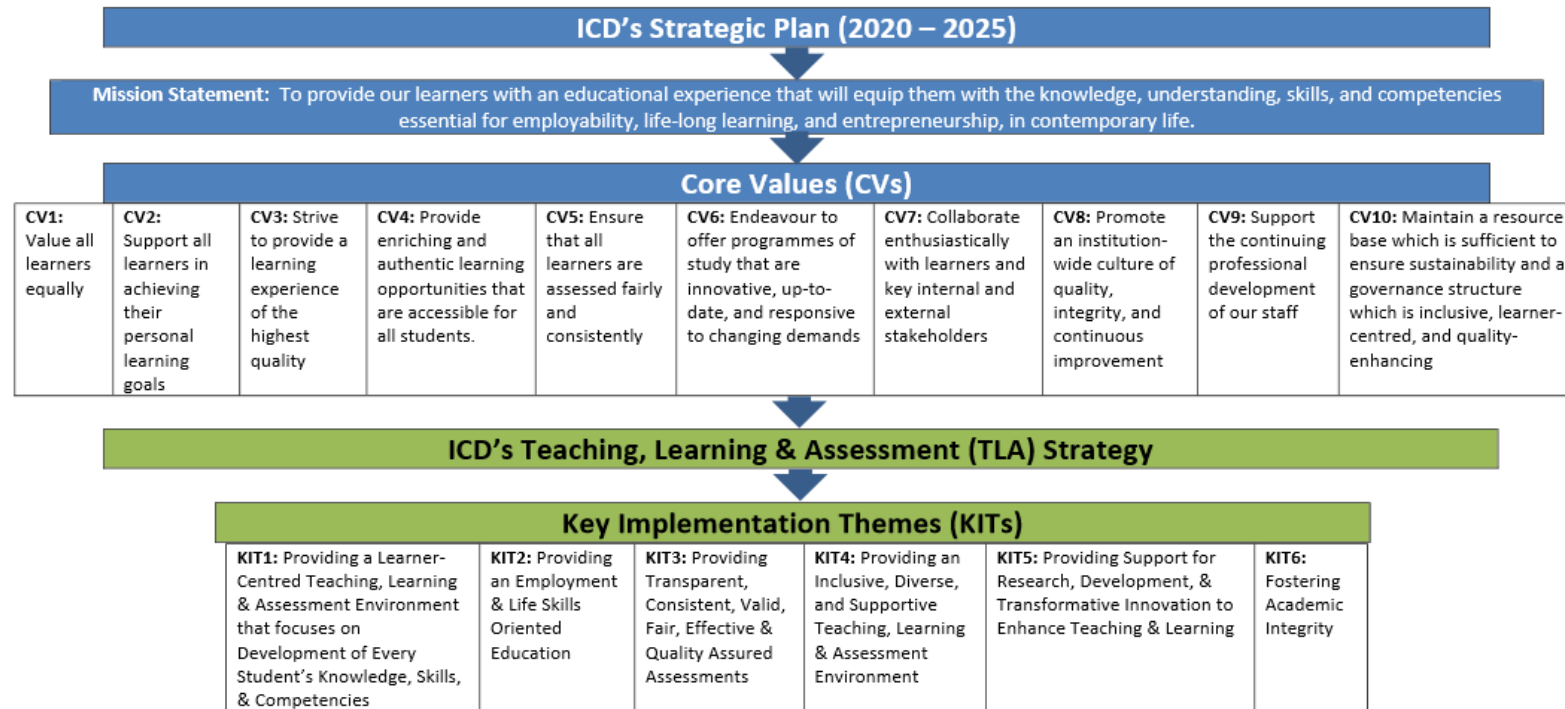


## **5. Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy**

ICD has developed a Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy with the goal of ensuring the highest quality education for all enrolled learners. That is contained in a separate companion document titled the ICD 'Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy.' The figure on the next page contains a summary of the ICD Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy. All lecturers should familiarise themselves with and follow the ICD Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy, separate companion, document.



## **5.1 Staff, Teacher and Learner Responsibilities**

### **5.1.1 Staff and Teacher Responsibilities to Students**

#### **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 difficulties

### **5.1.2 Student Responsibilities**

#### **Key Student Responsibilities**

ICD students are required to:

- \* Treat students and staff within ICD with respect
- \* Actively commit to the learning process through participation, study and timely completion of course work
- \* Fully familiarise themselves and comply with college rules/regulations and procedures, including Health and Safety procedures
- \* Take advice from academic staff on educational matters
- \* Report any behaviour which is inappropriate or criminal
- \* Report any personal circumstances that might affect studies

## **5.2 Assessment Policies**

Please refer to ICD QA Policy section 4 and its subsections for more information about assessments, quality control in assessments, External Examination, internal verification, exam boards and related.

