner support, assessment, communication and overall educational experience.

The self-evaluation was informed by the stakeholder engagement survey with feedback from 342 learners (17.9% response rate), 43 members of governance bodies and faculty contributors

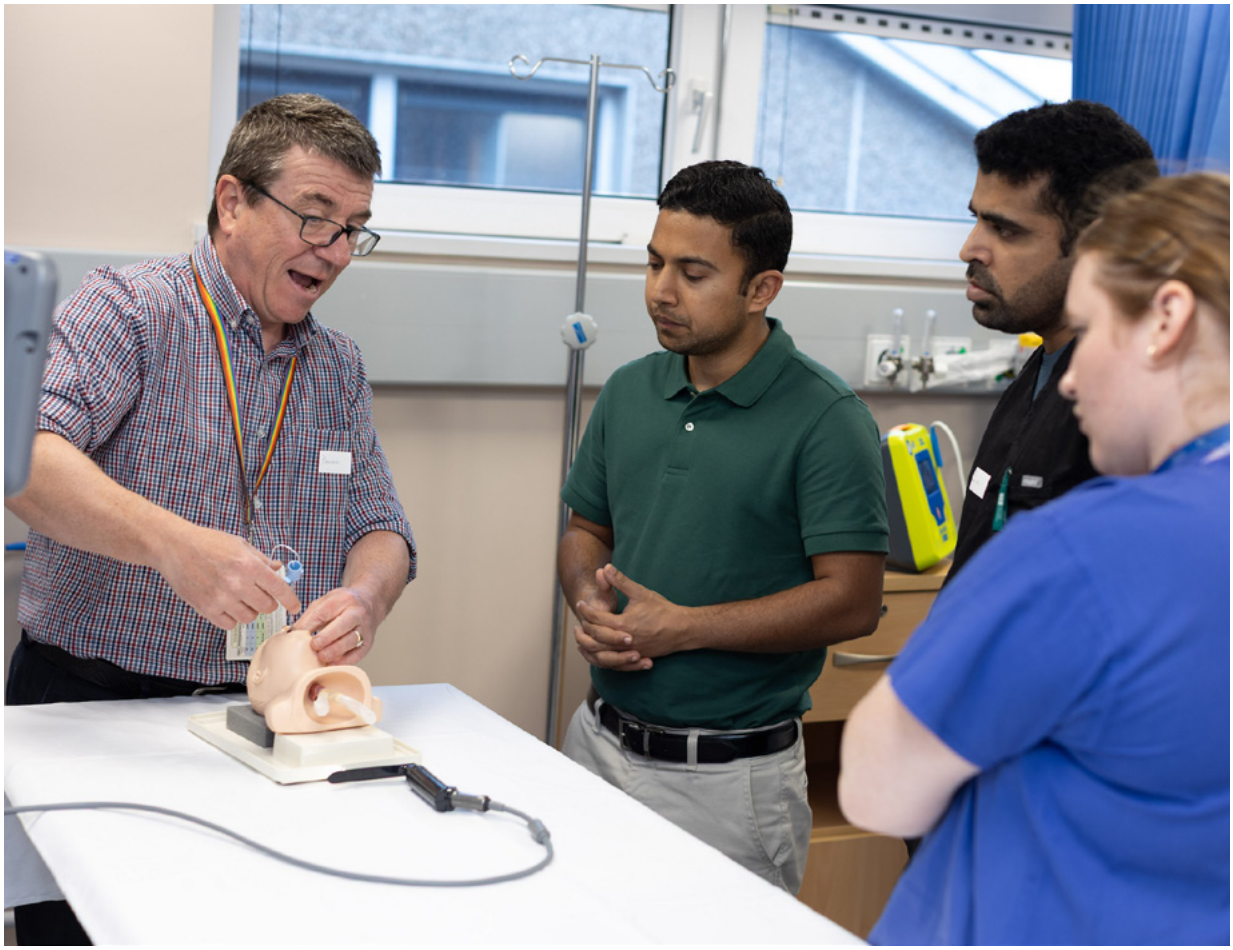
(53.75% response rate) and through, a focus group with RCPI staff and consultation meetings with Programme Leads, Assessment leads and the RCPI Senior Leadership Team.

Contributors were encouraged to distinguish between documented policy, actual established practice and areas in which implementation could be enhanced.

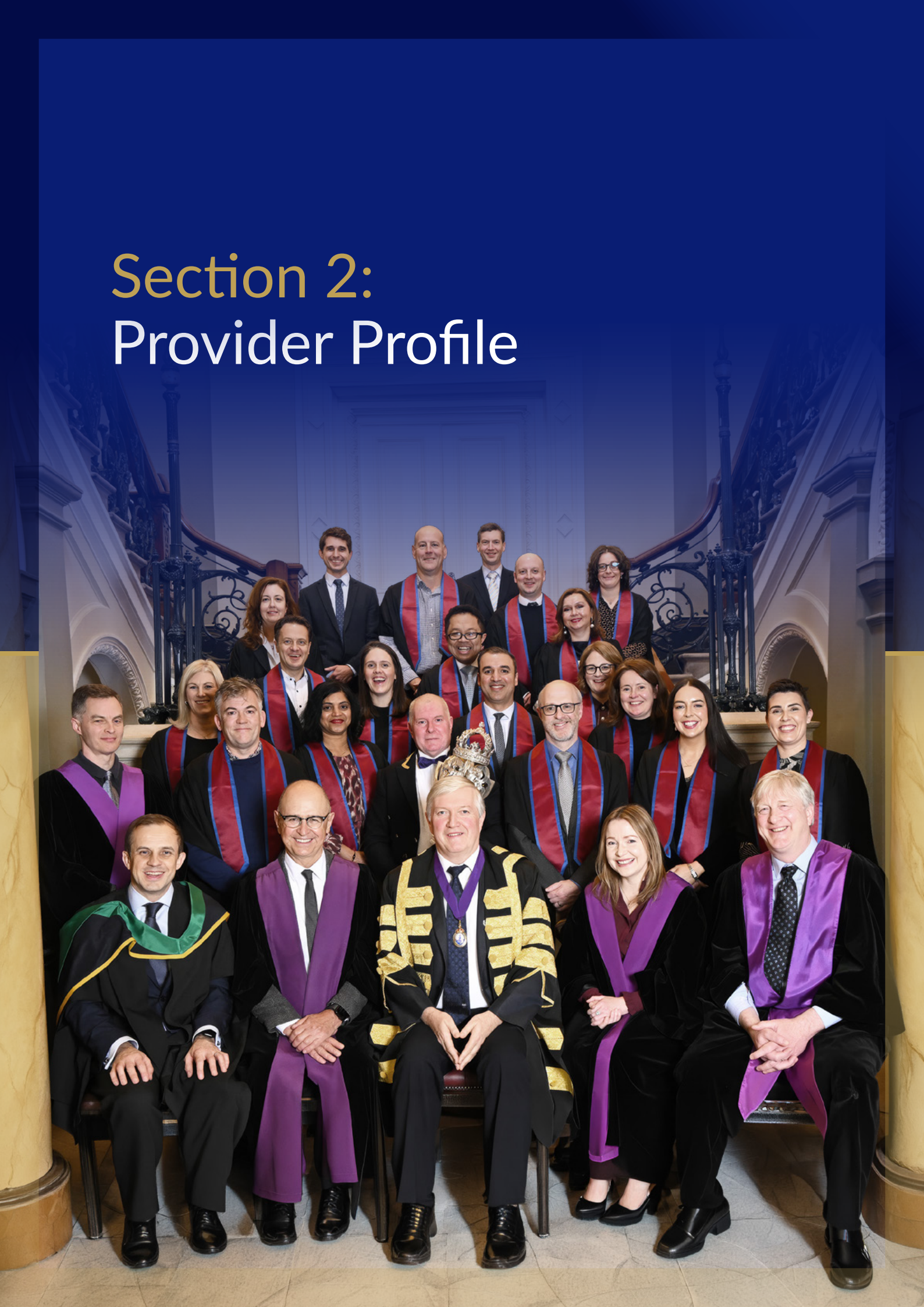
Survey findings were triangulated with focus group feedback, institutional documentation, programme monitoring information and governance records when developing conclusions and enhancement priorities.

