

#### **4.1 Programmatic Review & Programme Development**

ICD continuously defines and improves its processes to review, improve, and develop programmes, which are already validated, being proposed for revalidation, or are being proposed for new validation by QQI. These procedures are continuously improved in policy and practice to reflect QQI's (2017a) policies and criteria for validating programmes. Validation is a regulatory process that determines if a QQI award can be offered in respect of an individual programme. As part of this process, an independent panel will prepare a report which determines each programme's quality and fitness for purpose, including its established quality assurance arrangements and procedures for the assessment of learners. Any modifications recommended by the independent panel will be integrated into a revised programme which is fully compliant with QQI's core policies and criteria for validation (QQI 2017a). Quinquennial QQI revalidation – which is preceded by a (minimum) year-long process of internal review - is the main process by which ICD updates and modifies its existing programmes and associated QA procedures. The programme review and development process is supervised by the Academic Council who delegate authority to the Programme Development Subcommittee.

Figure 4.1a provides a big picture overview of the interconnected system at ICD that is ongoing programme review and programme development.



**Figure 4.1a:** Illustration of the Programme Development Process at ICD

**Please note:** Black boxes indicate processes. Black lines illustrate process outcome report lines

Coloured boxes and lines indicate participants in processes and communication/participation-in-process lines

**Programme Development:** The goals of programme development at ICD are both:

- **Developing High-Quality New Programmes:** The creation of new programmes to be delivered (dependent on validation by QQI)
- **Continuously Improving the Quality of Existing Programmes:** The continuous improvement of existing programmes, already being offered (and new-/re-validations by QQI as required)

#### **Programme Development Requirements at ICD:**

The development of new programmes at ICD is primarily the responsibility of the Head of Academic Development who consults and works with the Programme Development Committee, under the supervision of the Head of Quality Assurance and Director of Academic Affairs. Reports are submitted to the Academic Council for review to ensure all QQI (e.g. QQI 2017a) policies are followed. The requirements in developing new programmes and improving existing programmes at ICD include, but are not limited to:

- **Learning Outcomes Focused:** Ensuring that all programmes are written using minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPOs) and minimum intended module learning outcomes (MIMLOs)
- **Evidence-Based Reviewing & Development:** Ensuring that all programmes are developed based on evidence, which is gathered through ongoing research on education and skills needs, consultations and feedback from learners and staff, and external consultations with business (e.g. employers) and community
- **Alignment with NFQ & QQI standards:** Ensuring all programmes align with the relevant QQI awards standards and intended level of the NFQ
- **Rigorous Internal & External Reviewing:** Ensuring all proposed programmes are reviewed internally (by the Academic Council) and externally through independent external panels, and ultimately QQI, provided the evidence supports validation application
- **Developing Clear Access, Transfer, & Progression Guidelines:** Ensuring all proposed programmes comply with QQI's (2015b) *Policy Restatement: Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression in Relation to Learners for Providers of Further and Higher Education and Training*
- **Cyclical Review Using Feedback from all Learning Community Members:** Ensuring that all programmes are cyclically reviewed (at least annually) by the Programme Development committee, taking all evidence and reports into account (e.g. reports from the Registrar,

Programme Boards, Academic Council, Examination Boards, Student Survey Feedback, Lecturer Survey Feedback), and the results of these reviews are submitted for analysis by the Academic Council who will continuously monitor and review programmes and also programme review and development work across ICD

**Programme Review** processes include:

- **Reviewing existing programme(s) quality:** Continuous internal monitoring and reviewing of existing programmes with the goal to continuously improve quality
- **Reviewing existing quality assurance infrastructure:** Continuous internal monitoring and reviewing of existing quality assurance infrastructure which both gathers evidence on the quality of ICD's existing programmes and promotes evidence-based continuous improvement of existing programmes.
- **Reviewing new programme development processes, requirements, and infrastructure:** Continuous internal monitoring of new programmes in development and new programme development infrastructure through the usage of internally gathered evidence and also externally procured guidance and feedback on educational/graduate needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (e.g. through interfacing with external stakeholders such as the business community, and bodies such as QQI and ACCA).
- **Reviewing and improving programme resourcing and student support infrastructure** under the oversight of Academic Council and Governing Body. This entails ongoing improvement of learner supports and facilities, programme delivery facilities, and the overall learning environment strategy and implementation
- **Improving student recruitment initiatives** because without students, programmes cannot be delivered. This is primarily the responsibility of the Managing Director (in consultation with the Governing Body) who engages in marketing and prospective student recruitment in conjunction with the Admissions Office and Registrar, which requires both building awareness of programme(s) availability and also, importantly, informing prospective students of programme learning outcomes, awards, access requirements, and progression possibilities
- **Discontinuing programmes where they no longer serve learner (or external) educational/graduate needs**

- **Business case (including cost/benefit) analysis for continuing existing programmes and for developing and delivering new programmes.** This process (see below Table 4.1a) is the responsibility of the ICD Management Team and the Governing Body.

**Table 4.1a: Business Case Analysis at ICD:**

**Cost/Benefit Analysis:** All programmes at ICD Business School are monitored for their financial viability on a yearly basis, with overhead costs measured against budget on a monthly/weekly basis.

1. All costs associated with any existing programme are calculated (including all accounting based costs, depreciation, amortisation etc. and any reasonable variances in cost inputs, both upward and downward, over the specific accounting period, are calculated and posted, to the specific accounting period) including opportunity costs.
2. All income from the programme is allocated and posted to the relevant account (to include all accruals/prepayments) for ongoing budgetary monitoring.
3. Decisions on the viability/sustainability of any programme are made on a number of criteria;

**a) Financial Criteria used in Business Case Analysis [Financial Viability]**

The financial viability of a course is further sub-divided in terms of monitoring under the following headings;

- i. Good current and Projected Profitability
- ii. Favourable Asset Utilisation (opportunity costs as stated above)
- iii. Conservative Capital Structure
- iv. Earnings Momentum

**b) Fit with Strategy**

**c) The current capabilities of ICD Business School to deliver the programme v future requirements of a programme (IT/ICT)**

**Along with the above business case analysis criteria, current programmes are mapped against the following criteria when originally submitted to the Management Board for validation by the Awarding Body.**

1. What is the potential market size or demand?
2. Who are our competitors and/or potential competitors?
3. Is it a trend, fad, flat or growing market?
4. Who are our target customers?
5. What is our potential selling price?
6. What is our potential margin?
7. Will we face seasonality swings?
8. Are there any restrictions or regulations on this programme?

