



# ICD TEACHING, LEARNING, & ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

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ICD Business School

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## Introduction

ICD's Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy has been formalised into this document in order to identify and specify our approach to developing a strong culture of high-quality education. This document provides a framework to be used by all staff and learners as partners in our learning community. Key related companion documents are:

- ICD Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025
- ICD Quality Assurance Policy
- ICD Student Handbook

The following page depicts the ICD Teaching, Learning, & Assessment Strategy, how it is informed by the ICD Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and its specific Key Implementation Themes.

## ICD's Strategic Plan (2020 – 2025)

**Mission Statement:** To provide our learners with an educational experience that will equip them with the knowledge, understanding, skills, and competencies essential for employability, life-long learning, and entrepreneurship, in contemporary life.

### Core Values (CVs)

|   |  |   |   |  |   |  |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>CV1:</b><br>Value all learners equally | <b>CV2:</b><br>Support all learners in achieving their personal learning goals | <b>CV3:</b><br>Strive to provide a learning experience of the highest quality | <b>CV4:</b><br>Provide enriching and authentic learning opportunities that are accessible for all students. | <b>CV5:</b><br>Ensure that all learners are assessed fairly and consistently | <b>CV6:</b><br>Endeavour to offer programmes of study that are innovative, up-to-date, and responsive to changing demands | <b>CV7:</b><br>Collaborate enthusiastically with learners and key internal and external stakeholders | <b>CV8:</b><br>Promote an institution-wide culture of quality, integrity, and continuous improvement | <b>CV9:</b><br>Support the continuing professional development of our staff | <b>CV10:</b><br>Maintain a resource base which is sufficient to ensure sustainability and a governance structure which is inclusive, learner-centred, and quality-enhancing |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|

### ICD's Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TLA) Strategy

#### Key Implementation Themes (KITs)

|  |  |   |   |   |  |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|
| <b>KIT1:</b><br>Providing a Learner-Centred Teaching, Learning & Assessment Environment that focuses on Development of Every Student's Knowledge, Skills, & Competencies | <b>KIT2:</b><br>Providing an Employment & Life Skills Oriented Education | <b>KIT3:</b><br>Providing Transparent, Consistent, Valid, Fair, Effective & Quality Assured Assessments | <b>KIT4:</b><br>Providing an Inclusive, Diverse, and Supportive Teaching, Learning & Assessment Environment | <b>KIT5:</b><br>Providing Support for Research, Development, & Transformative Innovation to Enhance Teaching & Learning | <b>KIT6:</b><br>Fostering Academic Integrity |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|

# 1. KIT1 Providing a Learner-Centred Teaching, Learning & Assessment Environment that focuses on Development of Every Student's Knowledge, Skills, & Competencies

## Small Class Sizes

Because of its deliberate policy of small learner group sizes - typically no more than 40 in a traditional lecture setting, or 20 in a tutorial or demonstration – ICD lecturers are free to provide learners with the individual attention they require to achieve their academic goals.

## Increasing Emphasis on Independent Learning

This approach follows the recommendations of the HEA (2016 p VII) report on enhancing student engagement: “Students are ultimately responsible for their own learning and level of engagement.”

This is being facilitated at ICD through evolving our approach to teaching, learning, and assessment as follows:

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| Less focus on direct instruction   |
| Increasingly problem-based or inquiry (research (primary and/or secondary)) oriented assignments |
| Less focus on ‘rote learning’ style assignments  |
| Flipped classroom  |
| Online discussion groups on Moodle   |
| Technology enhanced teaching, learning and assessment (via Moodle)                               |
| The new non-credit bearing, mandatory induction module   |

## Multi-modal assessment

We are increasingly augmenting our modes of assessment across programmes to incorporate a variety of assessment techniques such as:

|                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| oral presentations                | online quizzes                    |
| Dissertations                     | case studies                      |
| secondary research assignments    | primary research assignments      |
| graded group discussions in class | graded group discussions (Moodle) |
| individual assignments            | group/team project assignments    |
| problem solving assignments       | reflective assignments            |
| work placement assignments        | essays                            |
| Exams                             |                                   |

## 2. KIT2 Providing an Employment & Life Skills Oriented Education

### Providing Learners with Internationally Recognised Qualifications to Enable Career Progression, Academic Mobility & Lifelong Learning

According to the NQAI (2019):

Recognition of qualifications can be categorised as follows:

- Recognition of qualifications for academic purposes i.e. for access to further learning and for access to unregulated professions
- Recognition of qualifications for the purpose of access to regulated professions

At ICD we provide both, qualifications that are recognised:

- **For academic purposes** (QQI Accreditation and NFQ recognition)
- **For the purpose of access to regulated professions** (ACCA exemptions; accreditation/exemptions for the CIPD, Marketing Institute of Ireland, and Chartered Accountants Ireland)

Strategically, ICD will continuously ensure accreditation with regulatory/awarding bodies (e.g. with QQI) and recognition/exemptions with/from professional bodies (e.g. ACCA) across all programmes.