Governance of the process includes review of findings by RCPI's Senior Leadership Team and formal consideration by the Academic Board before submission to QQI.

The process has been managed against a documented project plan commencing in July 2026, covering preparation of the SER, design and circulation of the survey, stakeholder consultation, evidence analysis, internal review, Academic Board consideration, submission to QQI by 5 October and preparation for the review visit on 25 November 2026.



Section 2:
Provider Profile



Section 2
Provider profile

The Context of RCPI

As noted in Section 1, RCPI occupies a distinctive position within the Irish higher education and healthcare landscape. Few QQI providers combine the functions of a Royal Charter institution, postgraduate specialist medical training body, professional membership organisation, higher education provider and international educational organisation.

In addition to its QQI-validated education provision, RCPI delivers postgraduate specialist training in partnership with the HSE, Department of Health and clinical training sites, under accreditation from the Medical Council. RCPI therefore operates across multiple educational, professional, regulatory and healthcare environments, requiring governance and quality assurance arrangements that support learners from entry to specialist training through to continuing professional development and lifelong learning

Organisational mission, vision and strategic goals

The 2025 – 2029 RCPI Strategy was launched in June 2025 with a vision for an inspired global community of doctors engaged and enabled to improve health.

Our mission is to empower, develop and support our community of learners, trainees, members, fellows and society to improve health through training, education and advocacy.

To support our long-term vision and drive meaningful impact, we have identified eight strategic initiatives that will guide our efforts over the coming years. Together, these strategic initiatives provide a clear direction for aligning resources, driving progress and achieving our strategic goals.

Within the eight initiatives, 4 are linked to academic programmes:

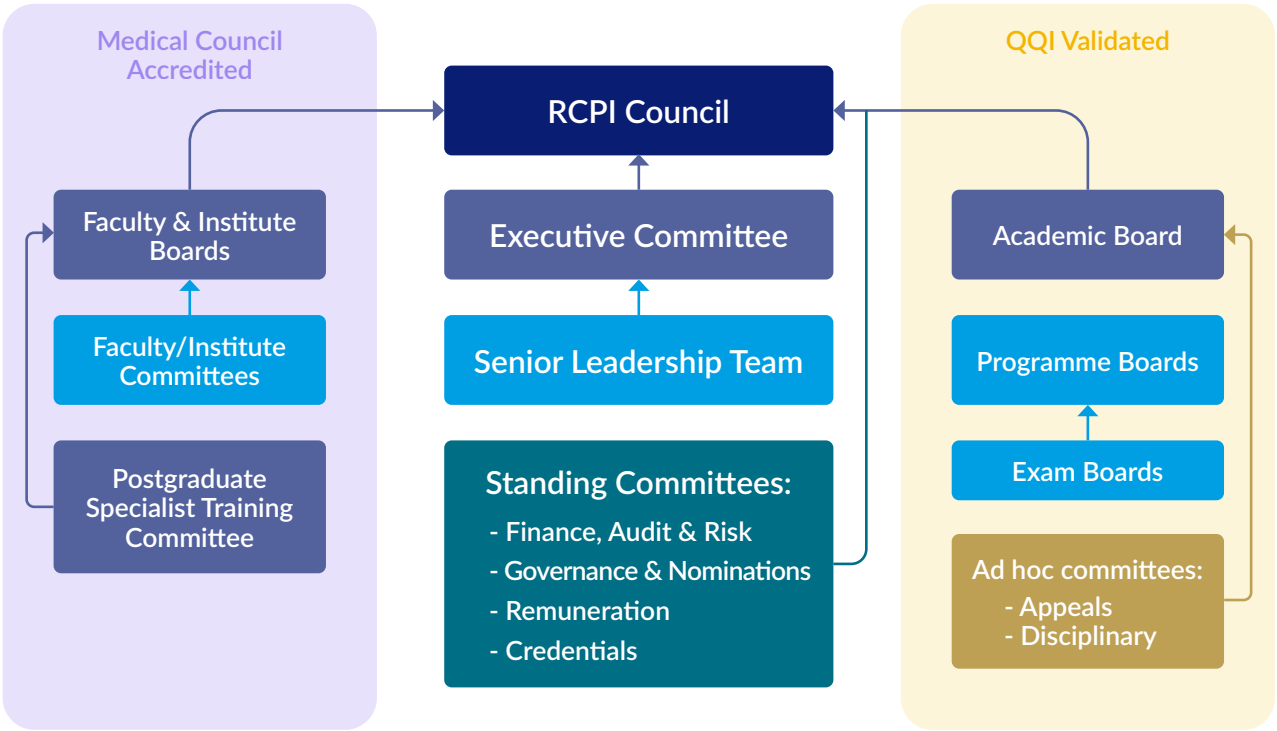
1. Retention and Engagement
2. Continuous Learning
3. Professionalism and Leadership
4. Innovation and Excellence

To achieve our strategic goals, we have developed a detailed implementation plan that outlines clear milestones, responsibilities and timelines for each strategic initiative. This plan defines all projects in the short, medium and long term that will drive progress and achievement of our ultimate goals.

Governance and Management structures

RCPI was established in 1654 by Royal Charter and is governed by Council. The Council is elected by Fellows of the College (FRCPI) who constitute the body corporate and have devolved responsibility to Council.

RCPI's Academic Board oversees all education programme activity, supported by dedicated governance committees and a Quality Office with clear lines of responsibility. This Academic Board has a direct reporting line to Council and is chaired by the Dean of Education and Academic Programmes. This is a clinical educator role at 0.2 WTE.



QA System

The Quality Enhancement Office has responsibility for the assurance and improvement, of the services we provide to our Trainees, Learners, Members and Fellows. This office consists of four full-time staff.

The office has the following key objectives.

1. Manage the Quality framework for RCPI
2. Manage Departmental Assessments (internal audits) in RCPI
3. Review policies and procedures across RCPI
4. Oversee accreditation activities across RCPI

RCPI Quality Framework

Professional/External Accreditation

- **Irish Medical Council** – Training programmes, Professional Competence schemes
- **Quality & Qualifications Ireland** – 3 educational programmes accredited and applied for a change to our scope of provision
- **Charities Regulations** – Audited on an annual basis focusing on our Board of Directors, i.e. Council



Internal Quality Activities

- Departmental Assessments
- Policies & Procedures
- Evaluation of new initiatives i.e. Mandatory Teaching, International training, OBE etc.
- Data collection



Training Site Quality Activities

- Site Quality Improvement Model
  - Specialty standards
  - Site activities
  - IMC Report and generic activities
- Training Post Evaluation
- New posts



Staff profile

A distinctive feature of RCPI's education model is its ability to draw upon an extensive network of practising clinicians, trainers, professional experts and Fellows of the College who contribute to teaching, assessment, curriculum development and governance. This enables programmes to remain closely aligned with contemporary professional practice and healthcare workforce needs

RCPI currently has 185 staff and 191 clinicians in adjunct positions. The organisation has been divided into six areas that include Business Development and Exams, Training Education and Lifelong Learning (TELL), Public Affairs and Advocacy, Healthcare Leadership, Corporate Services and IT Services.