**Business Case Analysis: Information Sources – Availability**

In ICD Business School we do not deliver programmes outside of our expertise. Therefore information sources in the areas of our Programme delivery tend to be known to the expert groups in the College, allowing for a fully informed decision to be made as part of our analysis.

### **Business Case Analysis: Financial Control – Weekly, Monthly and Annually**

All programmes are monitored in terms of income and expenditure on a weekly basis. Part of the reason for this is the need to ensure that all debtors are communicated to and all outstanding fees are remitted.

As indicated all programmes are monitored using the Financial Criteria (outside of income and expenditure a/c's) on an annual basis. The Earnings Momentum methodology is one of the more accurate as it shows trends towards and away from a particular programme of education.

Over the past number of years, applying Earnings Momentum methods ICD Business School has seen a trend away from the 'traditional' Business Studies Degree towards a more technology/social media based programmes.

ICD Business School submitted in 2018, a BA (Honours) in Digital Business, to QQI to follow this trend and to compensate for the falling income from the BA (Honours) in Business Studies.

All of the financial data would be reported in our Management Accounts and each programme/Course is allocated as a specific cost centre. Our Management Accounts are compiled monthly.

Our Accountants (O'Brien & Partners) would also advise as to their view regarding the viability ,on an ongoing basis, of a particular programme and have been doing so with ICD for the past 18 years.

**The Programme Development and Review Cycle at ICD:** The programme development process (developing new programmes and improving existing programmes) leads to programme reviewing and programme review processes lead to programme development (improving existing programmes and developing new programmes). Programme development and review at ICD are an interconnected and inseparable cycle as shown in Figure 4.1b. This process is supervised by the Academic Council with delegation of responsibility to (and reporting back from) the Programme Development Committee and Programme Boards.



**Figure 4.1b:** The Programme Development and Review Cycle at ICD

## **The role of external stakeholders in programme review and development at ICD:**

**Employers:** Our existing Business Studies and Accountancy programmes are regularly updated in response to changes in the wider business and employment landscape, particularly as developments in IT and digitalisation have impacted on the day-to-day realities of doing business in Ireland and beyond. With strong links in the local business community, ICD has always sought to solicit the input of employers about their expectations of contemporary business graduates. This has led – for example – to the introduction of Lean Six Sigma ‘Yellow Belt’ training into the final stage project management module for all business students. ICD is also currently revising the E-Commerce pathway of the BA (Hons) in Business Studies in response to feedback provided by employers. Where accounting and finance are concerned, ICD regularly updates its syllabi in line with changes in financial reporting standards (FRS’s) and according to advice provided by employers about current graduate skills profiles. Liaising with employers has also led to the introduction – in the college’s auditing and advanced auditing modules – of a stronger emphasis on the essential role that IT and automated systems now play in transforming the nature of audit work.

**Professional Bodies:** The main professional bodies that ICD’s programmes are recognised by include Chartered Accountants Ireland (CAI), the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants (ACCA), the Chartered Marketing Institute (CMI), the Institute of Personnel Development (IPD), the Marketing Institute of Ireland (MII) and the Law Society of Ireland, The King’s Inns. As professional bodies must regularly update their standards and policies in response to external changes, so too must ICD remain apprised of such developments, and committed to keeping its programme content up-to-date. To this end, changes are regularly made to programme modules as a result of recommendations made by professional bodies. For example, the college’s modules in ‘Taxation’ and ‘Advanced Taxation’ are updated following the implementation of any changes to the Finance Act and its associated budget.

**State Bodies:** ICD liaises with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in relation to matters of quality assurance, protection of enrolled learners, and the validation and re-validation of programmes. Enterprise Ireland’s ‘Education in Ireland’ and the Irish Council for International Students (ICOS) are also key partners where the recruitment, protection, and pastoral care of international students are concerned.

**Legal Advisors:** In recent years, ICD carried out a root-and-branch legal analysis of the processes and procedures pertaining to the college's programmes. This process was undertaken by an external law firm (E & F Collins). This brought to light certain discrepancies in the college's systems and the subsequent readjustment of these processes and procedures, both written and implied, has delivered benefits to learners, staff and all individuals connected to the delivery of the college's programmes.

### **Recent outcomes from continuous programme review and development at ICD:**

Specific outcomes from the continuous programme review and development cycle at ICD over recent years include:

- Successful QQI revalidation of the BA Hons in Business Studies (revalidated in summer 2019)
- Successful QQI revalidation of the BA Hons in Accounting and Finance (revalidated in summer 2019)
- Successful QQI revalidation of the MA in Accounting and Finance (revalidated in summer 2019)
- Continuous development of a new masters in brand marketing (forthcoming)
- Application to QQI for validation of the newly developed BA Hons in Digital Business. A summary of how this programme has been developed to date appears as follows, to provide more specific insight into how programme development is undertaken at ICD.

### **Case Study of Programme Development at ICD: The BA Hons in Digital Business (2017-2019):**

1. **Initial Conception (Based on Learning Community (Staff & Student) Feedback):** The impetus to develop the BA (Hons) in Digital Business grew out of discussions held by ICD's programme boards about the need for the development of a new undergraduate business programme designed to address the changing skills demands of contemporary information and knowledge intensive economies, and the day-to-day realities of work in increasingly technology-rich business environments.

This concept was based on analysis of qualitative and quantitative indicators (see section 4.1.1 of the present document) on existing programmes being delivered (programme reviewing) and consideration for the broader education, training, and skills need context. ICD lecturers and staff had received positive feedback about the college's existing ICT modules – both informally and through student survey – but had also become aware of a growing internal consensus, both amongst staff and learners, about a need to expand provision in this area, as well as to offer more integrated ways of providing digital skills training alongside traditional academic knowledge development. On this basis, the team decided that it was necessary to develop a programme that built on ICD's existing focus on providing students with a high-quality business education but augmented this with a learning experience that would also equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies required for success in an increasingly technology-permeated and 'digitalised' economy and society.