### **5.2.1 Examination and Assessment Regulations**

#### **Application of these Regulations:**

These regulations refer to:

- Written final examinations
- In-class tests
- Assignments (also known as coursework or continuous assessment)
- Oral examinations (e.g. presentations or viva voce)
- Project work
- Essays
- Reflective diary assessments
- Primary and/or secondary research assignments
- Dissertations or theses
- Any other form of assessment used to assess a learner's achievement of module or programme learning outcomes

#### **5.2.1.1 Expectations of Learners Regarding Assessment**

Learners are expected to:

- Demonstrate Awareness of Assessment Guidelines\*
- Demonstrate Academic Integrity\*
- Complete and Submit Assessments/Assignments Before the Relevant Deadline\*
- Attach Declaration of Authorship Sheet to all Submitted Assignments\*
- Make Digital (e.g. Moodle or email) Submission and Hard-copy (printout) Assignment Submissions as Required\*
- Be Available for Viva Voce\*

\*More detail on each of the above points is contained in the below subsections

#### 5.2.1.1.1: Demonstrate Awareness of Assessment Guidelines

Learners are responsible for making themselves aware of:

- Learning Outcomes of the Module
- Types of assessments for each module undertaken
- Due dates for assessments
- Tasks to be undertaken for assessments
- Guidelines for assessments
- ICD Examinations and Assessment Regulations before attending examinations or completing assignments
- ICD Plagiarism and academic dishonesty/misconduct regulations
- Learners should consult the relevant lecturer to clarify any of the above

#### 5.2.1.1.2: Demonstrate Academic Integrity

According to QQI (2013b, section 2.1.1) Assessment and Standards guidelines (revised 2013): “each learner is expected to strive for academic integrity, and to undertake assessment tasks honestly and truthfully, shunning plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty or impropriety.” See section 5.2.1.6 of the ICD Quality Assurance Framework for more detail.

#### 5.2.1.1.3: Complete and Submit Assessments Before the Relevant Deadline

- Students must complete assignments according to deadlines set out by ICD and by ICD staff (e.g. relevant lecturers for modules).
- Deadline extensions will not be granted unless students have extenuating circumstances officially recognised by ICD staff and/or lecturers)
- Excerpt from ICD Student Handbook: “All assignments must be completed by the appointed deadline. You must keep a copy of any assignment submitted. It is college policy not to grant assignment extensions other than in exceptional circumstances. This ensures the fairness of the challenge set for all students on the programme...From September 2017, ICD

will be implementing the Moodle system for assignment submission, students will be given training/instruction on same...Failure to submit an assignment by the due date, except in the case of extenuating circumstances, **will result in your grade being less than would be the case if submitted on time.**"

#### 5.2.1.1.3.1 Late Assignment Penalties Policy

A lecturer may refuse to accept late assignments. This depends on the specific lecturer and they should notify students of the late assignments policy via the dedicated module Moodle page. Example cases where lecturers may refuse to accept late assignment (except in cases of extenuating circumstances) include (but are not limited to):

- In-class tests/exams (due to scheduling difficulties)
- Presentations (due to scheduling difficulties)
- Moodle tests
- Any lecturer may refuse to accept late assignments for any assessment element [provided all students are treated equally in this regard] (in such cases, students will be afforded an opportunity to repeat the assignment or the module or to sit the repeat examination, but will be considered as a repeat candidate, **not** as a first sitting candidate [unless they have extenuating circumstances officially approved])

In the absence of a specific policy for a module regarding assignment lateness, the following rules apply by default:

- **Default Penalty for Lateness:** For each day late, or part thereof, late assignment grades will be reduced by a penalty of 10 percentage points (for each day).
  - This means that if an assignment is submitted 1 day late and is graded as a 55% performance, then the penalty (of 10 percentage points) reduces the grade for this assignment to 45%. Please note, this is not 10% of 55%; it is a 10 percentage point reduction. If penalties are applied as percentage reductions rather than percentage

point reductions, then better performing grades would receive higher penalties than lower performing grades, which is counter to student equality and goes against the principle of consistency in assessment.

- **Lecturers may alter the lateness policy for their specific module** (such that it is different to the official ICD default lateness policy), provided they notify students via Moodle in advance of the submission dates. However, it is intended that lecturer changes should not apply less severe penalties unless there is a specific rationale for doing so.
- **Students may apply for extenuating circumstances** in order to be granted official assignment submission date extensions. As a smaller institution, ICD also operates an 'open door' policy at its reception and administrative office, and actively encourages to learners to approach staff members about any matter pertaining to their study or personal circumstances.