Design, development and continuous improvement of RCPI's academic programmes sit within the Training, Education and Lifelong Learning (TELL) area. This work is enabled by the in-house Learning, Innovation & Development (LID) team, whose members include learning experience designers, educational digital designers and learning-technology specialists.

The team's expertise is further strengthened by subject expert consultants, many of whom are recognised leaders in their respective fields.

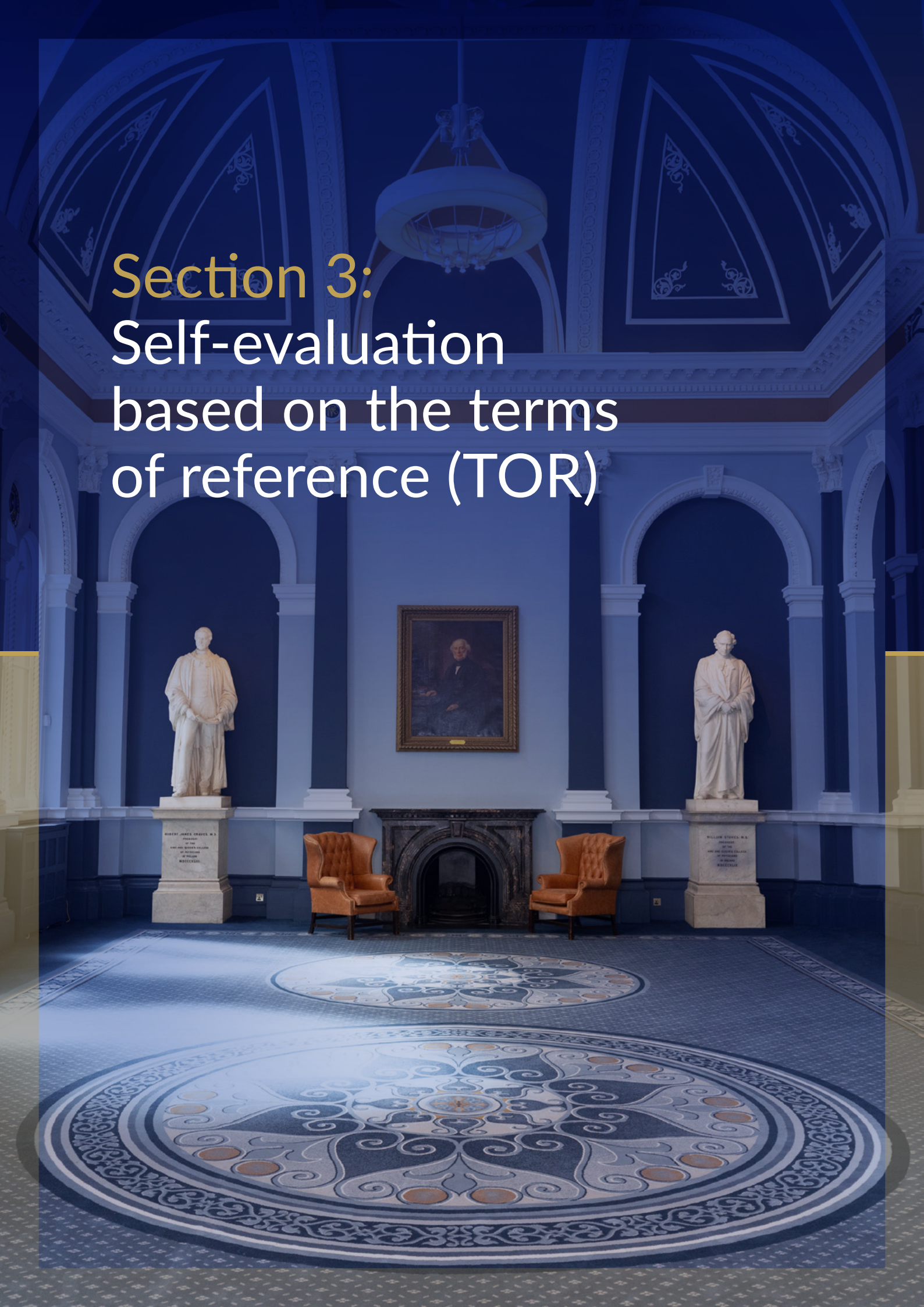
Programme delivery and learner support sit within RCPI's Operations area, under the oversight of the Education Delivery team.

Enterprise-grade platforms (Brightspace and Canvas for teaching, Turnitin for similarity checking, and four proctoring services for high-stakes assessments) provide resilience and GDPR-compliant security.

Learner profile and learner numbers

QQI Academic Year 2025	Irish	International
Quality Improvement Leadership In Healthcare	24	0
Certificate in Cancer Genetics and Genomics	15	0
Professional Diploma in Obstetrics and Gynaecology	89	175

Non QQI Academic Year 2025	Irish	International
Advancing Leadership for Integrated Care Excellence	30	0
SAFE – Situation Awareness for Everyone	72	0
Advanced Acne Therapy in Primary Care	100	0
Professional Diploma in Dermatology	184	775
Professional Diploma in Geriatric Medicine	106	243
Professional Diploma in Occupational Medicine	39	161
Professional Diploma in Infectious Diseases	42	126
Professional Diploma in Paediatrics	94	162



Section 3:
Self-evaluation based on the terms of reference (TOR)

Section 3:
Self-evaluation based on the terms of reference (tor)

Objective 1:
Governance and management of quality

Mission and strategy

RCPI's mission is to empower, develop and support its community of learners, trainees, members and fellows to improve health through training, education and advocacy. The College's strategic priorities are reflected through a governance and quality assurance framework designed to ensure that education provision remains aligned with College objectives, learner needs, professional standards and public expectations. Over the review period since 2021, RCPI has undertaken a deliberate programme of quality maturation, moving from an emerging quality assurance architecture to a more integrated and institutionally embedded model of governance and oversight.

Governance and Management structures

Five years ago, many of the elements which now underpin RCPI's quality assurance framework existed but were less formally integrated. Academic governance arrangements were developing, programme oversight structures varied between programmes, and quality assurance activity was often managed within operational teams rather than through a dedicated institutional quality function. As our provision expanded and regulatory expectations increased, RCPI recognised the need for a more systematic and coordinated approach to quality assurance and enhancement.

A significant milestone was the establishment of the Quality Enhancement Office in 2024. The creation of a dedicated quality function provided additional institutional capacity to coordinate quality assurance activities, support policy development, manage internal review processes, oversee external accreditation activities to the Irish Medical Council and QQI, and strengthen quality governance across the academic portfolio. The office works closely with the Academic Board, programme teams, development and delivery departments to promote an institution-wide approach to quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Today, RCPI considers its governance and quality assurance arrangements to be mature, clearly defined and increasingly embedded across the organisation. The Academic Board provides oversight of academic quality and standards and reports directly to Council, ensuring that quality assurance is

visible within institutional decision-making structures and benefits from appropriate independent scrutiny. Programme Boards, Programme Exam Boards, validation and approval mechanisms, external examining arrangements and quality monitoring processes provide multiple layers of assurance across programme development, delivery and review. Governance responsibilities are documented and supported through terms of reference, policies, procedures and reporting processes that clarify accountability and support consistency of decision-making.

A particular strength identified through the self-evaluation is the extent to which quality assurance has become part of routine institutional practice rather than a standalone compliance activity. Responsibility for quality is distributed across governance boards / committees, programme teams, clinical faculty, executive staff and learners. This reflects an increasingly mature quality culture in which academic quality, learner experience and continuous improvement are recognised as shared responsibilities. Stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the CINNTE process indicated strong confidence in the effectiveness of governance structures and academic oversight arrangements, while also highlighting opportunities to improve visibility of decision-making and communication across some stakeholder groups.