2. **Initial Programme Outline Development:** An initial programme outline was designed by the Academic Development Officer (now the Head of Quality Assurance) for a BA (Hons) in 'Business with Digital Skills' – later changed to 'Digital Business' – and described the proposed degree as building on ICD's 'existing strengths in business studies by developing a complementary offering designed both to equip graduates with the digital skills required by employers in the contemporary workplace, and with the knowledge to lead digital transformation in SMEs'.
3. **Initial Business Case Analysis:** The ICD Management Team reviewed the business case for the programme including financial (e.g. cost/benefit and resourcing requirements) analysis and non-financial (e.g. strategic fit and internal capacity) analysis. The programme was approved by the Management Team for further development pending further business case analysis when clearer indicators are available on demand and resource requirements
4. **Internal Review of Programme Outline:** The programme outline was then sent to internal academic staff. The outline was reviewed by lecturers internally who provided both positive and negative feedback.
5. **Programme outline improvement:** This internal feedback was used to improve and refine the programme before external evaluation.
6. **Independent External Evaluation:** This draft outline, which included an indicative curriculum, programme structure, learner profile, and minimum intended

programme learning outcomes, was shared with industry stakeholders – including representatives of digital marketing agencies, multinational tech firms, and business development and training companies – who provided feedback on the programme’s curriculum and graduate skills profile.

7. **Advanced Development of Programme and Testing for Need (feasibility analysis)**  
**Using Evidence:** Following this stage of conception and consultation, the team then embarked on a review of the literature related to national and international skills strategies and deficits, the impact of digital technologies on present and future skills needs, and recent developments in the classification of skills and competency types for the digital economy. A key finding of this review was that there appeared to be a growing national and international consensus about the demand for both ‘generic and complementary’ ICT skills, and technology-related transversal skills, in every sector of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy (OECD, 2017 p. 178). In addition to producing graduates with ‘specialist’ or technical ICT skills – in data analytics, app development, and network management – the literature broadly suggested that there was an imperative for providers of education and training to provide learners in all occupational and professional domains with ‘high-level complementary skills’ (OECD, 2016 p. 2) and ‘digital literacy’ for management, administration, marketing, leadership, communication, and problem-solving in technology-rich business settings. As a small college, specialising in business disciplines, the team at ICD concluded that it was not within the current scope of their provision or expertise to develop a programme oriented towards ‘specialist’ technical ICT skills, but we concluded strongly that the college was well-positioned to develop its business programmes to respond to the challenges and skills requirements of the digital economy.
8. **Defining Programme Learning Outcomes:** The BA (Hons) in Digital Business was further developed, then, to provide students with an integrated and in-depth knowledge of a range of core business sub-fields and disciplines, while also offering a mix of ‘generic’, ‘complementary’ – and some ‘specialist’ - ICT skills tailored towards the needs of contemporary businesses of all shapes and size, and adaptable lifelong learning in the digital economy. In addition to training students in the use of key software tools and platforms for use in 21<sup>st</sup> century business contexts, it was decided that a strong emphasis would be placed on developing ‘complementary’ skills which would help graduates to become proficient not only in using technology

functionally, but in engaging in the kind of non-routine, abstract, intrapersonal, and cognitive tasks characteristic of work settings where technology-enhanced information processing, self-direction, problem-solving and communication were highly prized. A key part of developing 'digital skills' in future graduates relates to the cultivation of so-called 'digital navigation skills', which denote the use of digital technologies to 'finding information, prioritising information and assessing the quality and reliability of information' (Grand-Clement RAND 2017 p. 5). This ICT competency is closely related to a generic skillset described by the OECD as 'communication and information search' (CIS), which entails communicating, 'finding work related information', and 'conducting transactions' using digital technologies. The OECD regard CIS skills as essential for modern graduates, but describe them in their 2017 digital skills outlook as both 'in demand' but 'insufficient' and 'unequally distributed' across countries, social groups, firms, and individuals (OECD, 2017).

9. **Defining Teaching, Learning, & Assessment Strategy:** In this light, it was decided that the programme would be developed to provide a mix of different teaching and learning modalities – and assessment strategies – that would integrate digital skills training with traditional academic skills in oral and written communication, peer-directed and self-regulated learning, and critical and analytical thinking. In effect, it would seek to develop a synthesis of traditional transversal skills and digital technology skills appropriate to contemporary business life and future learning. It was envisaged that at each stage of the students' development, a focus would be placed on combining training in business skills and digital tools and platforms with assessments that would focus on critique, reflection, information literacy, and individual and intrapersonal communication. The programme would also aim to foster in students a kind of 'digital literacy' which went beyond mere technical competence to focus on critical and reflective thinking, consistent with Gilster's definition of digital literacy as a matter of individuals being able to 'critically evaluate', select, and elaborate information, rather than simply having 'the technical skills required to access it' (Martin and Grudziecki 2006, 'DigEuLit: Concepts and Tools for Digital Literacy' p. 254). This perspective in digital literacy frames it as a critical, evaluative and reflective competence rather than a matter of purely technical skills, and this model – it was decided – was appropriate to the synthesis of business, digital, and transversal skills that the programme would be designed to

offer. In particular, the concept of problem-solving in technology rich environments was used as a foundation for the development of the programme's curriculum, assessment strategies, and learning outcomes, focussing as it does both on the need to develop enhanced digital skills *and* the requirements for 21<sup>st</sup> century graduates to be competent in constructing strategies for identifying and evaluating information, synthesising new knowledge, and communicating it to address specific problems in real-world business contexts.

10. **Resource requirements detailed:** The programme would require investment in IT resources internally, which were detailed and communicated to the Management Team
11. **Advanced Business Case Analysis:** The Management Team used the detailed programme documentation, particularly evidence provided on demand/need, and proposed resourcing requirements, to engage in detailed financial (e.g. cost/benefit, resource investment) analysis and non-financial (e.g. strategic fit and human resource fit) analysis of the programme. This included consultation with an external IT specialist regarding requirements and costing. The programme was approved for further development
12. **The 'Final' Draft Programme Internally & Externally Evaluated:** Staff and external evaluators were provided with a full 'final' draft of the programme, which, over a three-month period, entailed reworking and fixing of a variety of elements of the programme
13. **Application for QQI Validation:** A QQI programme validation panel is currently assessing this proposed programme and is planning to visit ICD in late 2019.