Our strategy to ensure an employment and life skills-oriented education is also encapsulated in:

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| Work-based learning modules  |
| Career services (CV & interview workshops)   |
| Continuously identifying external career/academic progression routes                   |
| Continuously enhancing internal progression routes                                     |
| Incorporating a focus on developing both hard <i>and</i> soft skills across programmes |

### 3. KIT3 Providing Transparent, Consistent, Valid, Fair, Effective & Quality Assured Assessments

#### Principles of Assessment at ICD

All examiners and all staff involved in designing and moderating assessments have a duty to follow these principles of assessment, which are designed with reference to QQI (2013) *Assessment and Standards* policy:

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|---|
| 1. <b>Assessment instruments must be fair.</b> They must be inclusive recognising that “different people can have different learning needs, styles and approaches” (QQI 2013 section 2.1.1). Assessments must be appropriately challenging assessment instruments to facilitate students to demonstrate learning outcomes |
| 2. <b>Assessment instruments must be consistent</b>   |
| 3. <b>Assessors must “have the necessary competence” and expertise to set and grade assessments</b> (QQI 2013 section 2.1.1)  |
| 4. <b>Assessors must declare any “conflict of interest (actual or potential, real or apparent) if he or she were to act as an assessor in a particular situation [and] should neither act nor be required to act as an assessor in that situation”</b> (QQI 2013 section 2.1.1)   |
| 5. <b>Assessment instrument design, setting and grading must be objective and transparent</b> (includes internal verification of assessment instruments, anonymous marking of examinations, second marking, & external examiner review)   |
| 6. <b>Assessment of learning must be transparent.</b> Learners must be informed about how and why they are assessed (QQI 2013) with specific reference to MIMLOs being assessed by an assessment instrument.  |
| 7. <b>Assessments must be devised to incorporate formative and summative feedback mechanisms.</b>   |
| 8. <b>Learners must be made aware of (and follow) assessment and examination regulations.</b>   |
| 9. <b>Assessment strategies across modules on a programme must be coordinated by Programme Directors and assessors at Programme Board meetings</b> (includes assessment sequencing to ensure learner work-load management)  |
| 10. <b>Learners should be involved in the periodic review of assessment procedures</b> (QQI 2013).  |

#### Grading/assessing group (or team) based assessment tasks

As per QQI (2013 section 2.2.5) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines, all “individuals undertaking team-based assessment tasks are assessed [i.e. graded] as individuals” at ICD.

## 4. KIT4 Providing an Inclusive, Diverse, and Supportive Teaching, Learning & Assessment Environment

### ICD Values Diversity

ICD is committed to creating a culture in which no learner or staff member is discriminated against on the basis of age, race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief, national or ethnic origin, or disability. ICD has also adopted a policy of transparent and non-discriminatory pricing, with academic fees set at the same level for all students irrespective of nationality or EU citizenship.

We are a proud member of ICOS (the Irish Council for International Students) and regularly hold consultations with ICOS in order to promote diversity and inclusion for International Students at ICD and in Irish Education generally.



### ICD's Key Commitments to Students:

The college's staff members are committed to providing students with an educational service that is:

- \* Open, honest and professional
- \* Supportive and welcoming
- \* Challenging and informative
- \* Based on internationally recognised qualifications
- \* A high-quality teaching and learning experience
- \* A relevant preparation programme for future careers
- \* A course designed to facilitate academic progression
- \* Support with special learning needs and personal difficulties (e.g. extenuating circumstance)

### Beyond Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Recognising the important role that non-teaching, learning, and assessment activities can play in a learner's experience in higher education from a physical and mental health perspective, ICD continuously seeks to enhance our student supports outside of the classroom:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Sports teams/facilities | Clubs and societies                     |
| Social events           | Career advice & work placement services |
| Language supports       | Counselling Services                    |



## 5. KIT5 Providing Support for Research, Development, & Transformative Innovation to Enhance Teaching & Learning

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.