QA Policy and procedural documentation

All policies and procedures are reviewed on a minimum of a 3 yearly cycle, or shorter, and made available to all staff. Only policies are publicly available to our learners. Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy (QA-POL-023)

The self-evaluation also confirmed that the next stage of organisational development is likely to focus on strengthening how evidence is aggregated, interpreted and used to inform enhancement activity across the organisation. While substantial volumes of learner, programme, assessment and governance data are collected through existing processes, there is scope to further develop institution-wide reporting, trend analysis and quality intelligence to support strategic decision-making and continuous improvement. This transition from building quality assurance structures to maximising the value of quality evidence represents the next phase in the development of RCPI's quality system.

> "So, the communication has been quite good at the town hall and the monthly meetings with Diarmuid and Janet and weekly meetings with Janet. And I guess, to be honest, I've worked at a research university before, and I felt the education work there was a sideline. So, I'm loving being part of an organisation where education is us sort of thing. So, I do feel in general core to the business of the college. So that's been great."
>
> **Sally, Learning Experience Designer RCPI**

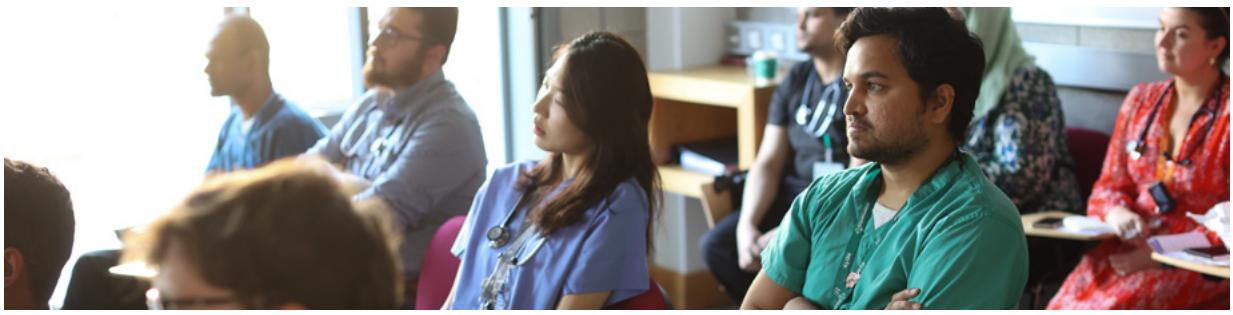
RCPI recognises that the quality of educational provision is dependent upon the expertise, commitment and development of its staff, faculty and contributors. Recruitment processes are designed to ensure that staff possess the qualifications, experience and professional competencies required to support programme development, delivery, learner support and quality assurance activities. Staff are appointed through formal recruitment processes and are supported through induction, line management arrangements and ongoing professional development opportunities.

RCPI's educational provision is delivered through a combination of permanent staff, practising clinicians, programme leads, subject matter experts and external contributors. Given the distributed nature of this academic community, particular emphasis is placed on collaborative working, professional expertise and the sharing of good practice across programmes and departments.

Staff recruitment, management and development

The College supports staff development through participation in internal working groups, programme boards, quality assurance activities, professional learning opportunities and engagement with external quality and accreditation processes as well as providing supports for education assistance. The establishment of the Quality Enhancement Office has also increased opportunities for staff engagement with quality assurance and quality enhancement initiatives across the organisation. Teaching Faculty Recruitment, Selection and Development Policy (LID-POL-057)

RCPI's strategic shift towards a broader and more scalable online education portfolio has required parallel investment in the capability of the teams responsible for designing, delivering and assuring these programmes. The College has supported targeted upskilling across its education community, including members of the Learning, Innovation and Development team undertaking the Diploma in Digital Learning Design with the Digital Learning Institute, and Learning Experience Designers and Assessment Leads completing specialist assessment development programmes such as the Health Professionals Assessment Consultancy course. This formal development has been complemented by internal collaborative working groups, lessons learned sessions, back-to-basics reviews, RACI matrix reviews and 'show and tell' sessions, which together have strengthened shared practice and supported a culture of continuous improvement across programme development and delivery. The Training Education & Lifelong Learning team regularly present at National and International education conferences (ISQA, AMEE, INHED etc).



Information and Data Management

RCPI ensures appropriate investment in information systems that support the collection and analysis of data. We also ensure the appropriate structures and processes are in place for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data to enable ongoing monitoring and improvement of education programmes. Programme Information and Data Management Policy (LID-POL-088)

A range of integrated digital platforms support programme development, delivery, learner engagement and assessment across the learner life-cycle:

- Quercus – Learner Information Management System
- Brightspace – Virtual Learning Environment
- Qualtrics – Research and engagement
- TurnItIn / TestReach / Honorlock – Assessment Integrity
- RCPI is undertaking an organisation-wide digital transformation programme, "Connect" which will further strengthen data integration and reporting capabilities.

Third party arrangements

At an institutional level, RCPI has set a strategic objective of being a forward thinking, globally active and dynamic organisation, underpinned by financial strength, and collaborative provision is a key strategic initiative of the College. As such, RCPI wishes to support the development of such collaborative programmes if there is a clear strategic rationale, demonstrable benefit to learners and sufficient organisational capacity in both institutions to ensure effective oversight and governance.

Collaborative provision is underpinned by a specific policy (RCPI Collaborative Provision Policy (RCPI-POL-095) which positions responsibility for academic standards and quality of learning experience as ultimately resting with RCPI. The College has two collaborative partnerships and the experience gained through the oversight of collaborative programmes has informed the strengthening of institutional policies, governance arrangements and risk management processes.





Evaluation

RCPI considers the alignment between institutional strategy, governance and quality assurance to be a significant strength. Governance structures are well established; responsibilities are clearly defined and quality assurance arrangements have become increasingly normalised and embedded in institutional planning and decision-making. The establishment of the Quality Enhancement Office significantly strengthened organisational capacity in this area and has contributed to greater consistency, visibility and coordination of quality assurance activity across the academic portfolio. There has been seamless transition for programme governance roles (Programme Lead, Assessment Lead) during transition at the end of terms, as well as staff changes, e.g. reallocation of Learning Experience Designers (LXDs). This was reinforced by the focus groups held with internal staff and their positive views on the office.

Programme leads highlighted the important role of Programme Boards and Academic Board discussions in supporting continuous improvement. Issues arising within programmes, including admissions challenges, learner progression concerns and programme governance matters, are routinely reviewed and used to inform policy refinement and programme enhancement activity.

Focus group participants reported regular use of institutional policies and procedures in programme delivery, learner support and assessment activities. Staff described quality documentation as a routine reference point for decision-making and highlighted the availability of learner-facing information through websites, handbooks and programme materials. This feedback suggests that quality assurance processes are increasingly embedded within operational practice.

Staff generally understood Programme Boards and Academic Board structures but wanted clearer pathways and visual representations of governance arrangements.

The self-evaluation nevertheless identified opportunities for enhancement. In particular, stakeholders expressed a desire for clearer communication regarding decisions, actions and outcomes arising from governance processes. Given that much of RCPI's educational activity relies on part-time faculty, practising clinicians, learner representatives and external contributors, maintaining effective communication across a distributed academic community remains an ongoing challenge. RCPI recognises this as a legitimate area for further development and intends to strengthen approaches to stakeholder communication and engagement.

More opportunities for engagement between scheduled governance meetings was also highlighted as part of this process.