#### **4.1.1 Programme Review Process**

ICD's Academic Council periodically undertakes internal reviews of its programmes – typically annually and quinquennially – according to the following terms of reference:

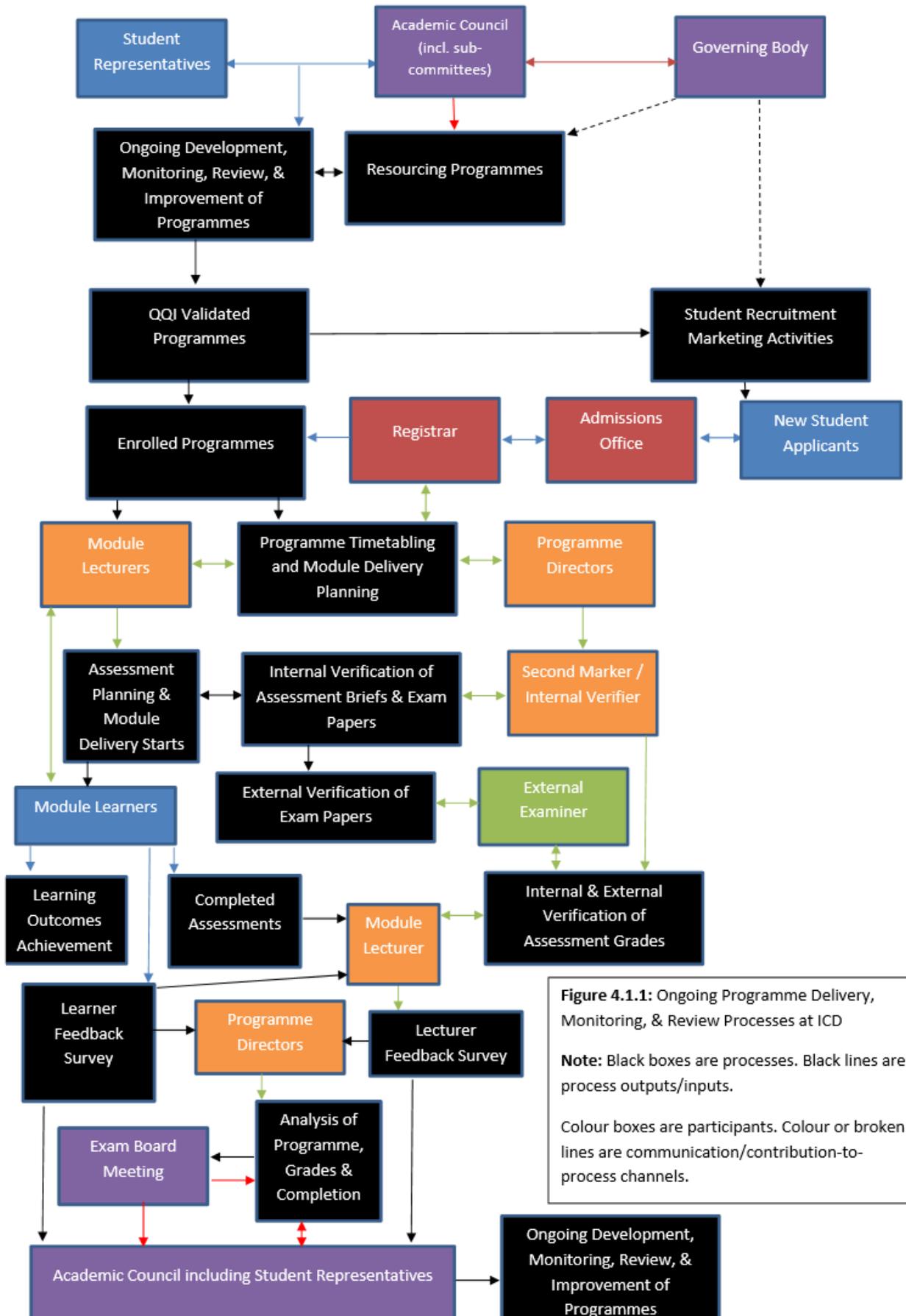
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** What has been learned about the programme, as an evolving process, from the experience of providing it over the last number of years?

- **Quantitative indicator of quality:** What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage, and overall? Completion rate “for a programme of education and training means the ratio that the number of enrolled learners who complete the programme bears to the number of enrolled learners who commenced the programme” (Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Revised 2014 p. 8)
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** What can be concluded from a survey and analysis of graduate pathways both about the college’s programmes and supports offered to ICD alumni?
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** The reputation that the programme and provider have with key stakeholders including learners, alumni, graduate employers, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, and professional bodies.
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** The perspectives of key stakeholders with respect to improvements that can be made to existing programmes, processes and procedures, facilities and resources, and learner supports (including issues identified in the reports of the college’s Academic Council and Governing Body).
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** The challenges and opportunities which are likely to arise during the next cycle of each programme’s provision and modifications that can be made with respect to these.
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** Whether the programme in light of its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes demonstrably addresses explicit learning needs of target learners and society?
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** If programme curricula are sufficiently up-to-date and appropriate to the needs of learners and society?
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?
- **Quantitative and qualitative indicator of quality:** What new resources may be needed to be offered to staff to support continuing professional development and academic performance?
- **Quantitative and qualitative indicator of quality:** Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of compromising educational

standards or quality of provision in light of its other commitments (i.e. Competing demands) and strategy?

- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** What changes need to be made to related policies, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)?
- **Quantitative and qualitative indicator of quality:** What improvements are indicated following analysis of learner feedback surveys?
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** What improvements are indicated following analysis of lecturer feedback surveys?
- **Qualitative indicator of quality:** What improvements are indicated following consultation with the Student Representative Committee (SRC) and the elected SRC Academic Council members?

Figure 4.1.1 illustrates the complex and interconnected system of both day-to-day and more strategic (by semester, and every year) ongoing programme delivery, monitoring, review processes at ICD, specifically from the perspective of one (non-specific) programme (whether a new or existing continuing programme).



