

4.2 Staff Recruitment & Performance to Enhance Teaching at ICD

Recruiting staff:

Staff recruitment for academic (e.g. lecturer) and administrative roles is primarily the responsibility of the Governing Body. The Human Resource management function at ICD is mainly carried out by the Managing Director who consults with the Registrar, Director of Academic Affairs, and Academic Council, as appropriate. These consultations focus on staffing needs (and other resourcing needs) for all programmes, quality assurance, and other academic, staff and student support functions at the college. An example of this in action is the current (August 2019) initiative proposed by members of the Academic Council (and approved by the Management Team) to recruit an external independent member of the Academic Council. Role definition is being created by the Academic Council, specifically the Head of Quality Assurance, Head of Academic Development, and Director of Academic Affairs. The recruitment initiative and process are being planned by the Management Team in consultation with the Academic Council.

During all recruitment processes for academic teaching positions, ICD uses the specific requirements (e.g. qualifications staff must have) for modules, which are detailed in the module descriptors and programme manuals (e.g. potential candidates' qualification levels (according to the NFQ), disciplinary expertise (e.g. subject areas), and prior experience requirements). These requirements are used to assess all recruitment processes for teaching staff.

Enhancing Teaching Quality and Continuous Professional Development:

ICD is committed to continually improving teaching and learning across its programmes. To this end, the college engages in regular reviews of individual and team performance in a manner which is consistent with the collegial and professional values of our academic staff. On the basis that ICD's staff constitute a professional learning community, teaching and learning development are primarily driven by staff members' critical reflections, day-to-day classroom experiences, and perceptions of impact, with a particular focus placed on linking instructional and assessment approaches to student learning. Performance and development goals are agreed collectively amongst staff in conjunction with Programme Directors at the Academic Council. Further to this, feedback about the quality of

programme content and delivery are periodically gathered from students, derived both from regular surveys and from class representatives at Academic Council.

As a small, independent provider, ICD does not have a dedicated human resources department or manager for overseeing staff performance evaluation, training, and professional development. Rather, the college Registrar and Director work in partnership with the Director of Academic Affairs, the Head of Quality Assurance, the Head of Academic Development, Programme Directors and academic staff to develop strategies for supporting continued professional development - in the context of research, scholarship, pedagogy, and professional accreditation – and performance management, in a manner which safeguards academic autonomy and professional self-determination. The Managing Director promotes and facilitates all academic staff developing and maintaining relationships with communities of practice in their respective fields. This includes reviewing, and approving as appropriate, any financial or non-financial assistance, which is provided to academic staff to ensure they are encouraged to attend conferences, engage in research seminars, and membership of academic and professional associations and bodies. All staff are encouraged to liaise with the Managing Director and submit requests for assistance.

Under ICD's revised QA framework, proposals for supporting staff professional development and training will be discussed at the college's Academic Council, the standing committee charged with the responsibility to ensure continuous improvement in staff development, teaching, and learning.

The new (summer 2019) role of Head of Academic Development includes responsibility for staff development and training initiatives, which are devised and delivered, by the Head of Academic Development, under the supervision of the Registrar and Director of Academic Affairs. Progress is reported to the Academic Council and, where required, all initiatives are approved and resourced by the Governing Body. Recent Examples of training initiatives include the July 2019 Pearson Higher Education teaching and learning training delivered at an intensive three-day workshop at ICD by a Pearson staff trainer. The Head of Quality Assurance continues to provide staff training on integrating Moodle and other technologies into teaching and learning, an initiative that is continuous and ongoing for two years. Plagiarism prevention and detection initiatives are continuous at ICD, but a specific plagiarism prevention initiative has been under development by the Head of Academic Development, in conjunction with the Head of Quality Assurance, from February

to August 2019. This has incorporated multiple meetings with all academic and non-academic staff invited to attend during June 2019, at which the wider higher educational issues relating to plagiarism were discussed. All staff in attendance provided feedback on proposed new plagiarism detection and prevention plans which included the agreed (by consensus) decision to create a new plagiarism policy at ICD, an upgrade of plagiarism detection software to Urkund, a proposed new mandatory module for all students to attend (which covers plagiarism awareness and prevention), and the decision to hold staff training on plagiarism prevention, detection, and handling in Autumn 2019 onwards. On foot of this staff-agreed initiative, ICD has since sought and received approval from QQI to deliver a mandatory induction module on all programmes from semester one of the 2019-2020 academic year (pending further discussions with QQI, forthcoming). Also, ICD has already procured Urkund's plagiarism detection system, which the Head of Academic Development is currently integrating into Moodle under the supervision of Urkund and the Head of Quality Assurance. Urkund are sending a representative for a site visit at ICD (provisionally set for September 2019) to deliver staff training on the system with the option for further remote training and support via email and video calling. The Head of Academic Development is currently consulting with staff on how arrangements will be made for all staff to access initial training in the new Urkund system. Ongoing support on how to use the system will be provided by the Head of Academic Development in conjunction with Urkund.

Also, the Head of Academic Development (under the supervision of the Head of Quality Assurance) is consulting with the Director of Academic Affairs and the Registrar as part of a planned, pilot annual staff training and development seminar initiative. This initiative's objective is to provide (at least) an annual platform at which staff can present research findings on any research interests they are pursuing and reflections on pedagogy, teaching and learning quality. The outcome of this initiative should be increased support for and recognition of high-quality teaching and learning strategies. A teaching and learning seminar is currently being planned for 2020. Planned themes relate to plagiarism prevention and the encouragement of diverse teaching practices and assessment methodologies using both technological and traditional resources. The Head of Academic Development is engaged with the Governing Body on this matter regarding support for the initiative.

Staff Access to QA Policy:

The quality assurance policy and all other key quality assurance documents and internal reports are available to staff via the internal staff-accessible Moodle document store developed by the Head of Quality Assurance in 2018 and continuously updated by the Head of Quality Assurance and Head of Academic Development.

Ensuring Availability of Staff

As a small college, ICD takes a specific, ongoing, and proactive approach to ensuring adequate staffing availability, to ensure timely and high-quality delivery of all programmes. The college registrar confirms availability with all contract teaching staff prior to the commencement of each academic year.

Contingency Measures to Cater for Situations where a Tutor/Lecturer is not Available:

ICD is fortunate to have built long-term relationships with teaching staff, some of whom have been working at the institution since the founding of the institution almost 20 years ago. Staff turnover rates are particularly low at ICD, when compared with some other HEIs in Ireland. However, ICD has two contingency measures in place to cater for situation where a lecturer or tutor may be unavailable for any reason:

- Strategically, the Managing Director monitors staffing needs and staffing availability to ensure that there is a minimum of at least two academic staff who are competent to deliver each specific module. This is also essential for the purposes of second marking procedures.
- Even though it is very rare for a staff member to be unavailable, classes are typically rescheduled in the event of leave or absence. ICD has a policy of not cancelling classes. Postponed classes can also occur for various other reasons such as adverse weather conditions and weather alerts. As a small agile institution, we are efficient in our response to any changes of availability or circumstances and will always consult with any student cohorts affected to ensure that they are included in any decision making around moving class slots

Staff attendance at meetings:

ICD regularly has staff meetings (e.g. Academic Council, Programme Boards, Exam Boards), which are integral to ongoing review, improvement, and delivery of all programmes. Part-time staff are paid for all meetings attended.