The College also recognises that increasing programme activity, greater use of online and blended delivery, and the pace of educational innovation place growing demands on staff and faculty capacity. Survey responses provide further evidence that staff and faculty development will remain important as RCPI grows its online and blended portfolio: learners valued clear learning materials, flexible learning pace, online access and supportive instructors, while also seeking more interactive practice, clearer feedback and stronger opportunities for peer and faculty engagement. In response, RCPI has identified faculty development as a key enhancement priority, with a particular focus on further strengthening their knowledge and confidence on effective strategies for teaching and facilitation in online and blended environments for adult learners. Work is already underway to expand faculty onboarding, develop practical guidance and support resources, and increase collaboration between faculty, Learning Experience Design and Programme Delivery teams. These activities are intended to enhance consistent teaching practice, support the effective use of digital learning methods, develop a framework of constructive feedback, and sustain a positive quality culture as provision continues to evolve.

Conclusion

RCPI considers governance and management of quality to be a significant organisational strength. Over the reviewed period, the College has evolved from an emerging quality assurance architecture to a mature and integrated governance framework supported by dedicated quality expertise, defined academic oversight structures and an increasingly embedded culture of quality assurance and enhancement.

The principal enhancement priority for the next phase of development is the more systematic use of institutional evidence and quality intelligence to support improvement, alongside strengthened communication and engagement across the wider academic community. These developments will help ensure that RCPI continues to move beyond assurance towards a more mature model of institution-wide quality enhancement. Develop simplified governance maps and stakeholder-facing guidance to improve understanding of decision-making pathways.

RCPI considers the expertise and commitment of its staff and faculty to be a major contributor to the quality of its educational provision. Future development will focus on strengthening onboarding arrangements, enhancing visibility of governance structures and continuing to support staff engagement with quality assurance and quality enhancement activities across the organisation. Specific focus will be on faculty development across all modes of delivery, including blended, face-to-face, and fully online programmes.

Objective 2:
Description: Access, transfer and progression (ATP)

Policies and procedures governing admissions

RCPI welcomes applications from all appropriately qualified applicants irrespective of social, cultural, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Applicants are assessed on the attainment of the entry criteria only.

Access to education is a key priority for RCPI and is embedded within the RCPI Strategic Plan 2025-2029, which commits RCPI to "Remain at the forefront of innovation in education, training and assessment in response to the changing needs of healthcare professionals, including multidisciplinary teams, and society equitable access on a regional and global basis."

RCPI is committed to promoting access and participation through inclusive programme design, delivery, assessment, and learner support services. This commitment seeks to ensure that educational opportunities are accessible to a diverse range of learners and that admission processes are fair, transparent, and aligned with programme requirements.

In support of this commitment, RCPI will continue to review and develop educational pathways and flexible modes of programme delivery to meet the needs of a changing healthcare workforce, while maintaining academic standards and programme integrity. Access considerations are incorporated into programme development and review processes to support participation and learner success across all educational offerings.

RCPI has established admissions policies and procedures that support equitable access to programmes.

Admissions Policy and Procedure (LID-POL-051)

Access, Transfer and Progression Policy (LID-POL-046)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

RCPI has an Access, Transfer and Progression Policy (LID-POL_046) which outlines the approach to RPL where it is included as part of the entry requirements for a specific programme. However, as we currently deliver Special Purpose Awards, RPL for advanced entry is not a feature of programmes currently validated by QQI. For current programmes, applicants are assessed solely against the standard published entry criteria, and no exemptions, advanced entry, credits, or module waivers are awarded through an RPL framework.

Learner information provision

RCPI is committed to providing clear, accurate, and accessible information to prospective applicants and enrolled learners throughout the learner journey. Information is made available through a range of channels, including the RCPI website, programme documentation, learner handbooks, admissions materials, and ongoing programme communications.

This information includes, but is not limited to:

- Programme information and learning outcomes
- Entry requirements and admissions processes
- Programme structure and delivery schedules
- Timetables and key dates
- Assessment regulations and requirements
- Relevant policies and procedures
- Learner supports and services
- Appeals, complaints, and feedback processes

These resources ensure that applicants and learners have access to the information required to make informed decisions, understand programme expectations, and successfully engage with their studies



Learner mobility and sector collaboration

RCPI does not currently operate formal learner mobility programmes such as exchange programmes, cross-institutional study arrangements or structured transfer pathways. However, programme delivery is supported through collaboration with relevant healthcare organisations, clinical training sites and professional stakeholders that contribute to the learner experience and programme delivery.

While learner mobility and formal articulation arrangements do not currently form part of RCPI's provision, the continued expansion of the educational portfolio may create opportunities to explore such arrangements in the future where they support learner progression and align with programme objectives.

Evaluation

Access

Staff involved in the administration of learner admissions reported that the admissions process generally operates effectively. Programme teams place significant emphasis on ensuring learners understand programme expectations before they begin. Information about workload, commitment, assessment requirements, and progression expectations is communicated through admissions materials, programme documentation, and induction activities to support informed participation and learner success. Programme Leads positively highlighted these practices during interviews as part of the self-evaluation process.

Focus group discussions further highlighted the extent to which accessibility principles and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) inform the design of learner information and education resources, supporting equitable access and participation across the learner population.

An area for continuous and iterative enhancement is increasing awareness of available learner supports, and ensuring that programme information is consistently presented in a clear, accessible, and learner-focused manner across all channels.

Staff and Programme leads noted the increasingly complex nature of adjudicating on the suitability of a programme for atypical applications, particularly those presenting with international qualifications and non-standard educational backgrounds. However, recent reviews of admissions criteria, creation of more detailed eligibility guidance, and enhanced Programme Board and Academic Board oversight of these areas has strengthened consistency and transparency in admissions decision-making, while supporting fair and defensible outcomes.

Some examples of recent review outputs are:

- The development of an entry criteria reference guide for programme development and delivery teams to ensure consistency, which received approval at the June 2026

Academic Board. This includes guiding principles regarding the requirements for and recognition of: Professional Registration, Academic Awards, Fellowship and Postgraduate Professional Awards, International Qualifications and the Substantial Difference test. Consistency in approach, and shared understanding by all staff and programme teams, ensures equitable access to RCPI programmes, which is core to RCPI values of inclusion.

- An example of improved access is the recognition of Diploma-Qualified nurses, recognising that the historic professional and academic pathway to nursing registration may not have included a bachelor's degree and therefore does not immediately warrant exclusion. The outcome meant that registered nurses holding diploma qualifications may be admitted to relevant RCPI Professional Diploma programmes based on professional registration and/or diploma qualification, where this aligns with the programme learning outcomes and intended learner profile. The programme development and delivery teams collaborated and provided examples of how to apply the principles in practice, with the Delivery team reviewing the process for admissions.

Transfer

Staff reported that deferral and transfer arrangements are generally effective and focused on the needs of learners. Programme teams provide active support to those experiencing difficulties and work to facilitate re-engagement whenever possible, using flexible deferral and return options.

Progression

A small amount of stakeholder feedback highlighted increasing interest in progression pathways following programme completion. While programme teams provide information regarding relevant professional and educational opportunities, clinicians involved in the review highlighted the professional nature of the learner population, that most are already on a medical training programme or professional pathway and that Special Purpose Awards are designed to gain a specific skill or enhance an area of professional confidence. In that way, there are limited progression opportunities in comparison to undergraduate or 'stackable' postgraduate qualifications.

Conclusion

RCPI considers its arrangements for access, transfer and progression to be effective and aligned with its commitment to fair, transparent and inclusive admissions practices. Clear admissions policies, published entry criteria, accessible learner information and flexible arrangements for learner support help ensure that applicants can make informed decisions and successfully engage with their programmes.