Internal review is carried out by the college's Academic Council and through regular (ad-hoc, but, ideally, at least annual) Programme Development committee meetings. The Programme Development committee is a subcommittee of Academic Council. This subcommittee is comprised of the Head of Academic Development, the relevant Programme Directors, and at least two programme board members from the respective academic programme. Programme Directors are responsible for coordinating the contribution of all academic staff for programmatic review and reporting to and by the subcommittee and Academic Council. The proceedings of Academic Council – including feedback presented by student representatives – constitute an important source of information on stakeholder perspectives on the structure, design, and quality of respective programmes. ICD is also currently exploring the possibility of making better use of Moodle as a tool for carrying out internal stakeholder surveys for programmatic review and quality assurance more generally. By conducting more regular internal surveys, it is hoped that more effective processes for continuous improvement can be developed that will ensure that ICD is responsive to changing learner demands and can monitor and ensure the ongoing quality of its provision.

All quality assurance infrastructure at ICD has the objective of continuous learning and improvement in tandem with various internal and external stakeholders. This infrastructure all feeds into the overall programme development and programme review initiatives in both the day to day delivery of programmes and ensuring their smooth running but also the more strategic level of planning, developing, resourcing, and improving new and existing programmes. The overall QA infrastructure at ICD is detailed throughout the QA policy. However, appendix 4.1.1 provides a reference table summarising some (but not all) of the QA infrastructure ICD has developed over the years and continues to develop and improve. Two key components of QA infrastructure at ICD are the Learner Feedback Survey and the Lecturer Feedback Survey.

#### **4.1.1.1 Lecturer Voice and Feedback in Internal Programme Review Processes**

It is a fundamental quality assurance objective at ICD to include the lecturer/faculty voice and feedback in all programme and module monitoring, reviewing, and development. While this is done in an ongoing process of internal communications between staff, a formal instrument has been developed for usage across all programmes, starting semester one 2019-2020. The instrument used

to collect data is a qualitative survey of lecturer feedback and reflection on every module's delivery, assessments, and resourcing. This list of questions (below) is emailed by all Programme Directors to all respective module lecturers in order to receive feedback on positive and negative aspects of modules.

List of questions Programme Directors email to lecturers:

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Dear Colleague

I would be very grateful if you might take a few minutes to respond to the below questions list (with qualitative answers) for each of the modules you deliver on this programme [INSERT PROGRAMME NAME]

1. Please indicate the name of the module, year/stage, programme name, and semester and year when most recently delivered?
2. What went particularly well in the module?
3. How might the module be improved with regard to the following categories:
  - a. Does the module descriptor need to be updated or changed? If so, how?
  - b. Does the module assessment strategy need to be updated or changed? If so, how?
  - c. Does the resourcing of the module need to be changed or improved? If so, how?
4. How may ICD and/or the Programme Director help you to improve the module or its delivery, if applicable?
5. Do you have any other feedback regarding the module, the programme, or ICD in general that you wish for the Programme Director to consider?

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To enable optimum communication and feedback quality, the above questions list should be circulated by every Programme Director to every lecturer on the programme at the end of every semester. The responses should be collected and analysed by the Programme Director who is responsible for reporting the findings to the Head of Academic Development, the Programme Development sub-committee, and Academic Council. Primary responsibility for acting on (or

ensuring action on) the findings of this survey lies with the Programme Director and the Head of Academic Development, under the supervision of the Academic Council.

#### **4.1.1.2 Learner Voice and Feedback in Internal Programme Review Processes**

Please refer to section 5.5 for detail on the role of learner feedback and student voice and communications at ICD, which includes discussion of the learner feedback survey carried out in every module and also other QA infrastructure such as democratically elected student representatives, the Student Representative Committee (SRC), and elected SRC representation on the Academic Council. These combined processes and functions within ICD are pivotally important mechanisms used to continuously gather feedback from students so that their voice can be included in all discussions regarding programmatic reviewing and development.

## Appendix 4.1.1: Reference Table of QA Infrastructure at ICD

QA Infrastructure (What)	QA Instrument (How)	Who Initiates (responsible for action)	Who Implements	Who Contributes / Participates	When	Reports of Outcome(s) Delivered to (Who)	Key Outcome Objective(s)	Key Outcome Owner(s) (Who Acts on Outcomes)
Academic Council	Academic Council Meetings	Director of Academic Affairs (or Chair of Academic Council if different)	Academic Council Secretary coordinates meetings, collates agenda, convenes meetings, and invites attendees in collaboration with Chair of Academic Council and Head of Academic Development	Council Chair, Director of Academic Affairs, Council Secretary, Registrar, Head of Academic Development, Head of Quality Assurance, Programme Directors, College Librarian, Faculty Members (elected lecturer representatives), External Council Member.  Representatives of Academic Council sub-committees.  Elected Student Representation is present at no less than one meeting per year	Three meetings per academic year: 1. Prior to autumn semester; 2. Prior to spring semester; 3. After conclusion of college's end of academic year exam board	To governing body as appropriate.  Minutes of meetings distributed to all staff via college document store (online).  To elected student representative members of Academic Council as appropriate	Quality assurance, planning, coordination, development and oversight of all academic matters at ICD.  An autonomous body that acts, as much as possible, independently of (while still taking prudent regard for) commercial considerations	Chair of Academic Council and Director of Academic Affairs (if different).  Academic council sub-committees as appropriate.  Governing Body, as appropriate, e.g. assessing business cases for existing/new programmes, and resourcing requirements

QA Infrastructure (What)	QA Instrument (How)	Who Initiates (responsible for action)	Who Implements	Who Contributes / Participates	When	Reports of Outcome(s) Delivered to (Who)	Key Outcome Objective(s)	Key Outcome Owner(s) (Who Acts on Outcomes)
Admissions services	Administration office	Prospective or transferring or progressing students	Admin staff	Registrar	During opening hours	Registrar & Academic Council	Enable and fully inform all prospective (and progressing) students about programmes, access requirements, completion requirements and progression routes	Registrar
Elected Student Representative Members of Academic Council	Student Representative Committee (SRC) elects at least one member per programme to sit at Academic Council meetings	Head of Academic Development	SRC	SRC members elect one SRC member per programme to also sit at the Academic Council	At least once per every two academic years but ad-hoc elections will occur when/if positions are vacated	SRC, Head of Academic Development & Academic Council	Student representatives sit on Academic Council to represent student needs/welfare and voice/feedback to be included in ongoing programme, module, and broader QA reviews	Student representative members of Academic Council, Academic Council, Director of Academic Affairs