The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2016) describe acknowledgement within the higher educational sector that there is a spectrum of activities under the overall umbrella of professional development Table 5 adapts the guidelines of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2016), specifically the 'Typology of accredited and non-accredited professional development activities', by specifying initiatives at ICD Business School regarding the continuous performance management and professional development of academic staff.

**Table 5: Typology of Accredited & Non-accredited Professional Development Activities at ICD**

**Source:** Adapted from National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2016 p. 2)

| 1. Collaborative Non-accredited (non-formal)   | 2. Unstructured Non-accredited (non-formal)   | 3. Structured Non-accredited (informal)   | 4. Accredited (formal)  |
|--|---|---|---|
| Learning from these activities comes from their collaborative nature – in this case professional development is not a commodity to be consumed, it is developed through the collaborative process  | These activities are independently led by the individual. Engagement is driven by the individual's needs/interests. Individuals source the materials themselves   | These are externally organised activities (by an institution, network, disciplinary membership body). They are typically facilitated and have identified learning objectives  | Accredited programmes of study (ECT credits)  |
| <b>Examples (provided by National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 2016 p.2)</b>   |   |   |   |
| Conversations with colleagues<br><br>Sharing research at a conference<br><br>Peer review of teaching   | Reading articles<br><br>Following social media<br><br>Watching video tutorials<br><br>Keeping a reflective teaching journal/portfolio<br><br>Preparing an article for publication   | Workshops<br><br>Seminars<br><br>MOOCs<br><br>Summer Schools  | Professional Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters, PhD in:<br>- Teaching & Learning<br>- eLearning<br>- Leadership in Education<br>- Education Policy<br>- Etc. |
| <b>ICD initiatives regarding each type of professional development activity</b>  |   |   |   |
| Collaborative processes at ICD that enable staff professional development:<br><br>1. Programme Board Meetings<br><br>2. Internal Verification of assessment instruments<br><br>3. Second marking<br><br>4. External verification of assessment instruments<br><br>5. External examiner review of grades<br><br>6. Research conference funding and supports<br><br>7. ICD training workshops<br><br>8. Annual staff development meeting<br><br>9. Learner feedback surveys<br><br>10. Staff induction | Initiatives at ICD to encourage and facilitate 'unstructured' professional development activities:<br><br>1. Staff access to online journal repositories (e.g. JStor)<br><br>2. Annual Award for Excellence in Research & Scholarship<br><br>3. Annual Award for Excellence in Teaching<br><br>4. Moodle Document Store for Staff | Initiatives at ICD that encourage and facilitate 'structured' professional development activities:<br><br>1. ICD Teaching, Learning & Assessment Annual Seminar<br><br>2. External body seminars and training/workshops facilitated/arranged by ICD<br><br>3. ICD supports for staff to engage with external bodies | Initiatives at ICD that encourage and facilitate Accredited professional development activities:<br><br>1. ICD supports for staff to continue accredited study    |

## 6. KIT6 Fostering Academic Integrity

Diverse cultural and educational backgrounds among learners are beneficial in a variety of ways. However, this diversity can also pose challenges relating to learners' training with regard to academic integrity and plagiarism. Following a strategy to provide support to our diverse learner population in this regard has led to the creation of the following initiatives.

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| <b>Mandatory induction module:</b>   |
| All stage 1, semester 1 learners must attend a mandatory induction module and pass two assignments that focus on independent learning & critical thinking skills, and why and how to avoid plagiarism through citation and referencing |
| <b>Refresher study skills sessions:</b>  |
| All learners at all programme stages can attend regular training sessions at ICD that focus on how to carry out research and how to avoid plagiarism through citation and referencing  |
| <b>Urkund plagiarism detection software:</b>   |
| used by students to prevent plagiarism and used by lecturers to detect plagiarism  |
| <b>ICD Moodle Document Store for Students:</b>   |
| Contains a variety of ICD material and links to external materials about study skills how and why to avoid plagiarism  |

## References

HEA (2016) *Enhancing Student Engagement in Decision-Making*. Report of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education, Higher Education Authority, April. Available from: <http://www.iua.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/HEA-IRC-Student-Engagement-Report-Apr2016.pdf>

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## Document Control

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