The self-evaluation identified particular strengths in the consistency and transparency of admissions decision-making. Recent enhancements, including the development of an Entry Criteria Reference Guide and strengthened Academic Board oversight, have improved support for admissions decisions involving international qualifications, professional awards and other non-standard applicant profiles. The review also demonstrated RCPI's willingness to adapt admissions practice where appropriate to support equitable access, while maintaining academic standards.

The principal enhancement priorities arising from this review are:

- to strengthen admissions and applicant data analysis,
- further improve the visibility of learner support services,
- continue to explore opportunities for additional educational pathways where aligned with learner demand, organisational capacity and institutional strategy

Within this context, the implementation of the Connect project provides a significant opportunity to support evidence-informed decision-making through improved data integration and longitudinal analysis across the learner journey.

Overall, these developments will strengthen RCPI's commitment to widening participation, learner success and continuous improvement while maintaining the academic and professional standards expected of RCPI programmes.



Objective 3:
Description: Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Learning Environment

RCPI's academic programmes are designed to support doctors and other healthcare professionals to develop practice-relevant knowledge, skills and capability in response to evolving healthcare needs.

Over the past five years, this purpose has been supported by a significant period of development, during which RCPI has strengthened its academic governance, developed an RCPI Strategy for the Provision of Online Education, expanded its online and blended learning capability, refined programme design processes and responded to changing expectations in assessment, learner support, and academic integrity.

This journey has reinforced the importance of ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment are not treated as separate activities, but as connected elements of a coherent learner experience. Through this self-evaluation, RCPI recognises that quality is shaped not only by the strength of its policy framework, but by how consistently that framework is applied in programme design, delivery, learner support and assessment practice.

Oversight through Academic Board, Programme Boards and Programme Exam Boards provides academic ownership and assurance across these areas, while also supporting ongoing reflection on how effectively arrangements operate in practice. RCPI's development of online learning capability was further strengthened through its application to QQI to extend scope of provision to include online delivery. Through the application and validation process, the College demonstrated that its governance, programme design, digital infrastructure, learner support, assessment, academic integrity and monitoring arrangements were sufficiently robust to assure the quality of online provision. Engagement with QQI provided valuable external scrutiny and also helped and prompted RCPI to articulate more clearly how its existing quality assurance framework applies within an online environment. Approval of the extension of scope marked an important milestone in RCPI's quality journey, validating its institutional capability to design, deliver, support and continuously enhance online programmes while maintaining academic standards and a consistent learner experience.

Programme and learning design is guided by Teaching and Learning Policy (LID-POL-062), Teaching, Learning and Assessment Framework (LID-GL-061), Online and Blended Learning Policy (LID-POL-027), Learner Supports Policy (LID-POL-082) and the Reasonable Accommodation Policy (LID-POL-084). These documents provide a coherent basis for constructive alignment between programme aims, learning outcomes, learning activities, assessment methods and learner support.

RCPI considers these to be a strength, as it gives programme teams and development colleagues a shared language for evidence-informed, learner-centred, accessible and evaluative learning design, while allowing flexibility to respond to programme context, learner profile and mode of delivery.

Stakeholder feedback consistently highlighted the quality and commitment of faculty, tutors and subject matter experts as a key strength of RCPI's provision. Learners valued the professional expertise of faculty and the practical relevance they bring to programme delivery. Programme teams also highlighted ongoing faculty development activity as an important mechanism for supporting consistency and quality across different modes of delivery.

Assessment of Learners

Assessment arrangements are supported by the Assessment Policy (LID-POL-076), Assessment and Grading Procedure (LID-SOP-077), Programme Exam Board Procedure (LID-SOP-079), External Examining Procedure (LID-SOP-080), Appeals Policy (LID-POL-071) and related learner-facing assessment regulations. RCPI's assessment processes provide a robust framework for fairness, consistency and transparency.

A recent example of continuous improvement is the establishment of the Assessment Design Guidelines Working Group, which was initiated in response to the challenging changing assessment landscape and the growing impact of generative AI on learner work, assessment validity and assurance of learning. The group is drawing on existing assessment strategy work, programme mapping, learner and faculty feedback, AI-related assessment guidance and current programme experience to develop practical outputs for programme teams. Expected outcomes include an assessment design matrix, assessment principles brief and clearer criteria for selecting assessment methods that are valid, reliable, scalable, sustainable and aligned to learning outcomes. The work involves colleagues across learning experience design, programme delivery, learning technologies and subject expertise, reflecting RCPI's recognition that assessment quality requires both educational design expertise and operational understanding.

Academic integrity is addressed as both an academic standard and a learner support responsibility. RCPI's Academic Integrity Policy for Learners (LID-POL-063), Academic Integrity Policy for Faculty (LID-POL-067), Policy on the Acceptable Use of Generative AI in Assessments (LID-POL-239), Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Learners (LID-POL-066) and Appeals Policy (LID-POL-071) provide a clear framework for promoting good academic practice, preventing misconduct and responding proportionately where issues arise. RCPI recognises this as a developing area of practice, particularly as expectations around generative AI, authorship and assessment design continue to evolve. This is reflected in frequent reviews of policy and procedures in this area.

Management of Learner Records

There are established protocols governing the receipt, storage, and management of assessments submitted online, as well as the provision of feedback to learners.

These protocols are embedded within the programme's data retention policy and records management policy, ensuring compliance with data protection and privacy standards and deletion of records after set lengths of time.

Upon submission, assessments are securely stored in line with these policies, with access restricted to authorised personnel only, maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of learner submissions.

Feedback to learners is systematically managed within the secure online platform, allowing for timely and private communication.

Learner support is embedded across the programme lifecycle through programme-specific induction, academic and administrative support, technical guidance and published learner support resources. Feedback mechanisms include module and programme evaluations, learner representation on Programme Boards, direct programme team contact and formal procedures for complaints and appeals. These mechanisms provide important evidence of learner experience and enable timely local responses. RCPI recognises that the next step is to make more consistent use of this evidence across programmes so that individual improvements also contribute to wider portfolio-level learning.

Learner Support

Learner support is embedded throughout the learner lifecycle, from initial enquiry and onboarding through to completion and graduation. RCPI recognises that many learners are full-time practising healthcare professionals undertaking education alongside demanding clinical and professional responsibilities. As a result, support arrangements are designed to promote accessibility, flexibility and learner success across a range of delivery models.

Support begins prior to programme commencement through the provision of detailed programme information, learner handbooks, induction activities and orientation resources. These supports are designed to help learners understand programme requirements, assessment expectations, available services and the digital learning environment before commencing their studies.

Programme-specific induction activities also provide opportunities for learners to engage with faculty, programme teams and fellow learners at an early stage of the learner journey.

Throughout programme delivery, learners are supported through a combination of academic, administrative and technical supports. Programme teams, Learning Experience Designers, faculty, tutors and administrative staff provide guidance on academic requirements, assessment processes, digital learning platforms and programme participation. Learner supports are complemented by published policies and procedures relating to reasonable accommodation, academic integrity, learner feedback, complaints and appeals, helping to ensure that all learners have access to clear and consistent information regarding their rights and responsibilities.

RCPI increasingly adopts a proactive approach to learner success. Programme teams routinely monitor engagement, participation and progression data and provide targeted support where concerns are identified. This includes direct engagement with learners experiencing difficulties, support for temporary withdrawal or re-entry where appropriate, and interventions designed to

promote retention, progression and successful completion. Examples from programme monitoring processes demonstrate the use of attendance, participation and engagement data to identify learners who may benefit from additional support and guidance.