QA Infrastructure (What)	QA Instrument (How)	Who Initiates (responsible for action)	Who Implements	Who Contributes / Participates	When	Reports of Outcome(s) Delivered to (Who)	Key Outcome Objective(s)	Key Outcome Owner(s) (Who Acts on Outcomes)
Elected Student Representatives	Students elect one representative (or more) at each stage on every programme	Head of Academic Development	Programme Director(s)	Students	First weeks of every programme stage	<p>Student representatives report to Student Representative Committee (SRC).</p> <p>Monitoring &amp; ensuring student representatives are in place is carried out by, and reported by Programme Director(s) to Academic Council</p>	<p>Student representatives gather student feedback and represent student welfare and provide representation to students, where requested, as part of appeals, complaints, academic misconduct, general misconduct, or plagiarism processes</p>	SRC, Programme Director(s)

QA Infrastructure (What)	QA Instrument (How)	Who Initiates (responsible for action)	Who Implements	Who Contributes / Participates	When	Reports of Outcome(s) Delivered to (Who)	Key Outcome Objective(s)	Key Outcome Owner(s) (Who Acts on Outcomes)
Examination and Assessment Regulations	Mandatory induction module, student Moodle document store, and student handbook informs students about examination and assessment regulations	Head of Academic Development & Head of Quality Assurance	<p>Mandatory induction module lecturer(s).</p> <p>Students follow regulations.</p> <p>Staff and students monitor to ensure regulations are followed.</p> <p>Registrar coordinates mechanisms for investigating examination and assessment regulation breaches</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Students</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Head of Academic Development</p>	Ongoing	Registrar, Director of Academic Affairs & Academic Council	<p>Ensure staff and students maintain academic integrity.</p> <p>Ensure staff and students protect all students' right to perform demonstration of learning outcomes in an environment of professionalism and equality</p>	Registrar, Academic Council, Director of Academic Affairs, Head of Academic Development

QA Infrastructure (What)	QA Instrument (How)	Who Initiates (responsible for action)	Who Implements	Who Contributes / Participates	When	Reports of Outcome(s) Delivered to (Who)	Key Outcome Objective(s)	Key Outcome Owner(s) (Who Acts on Outcomes)
Examination Board	Meeting of internal assessors, external examiners, programme directors, and registrar	Registrar convenes meetings	Registrar prepares broadsheets, invites internal and external (External Examiner) attendees	Board of Examiners: External Examiners, Registrar, Programme Directors, Lecturers (examiners / assessors)	Meets at all award and progression stages of programmes	Director of Academic Affairs & Academic Council	<p>To consider and make deliberative decisions regarding all results of learners as recommended by assessors (examiners).</p> <p>Ensure internal and external oversight of assessment grades/results, grading procedures, progression, completion rates, failure rates, award classifications, &amp; decisions around borderline and exceptional cases</p>	Registrar, Academic Council, Director of Academic Affairs, Programme Directors, Lecturers

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External Independent Academic Council Member	External Independent Academic Council Member Attends Academic Council Meetings	Chair of Academic Council	Academic Council	Governing Body and Management Team	External Academic Council Member is invited to at least one Academic Council Meeting Per Year	Student Representative Committee  Academic Council  Governing Body	Ensure the Academic Council has sufficient independence to discharge its obligations and responsibilities effectively.  Provide independent oversight and advice to the Academic Council.  Promote a culture of integrity, internal self-monitoring and quality improvement	Academic Council and Director of Academic Affairs
External Verification of Assessment Grades	Sample pack and Form 102	First marker distributes sample pack and Form 102 to Registrar	Registrar distributes sample pack and Form 102 to External Examiner	External Examiner provides assessment of grades and sample	After internal verification (second marking) of assessment grades is completed	Registrar and Exam Board Meetings receive report (and ideally attendance at Exam Board) from/by External Examiner	External verification of consistency, fairness, and level of all assessment grades	Exam Board Meeting attendees, Programme Director(s), Module Lecturer(s), Registrar

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External Verification of Examination Papers	External Examiner Assessment of all final examination papers	Registrar informs all lecturers of due dates for all exam papers	Module Lecturer(s) provide internally verified exam papers to Registrar. Registrar distributes all final exam papers to External Examiner(s)	External Examiner(s) assess(es) exam papers	Middle of every semester	External Examiner provides feedback (recommendations and requirements) regarding each exam paper to Registrar	External verification of quality of assessment instruments	Registrar provides External Examiner exam paper feedback to Module Lecturer who acts on feedback
Governing Body	Governing Body meetings	Chair of Governing Body	Chair of Governing Body	Managing Director Registrar Head of Quality Assurance Head of Academic Development Appointed Chair/Secretary	At least once per calendar year	To Academic Council as appropriate regarding decisions related to academic affairs  Annual report to all staff via Document Store (Moodle)  To Student Representative Committee	Student recruitment and marketing planning.  Resourcing allocations for all programmes and related academic and quality assurance infrastructure  Risk monitoring (Risk Register) and mitigation	Managing Director of ICD  Secretary/chair of Governing Body  Registrar

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Grade Appeals	Grade Appeals Procedure	Student appealing grade follows grade appeals procedure specified in QA document. At stage 1 and stage 2, the student must contact the lecturer (examiner). At stage 3, the student must contact the Registrar and the Lecturer (examiner). At stage 4, the student must contact the Registrar	<p><b>Stage 1:</b> Feedback is provided to the student by Examiner (e.g. lecturer).</p> <p><b>Stage 2:</b> Recheck is carried out by Examiner (e.g. lecturer).</p> <p><b>Stage 3:</b> Review is carried out by Examiner (e.g. lecturer) and coordinated by Registrar</p> <p><b>Stage 4:</b> Formal appeal is initiated by student appealing but coordinated by Registrar</p>	<p>Examiner and student in stages 1-2.</p> <p>Examiner rechecks (and Registrar coordinates process) in stage 3.</p> <p>At stage 4: Programme Director, Module Lecturer, &amp; one additional member of academic staff. A formal appeal meeting will take place with the student in attendance and they have the right to request the attendance of a student representative. The External Examiner may also be consulted as part of this process</p>	<p><b>Stage 1:</b> student must seek feedback within two weeks of receiving grade</p> <p><b>Stage 2:</b> student must seek recheck within one week of stage 1 completion</p> <p><b>Stage 3:</b> student must seek review within one week of stage 2 completion</p> <p><b>Stage 4:</b> student must contact Registrar to formally appeal within one week of stage 3 completion</p>	<p>Student receives report of outcome from lecturer/examiner at stages 1-3.</p> <p>Report of the outcome of stage 4 is reported to the student appealing, and Academic Council (process coordinated by the Registrar and report of outcome delivered by the formal appeal panel).</p> <p>External Examiner to be notified and/or consulted with if any change in classification is decided at award level as a result of the appeal</p>	<p>Ensuring fairness, consistency, integrity and transparency of the grading system and ensuring students receive formative and summative feedback</p>	<p>Lecturer (Examiner)</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Academic Council</p>