Learner voice is incorporated through formal learner feedback processes, learner representatives, Programme Board participation and direct engagement with programme teams. These mechanisms ensure that learner perspectives contribute to programme enhancement and the ongoing development of learner support arrangements

Evaluation

Over time, and in response to evolving digital learning landscape, RCPI developed its own learning design Guiding Principles which have become particularly important in translating approved programme objectives into coherent learner journeys. They clarify expectations across the team and with partners, support consistency in how work is planned, designed, delivered and evaluated, and provide a practical framework for reflection, development and innovation.

In design and development, the principles emphasise evidence-informed design, learner-centric experience, assessment, content development, accessibility, peer and expert review, and evaluation. This supports development teams to define clear learning outcomes, sequence content appropriately, select activities that promote engagement and application, build accessible and inclusive learning resources, and design assessments that provide valid evidence of achievement. Programme handbooks, induction resources, academic writing resources, and online learning environments further support transparency by providing learners with information on programme aims, learning outcomes, assessment requirements, academic integrity, supports and routes for raising queries or concerns.

At the same time, this self-evaluation has highlighted the importance of continuing to strengthen how assessment feedback and performance data are used by programme teams to identify patterns, support learner progression and inform enhancement. This is supported by learner survey responses, where assessment feedback emerged as the clearest area for targeted enhancement despite positive views of teaching, learner support and overall programme experience. Learners are informed in advance about the purpose, format, criteria, timing and feedback arrangements for assessment through programme handbooks, assessment briefs, rubrics, induction materials and the online learning environment. Future improvement activity will therefore review how feedback expectations are communicated, how the timeliness and usefulness of feedback are monitored, and how assessment insights are used by programme teams to support learner progression and inform assessment design. The provider learner feedback is particularly timely, as it can be addressed within the existing faculty development project. RCPI now has an invaluable insight and opportunity

to provide targeted guidance, practical examples and development sessions on timely, constructive and actionable feedback, directly responding to learners' calls for clearer and more useful assessment feedback.

Conclusion

In summary, RCPI has established clear and coherent arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment across its academic programmes.

The principal strengths are explicit policy coverage, structured academic governance, aligned assessment processes, external examiner input, embedded learner support and the use of the Guiding Principles from Learning, Innovation and Development Team to support consistent, evidence-informed and learner-centred design practice.

The key enhancement priority is to improve how consistently programme teams evidence the impact of learning design and assessment feedback, while providing clearer signposting of learner support services.



Objective 4:
Description: Self-evaluation, monitoring and review

Arrangements for self-evaluation, monitoring and review

The Quality Enhancement Office supports the Training, Education & Lifelong Learning and Operations Department functions to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the QA system. All policies and procedures undergo a review on a three-year cycle. If changes are required during the cycle, the request is brought to the QEO, and support is provided for review and approval through the appropriate channels.

The TELL QA Manual was comprehensively updated in early 2026 and approved by the Academic Board, consolidating current quality assurance responsibilities, governance arrangements and operational processes in a single authoritative resource. The revised manual was communicated to all staff and now supports both the consistent application of quality processes and the effective onboarding of new colleagues.

Programme monitoring and revalidation processes

Programme monitoring is guided by the Programme Monitoring and Review Policy (LID-Pol-097), Programme Monitoring and Review Procedure (LID-SOP-098), Programme Monitoring Plan (LID-T-036) and Annual Programme Report process. These reports are summarised in the Academic Board report presented at the RCPI Annual Stated Meeting. A strength of the current approach is that monitoring requirements are considered from the point of programme design, with programme teams identifying the evidence that will be used to evaluate implementation, learner experience, assessment performance and continuing fitness for purpose. This creates a clear line of sight from design and delivery through to review, action planning and enhancement.

Programme Boards provide the primary forum for routine programme-level review. They consider learner engagement, learner feedback, faculty feedback, assessment outcomes, matters arising during delivery, external examiner commentary and progress against agreed actions. Programme Exam Boards provide additional assurance in relation to assessment outcomes, standards and progression decisions. RCPI considers these forums to be effective mechanisms for identifying strengths, risks and areas requiring attention; however, the consistency of action tracking and the use of comparable evidence across programmes remain important areas for ongoing development.

Annual Programme Reports provide a structured point of reflection, bringing together qualitative and quantitative evidence to assess how effectively programmes are operating. They support programme teams to identify effective practice, recurring issues, learner experience themes, assessment trends, external examiner feedback and agreed actions for enhancement. Where changes to programme content, structure, assessment or delivery are required, these are progressed

through the Programme Change Procedure (LID-SOP-045), ensuring that modifications are appropriately documented, approved and communicated. RCPI recognises that the impact of this process will be strengthened by further standardising how actions, outcomes and evidence of improvement are captured over time.

Learner and stakeholder feedback are central to RCPI's monitoring and review approach. The Learner Feedback Policy and Procedure (LID-Pol-083) sets out expectations for collecting, considering and responding to learner feedback. Feedback is gathered through module and programme evaluations, learner representation on Programme Boards, direct engagement with programme teams, faculty feedback forms, and formal routes such as complaints and appeals where required. Learner Representatives and learner feedback provides valuable and key insight into programme delivery, informing design teams of the impact on learner load, teaching faculty, and assessment delivery. The feedback mechanisms are well established, but RCPI recognises the need to continue improving how feedback themes are synthesised across programmes and communicated back to learners in a consistent way. Externality is embedded through external examiner reports and, where applicable, collaborative governance arrangements.

Oversight of external and collaborative partnerships

In the RCPI/iheed collaboration, oversight is supported by documented responsibilities in the Collaborative Provision Policy and Procedure, the RCPI/iheed Standard Operating Procedure and ultimately the Strategic Programme Management Board. These structures clarify decision-making, escalation, programme monitoring, learner support, assessment oversight and approval of changes. RCPI's reflection on collaborative provision has highlighted the value of these arrangements in making responsibilities visible, while also confirming the need to keep SOPs, action logs and reporting expectations under regular review as programmes mature.

Evaluation

RCPI can also identify recent examples where engagement with QQI processes has directly informed improvement. Feedback and evidence requests arising through recent QQI engagement prompted a more explicit articulation of English language requirements, resulting in the development and approval of the English Language Policy (LID-POL-260) and greater consistency of admissions information across different programmes. Related work has strengthened how RCPI describes entry criteria, international qualification equivalency, learner supports, online provision, public information and the distinction between RCPI and collaborative partner responsibilities. Academic Board reports and programme update reports have also been used to evidence learner progression, completion, programme activity and actions arising, supporting a more systematic approach to monitoring and reporting.