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Internal Verification (Second Marking) of Assessment Grades	Form 102	Module lecturer distributes sample to second marker	Second marker provides feedback on grades	First and second marker agree all grades	After grading is completed by the first marker for an assessment element and/or module	Registrar is sent final grades, sample pack, and Form 102 by the Module Lecturer (first marker)	Internal verification of consistency, fairness, and level of all assessment grades	Programme Director, Registrar
Internal Verification of Assessment Briefs	Form 101	Module Lecturer(s)	Second Marker / Internal Verifier	Second Marker / Internal Verifier and Module Lecturer	Before assessment briefs are distributed to students	Programme Director, Registrar, External Examiner	Internal monitoring and verification of all new and continuing assessment instruments	Module Lecturer(s), Academic Council, Programme Director(s)
Lecturer Feedback Survey	Qualitative Survey of lecturer feedback and reflection on every module's delivery, assessments, and resourcing	Programme Director	Programme Director sends survey to all module lecturers on that programme	Module lecturers	At the end of every module	Head of Academic Development, Programme Development sub-committee and Academic Council	Inclusion of lecturer voice and feedback in all programme & module monitoring, review, and improvements	Programme Director and Head of Academic Development

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Mandatory Student Induction Module	Mandatory student induction module for every stage 1, semester 1 learner on every programme	Head of Academic Development	Module lecturer(s)	<p>Module lecturer(s) and students (at stage 1, semester 1).</p> <p>Stage 2 (or later) students are given an open invitation to attend.</p> <p>ICD have been consulting with QQI seeking approval for this module to be mandatory (granted summer 2019), and will continue to consult with QQI about the specific learning outcomes and delivery of the module (currently in planning stage, Aug 2019)</p>	Semester 1 of Stage 1 of every programme, every academic year from September 2019 onwards	Head of Academic Development, Programme Director(s), Registrar, Director of Academic Affairs, and QQI as appropriate	<p>Inform students about all aspects of academic and student life at ICD including:</p> <p>a. academic study, research, &amp; writing skills</p> <p>b. IT skills (e.g. Moodle &amp; MS Office)</p> <p>c. use of Library Resource centre and other ICD physical and online learning environment facilities</p> <p>d. English language education &amp; supports</p> <p>e. citing &amp; referencing, assessment regulations, academic integrity, misconduct &amp; plagiarism prevention</p>	Head of Academic Development and students themselves

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Plagiarism Detection & Investigation	Urkund and Plagiarism Detection Handling Process	<p>Module lecturers create Urkund assignment submission boxes in Moodle (as appropriate), analyse Urkund reports and follow Plagiarism Detection Handling process when detections occur. This requires the lecturer to alert the Registrar (<b>stage 1</b>)</p> <p>Use of Urkund is not a requirement for a plagiarism detection process to result (e.g. the lecturer can manually plagiarism check)</p>	Registrar implements stages of plagiarism detection handling process in sequence	<p><b>Stage 2:</b> If a viva voce is called with plagiarism concerns on the agenda, there must be two (or more) staff in attendance.</p> <p><b>Stage 3:</b> plagiarism review meeting constitutes two (or more) staff. Staff present at stage 2 cannot be present at stage 3.</p> <p>The student is invited at both stage 2 and 3 but is not required to attend for a possible sanction (due to plagiarism) to result.</p> <p>Student representation is available on request for stage 2 &amp; 3 above</p>	<p>Urkund can be used by all lecturers to receive assignments where appropriate.</p> <p>Plagiarism detection handling process is used when plagiarism is detected (either through Urkund or otherwise)</p>	Student, Registrar, Lecturer, Head of Academic Development, Director of Academic Affairs, Academic Council	Prevent and detect plagiarism in order to promote and maintain academic integrity	Head of Academic Development, Lecturer, and Registrar

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Plagiarism Detection software upgrade	Urkund	Head of Academic Development	Software management, ongoing staff training & support provided by Head of Academic Development.  Plagiarism detection carried out by lecturers	Head of Academic Development.  Module Lecturers	Ongoing plagiarism detection following migration to Urkund system (summer 2019)	Head of Academic Development, Director of Academic Affairs, Academic Council	Prevent and detect plagiarism in order to promote and maintain academic integrity	Head of Academic Development

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Plagiarism Prevention Awareness Initiative	<p>Prevention through mandatory induction module.</p> <p>Prevention through cyclical plagiarism prevention and referencing classes.</p> <p>Prevention through distribution of plagiarism awareness building resources via ICD Moodle, accessible to all students enrolled.</p>	Head of Academic Development	Head of Academic Development	<p>Mandatory induction module lecturer(s).</p> <p>All module lecturers.</p> <p>Head of Academic Development.</p> <p>Consultations with QQI</p>	Mandatory induction module during semester one, stage one, of every programme.	Head of Academic Development, Academic Council, and QQI (as appropriate)	Promote academic integrity and prevent plagiarism	Director of Academic Affairs, Head of Quality Assurance, and Head of Academic Development

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Programme Boards	Programme Board Meetings	Programme Director	Programme Director	Programme Director and lecturers involved with programme	Twice per year (once per semester, to meet at beginning of the semester)	Academic Council (and Programme Development Subcommittee)	Continuous coordination and implementation of programmes.  Continuous monitoring and review of programmes to ensure quality deliver and to recommend changes to improve programmes	Programme Director and programme board members

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Programme Development Subcommittee	Programme Development Subcommittee meetings	Head of Academic Development	Head of Academic Development	Head of Academic Development  Programme Director(s)  Academic staff members (lecturers)	Ad hoc	Academic Council and Governing Body	<p>Continuous monitoring of implementation of programmes.</p> <p>Continuous monitoring and review of programmes to ensure quality deliver and to recommend changes to improve programmes.</p> <p>Considering proposals (received and made) for modifications to programmes.</p> <p>Considering and creating proposals for new programmes.</p> <p>Making evidence-based recommendations regarding programme development</p>	Head of Academic Development

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RPL / APEL Appeals	RPL / APEL Appeals Process	(Prospective) student intending to appeal contacts Registrar	Registrar and admin staff convene appeal board meeting and invite attendees	Ad-hoc RPL/APEL Appeal Board: Two (or more) academic staff.  Person making appeal.  Student rep, on request	Ad-hoc	Registrar and admin staff receive RPL/APEL Appeal Board decision.  Report to Academic Council (and External Examiner where required)  Student making appeal	Ensure all (prospective) students receive fair, consistent, appropriate, and transparent outcomes from RPL/APEL applications	Registrar and Academic Council
RPL / APEL Applications	RPL / APEL Applications Process (described in ICD QA policy)	(Prospective) student intending to apply for RPL / RPEL recognition / approval contacts Registrar or admin office	Registrar and admin staff guide student applying through application process	Applicant (student or respective student), and admin staff or Registrar	Ad-hoc	Registrar and/or admin staff report RPL/APEL application outcome to the applicant and Academic Council (and External Examiner where required)	Ensure all (prospective) students receive fair, consistent, appropriate, and transparent outcomes from RPL/APEL applications	Registrar and Academic Council

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Staff Development	Staff Development and Training Initiatives	Head of Academic Development	Head of Academic Development plans annual schedule of staff development initiatives in conjunction with Academic Council and Governing Body as required. Recent examples include Pearson Higher Education Training (July 2019), and currently (Aug 2019) under-construction Urkund and plagiarism detection system and procedures. During 2019-2020, a pilot annual ICD seminar about teaching and learning quality is being scheduled for internal and external staff to contribute at and learn from	All staff	Ongoing	Head of Quality Assurance, Director of Academic Affairs, Registrar, Academic Council and Governing Body as appropriate	Promoting continuous professional development of all staff (academic and non-academic) in order to maintain the highest possible quality faculty and staff, which ultimately delivers on the overall quality assurance objective of continuous improvement of teaching and learning at ICD	Head of Academic Development and Director of Academic Affairs

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Student Complaints (does not include appeal of grades)	Student Complaints handling procedure (covers student complaints about academic process, or academic opportunities, or non-academic complaints)	Student with complaints or concerns (regarding student protection or unfair or unequal treatment) contacts any member of ICD staff (of their choosing). If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, they should contact the Registrar	Registrar will try to find a solution to solve the issue with the student ( <b>Stage 1</b> ).  If not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1, the student may request <b>stage 2</b> : a complaints committee	<b>Stage 1:</b> Registrar and student  <b>Stage 2:</b> Chair of Academic Council (or nominee) and two other members of staff will meet the student to work towards a solution  At both stages 1 & 2, the student may request student representation	Ad-hoc	Registrar and Academic Council	Student protection, and fair and equal treatment of all students	Registrar, Academic Council, & Chair of Academic Council

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<p>Student Misconduct Sanctions</p> <p>*This is NOT the process for plagiarism investigations. Plagiarism detections must follow the Plagiarism Detection &amp; Investigation procedure, known as the Plagiarism Detection Handling Process</p>	Disciplinary Committee	<p>Staff or students report instances of misconduct to the Registrar. This includes either:</p> <p>a. academic misconduct (including breaches of academic regulations) (but not plagiarism)</p> <p>or b. non-academic general misconduct (e.g. a student endangering, bullying, or harassing another student or member of staff)</p>	<p><b>Stage 1:</b> Registrar invites two (or more) staff to form disciplinary committee. Student is invited to discuss issues relating to potential misconduct.</p> <p>If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 1, the Registrar activates <b>stage 2</b>, a disciplinary review involving two (or more) staff. None of the staff from stage 1 may be present. Student is invited to discuss the issue.</p> <p>Student has right to representation on request at stage 1 &amp; 2</p>	Registrar, two (or more) staff, the student, and student representation (on request)	<p>Disciplinary committees are formed ad-hoc when misconduct issues arise.</p> <p>For stage 2 to occur, the student must request a review within one (1) week of receiving the outcome from stage 1</p>	Registrar and student and Academic Council	Promoting and maintaining respect and good conduct at ICD, to protect all staff & students from other students' possible misconduct. To ensure academic and assessment regulations are followed so that all students have equal opportunity to learn and demonstrate learning. To maintain academic integrity.	Registrar & Academic Council

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Student Representative Committee (SRC)	SRC meetings	Head of Academic Development	Student representatives	Student representatives	Once per semester	Student representative Academic Council membership	Ensure student representatives are actively procuring student feedback and representing student needs. Gather student feedback to be communicated to Academic Council	Director of Academic Affairs, SRC members of Academic Council, Head of Academic Development, Programme Directors
Student Services	Administration office	Student or prospective student contacts administration office	Admin staff	Admin staff acting on behalf of the student with Registrar as chief point of contact and consultation	During opening hours	Registrar & Academic Council	Maintain quality through ensuring students have full access to all required and requested information, facilities, and supports (including specific learning needs and extenuating or personal circumstances)	Admin staff

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Student Survey	Quantitative Survey of Student Feedback	Registrar	Admin staff	Students (survey for every module)	Final weeks of every semester	Registrar, Programme Director(s), Relevant Lecturer(s), Head of Quality Assurance, Academic Council	Include student voice in all module & programme reviewing, planning, & improvements	Programme Director(s), Lecturer(s), Registrar, Head of Quality Assurance
Viva Voce  *A viva voce may be called as a general viva voce to discuss an assessment with a student (this requires just one member of staff)  *If a viva voce is called with plagiarism on the agenda, it must be attended by two (or more) academic staff. See plagiarism detection & investigation.	Viva Voce Meeting(s)	Examiner	Examiner invites student to attend	Examiner (other staff may be invited).  Student.	Ad-hoc (based on discretion of examiner/ assessor)  Before grading process completes	Student  Examiner may contact other staff as required for consultation or assistance	Ensure integrity, accuracy, transparency, and fairness (equality) within assessment and grading through facilitating a two-way dialogue between student and examiner(s) about the assessment submission	Examiner

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