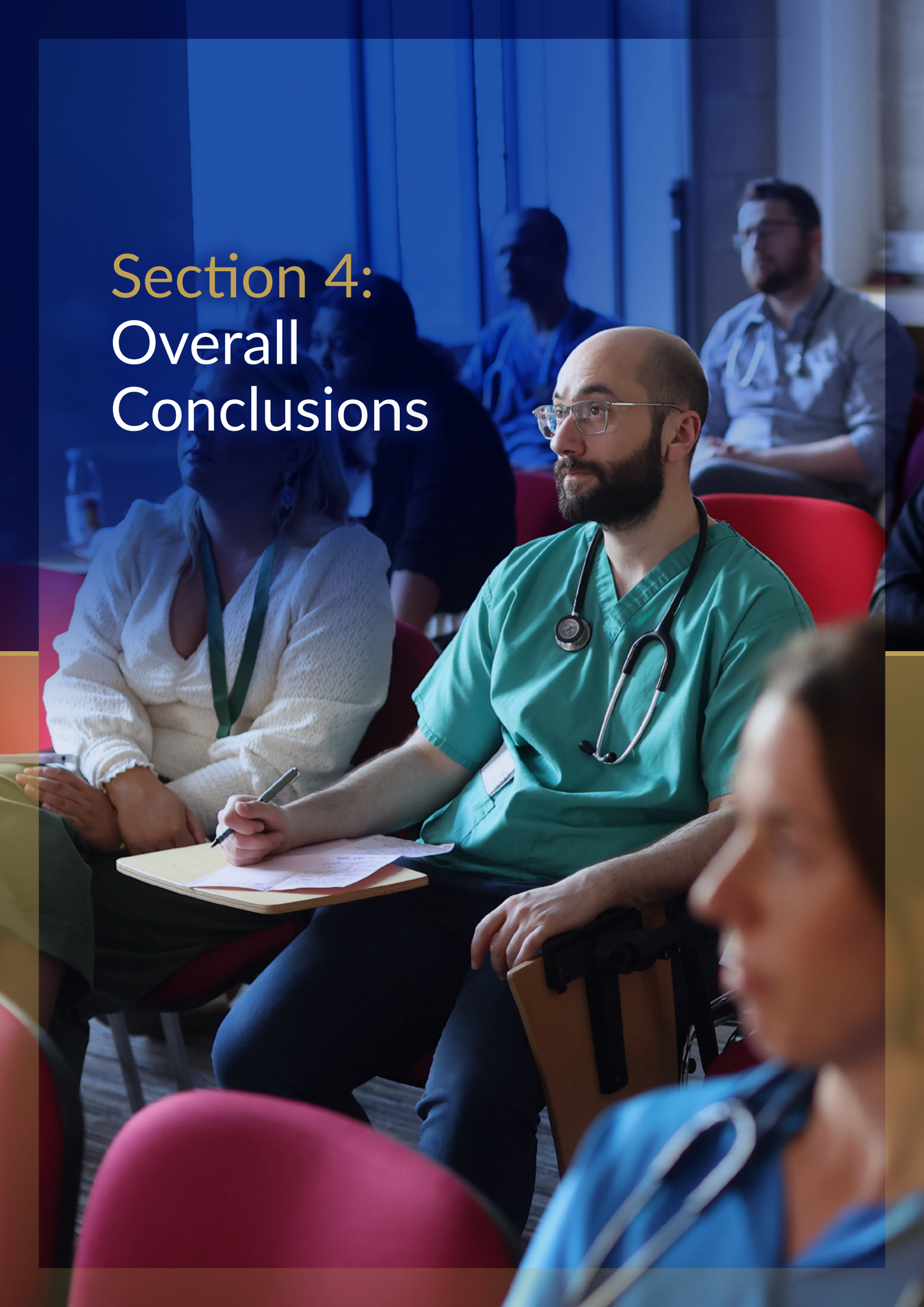
These examples demonstrate that RCPI's quality assurance system is capable of responding to external scrutiny and translating feedback into policy, procedural and operational change. They also indicate an area for further development: ensuring that improvements initiated through QQI engagement are captured in a more consistent institutional enhancement log, so that the rationale, action taken, governance approval and impact can be tracked over time across the academic portfolio.

Focus group participants reported regular use of institutional policies and procedures in programme delivery, learner support and assessment activities. Staff described quality documentation as a routine reference point for decision-making and highlighted the availability of learner-facing information through websites, handbooks and programme materials. This feedback suggests that quality assurance processes are increasingly embedded within operational practice.

Conclusion

Through this process, RCPI's self-evaluation has reassured us that quality assurance is increasingly embedded in programme governance and day-to-day programme management. The opportunity now is to ensure that the evidence generated through these processes is used consistently not only to address programme-level issues, but also to inform wider academic planning and portfolio enhancement.

In summary, RCPI has effectively and increasingly mature arrangements for self-evaluation, monitoring and review. The principal strengths are planned monitoring from programme design, Programme Board oversight, annual programme reporting, external examiner input, learner feedback processes, collaborative governance structures and clear procedures for programme change. The key enhancement priority is to strengthen the aggregation, thematic analysis and follow-through of programme-level and QQI-related evidence across the academic portfolio, so that insights from individual programmes and external engagement more consistently inform academic planning, resource decisions and quality enhancement.



Section 4: Overall Conclusions

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Overall conclusions

RCPI occupies a unique position within Ireland's higher education and professional learning landscape. As an institution that is at a relatively early stage in its engagement with QQI, this self-evaluation process has provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved to date, to evaluate the effectiveness of existing systems and processes, and to highlight strengths and identify areas for further development.

The process has also highlighted the extent to which quality assurance and quality enhancement practices have become embedded within the day-to-day operations of the College.

Across all review areas, stakeholders expressed strong confidence in the quality of RCPI's educational provision and in the commitment of staff, faculty and governance bodies to maintaining academic standards and supporting learner success. The establishment of the Quality Enhancement Office, the continued development of the Academic Board, the maturing role of Programme Boards, and the systematic review of policies and procedures have strengthened institutional oversight and contributed to greater consistency across programmes. Quality assurance is no longer viewed solely as a compliance requirement but is increasingly embedded within routine decision-making, programme development and learner support activities

The review identified strengths in RCPI's learner-centred approach to programme design and delivery. Stakeholder feedback consistently highlighted the responsiveness of programme teams, the quality of learner support, the strong relationships between faculty, tutors and learners, and the commitment to maintaining high educational standards. Programme leads demonstrated a strong commitment to evidence-informed improvement, using learner feedback, external examiner reports, programme monitoring activities and governance structures to guide ongoing programme enhancement.

A significant strength of this review process was the engagement with stakeholders. Through surveys, staff focus groups, and interviews with programme leads and assessment leads, the College gathered a rich body of evidence that provided valuable insights into its educational activities. The consistency of the feedback received enabled the identification of key themes and priorities, which will inform future strategic and operational developments across the College.

The review also identified several opportunities for further enhancement. Assessment practices warrant ongoing consideration to ensure that the balance between assessment requirements and educational value remains appropriate, proportionate, and aligned with programme outcomes and learner expectations. Opportunities also exist to strengthen onboarding processes and faculty development, enhance awareness and visibility of governance structures, and continue to support staff engagement in quality assurance and quality enhancement activities.

A recurring theme throughout the review was the challenge and opportunity presented by organisational growth. As RCPI expands its educational portfolio and increases learner numbers, maintaining the high levels of learner engagement, personalised support and academic oversight that currently characterise programme delivery will require continued investment in governance, systems, quality assurance processes and staff capability. Stakeholders recognised the importance of ensuring that growth is supported by scalable processes which preserve the learner-centred ethos and quality culture that have become defining features of RCPI's educational provision

The self-evaluation further confirmed that the next stage of RCPI's quality journey will focus on strengthening institutional quality intelligence and enhancement capability. While substantial information is already collected across programmes, there is an opportunity to further integrate learner, programme, progression, assessment and graduate outcome data to support strategic decision-making and evidence-informed enhancement. This shift from establishing quality assurance structures towards maximising the value of quality evidence represents a natural progression in the maturity of the institution's dynamic quality system.

Looking ahead, the implementation of the Connect project represents a significant strategic opportunity for the College. Through enhanced data management, reporting capabilities, and operational efficiencies, the project has the potential to strengthen evidence-informed decision-making, improve programme oversight, reduce administrative burden, and further enhance the learner experience.

Overall, RCPI considers itself well positioned to continue delivering high-quality educational provision that meets the needs of learners, healthcare professionals and society. The review has demonstrated that RCPI possesses strong foundations, an engaged academic community and a genuine commitment to continuous improvement. The enhancement opportunities identified through the CINNTE process will support the next phase of institutional development and ensure that RCPI continues to fulfil its mission of empowering, developing and supporting healthcare professionals through high-quality education, training and lifelong learning.

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