#### 5.2.1.1.3.2 Policy on Learner Absence from an Assessment or Non-Submission

##### **What will happen if a student does not submit an assignment or does not attend an examination?**

The policy is very clear regarding this issue. If a student does not submit an assignment, it is **not** the lecturer's responsibility to 'follow-up' with this student. If a student does not attend an examination, it is **not** the lecturer's responsibility to 'follow-up' with this student. It is the student's responsibility to make contact with ICD and/or a lecturer if they fail to submit an assignment or if they fail to attend an examination, and wish to query what to do next. In the interest of pastoral care, ICD staff **may** contact such a student, potentially to discuss retention or failure to progress in their programme. However, while ICD takes its pastoral duties very seriously, it also expects students to be autonomous, independently learning and completing assessments, and following the principle of student-self-directed education as much as possible.

#### 5.2.1.1.3.3 Extenuating Circumstances Policy

Students who fail to attend for examination, or who fail to submit an assignment on schedule, are advised to notify the college Registrar of any extenuating circumstances that might apply to their situation. Such exceptional circumstances are limited to:



- certified illnesses,
- family bereavement
- Involvement in an accident
- Victim of a crime
- Serious family illness
- Bereavement of a partner
- Domestic emergency (e.g. fire, burglary)
- or other similar significant adverse influences (which will be dealt with compassionately, confidentially, and on a case by case basis).

In such cases, the college may permit the student to resubmit the assignment(s) or retake the examination at the next available sitting as a first attempt. Supporting documentation must be submitted where applicable (e.g. illness certificate from a medical practitioner).

Circumstances that are unlikely to be approved as extenuating circumstances:

- Exam stress
- Stress or standard anxiety relating to completing assignments
- Disrupted sleep patterns due to worry about assessments
- Relationship difficulties
- Financial difficulties
- Going on holidays
- Travelling of any kind
- Transportation issues (e.g., ones which make a student late for an exam)
- Getting mixed up about the exam timetable or the submission date for an assignment
- Loss of data (relating to an assignment) on a computer
- Being in work or having to work when an assignment is due (or at exam time)
- Sporting commitments of any kind
- Weddings or other similar social events
- Forgetting about an assignment
- Not knowing about an assignment
- Being busy
- Delaying an assignment submission to improve it

- A printer 'breaking' while printing an assignment 'at the last minute'

The process to apply for extenuating circumstances:

- i. **the student should contact the Registrar**
- ii. **the student may be requested to provide supporting documentation:** The Registrar will assess the case and may request supporting documentation for verification purposes (e.g. illness certificate from a medical practitioner).
- iii. **Approval or rejection of extenuating circumstances application:** The Registrar will decide whether extenuating circumstances apply in each case. While ICD wishes to protect all learners who find themselves in difficult personal circumstances, and this will typically lead to reasonable accommodations, it is important to note that extenuating circumstances applications will not be approved lightly. This is in order to maintain consistency in assessment and to provide every learner with equal treatment in assessment (equal opportunity and time [no greater or lesser]) to demonstrate learning outcome achievement. Equal and consistent treatment of all learners is paramount. Therefore, extenuating circumstances applications will be treated confidentially but will, as appropriate, be carefully considered before approval to protect learner equality. Extenuating circumstances applications will be rejected if the learner's circumstances are not deemed to be extenuating.
- iv. **Notification of approval or rejection to the student:** The Registrar will inform the student that their application has been approved, or rejected with a reason for same
- v. **Notification of approval to ICD Staff:** If the Registrar verifies and approves a learner's extenuating circumstances application, it is the Registrar's responsibility to inform the relevant lecturers/assessors, confidentially. Learners are advised that they may choose to contact specific lecturers about their extenuating circumstances application, in confidence, but only if they so choose. Doing so will ensure that a lecturer can maintain awareness of the situation.

[5.2.1.1.4: Attach Declaration of Authorship Sheet to all Submitted Assignments](#)

See Appendix 5.2.1.1.4 for a copy of the official ICD Declaration of Authorship Sheet.

- The official ICD Declaration of Authorship sheet must be attached (stapled or bound) to or within every piece of assessment work submitted by the learner (except for examinations, Moodle tests, or in-class tests)
- It is the learner's responsibility to download, print, fill in, sign, and attach this sheet
- Assignments will not be graded unless the Declaration of Authorship sheet is properly attached, filled in, and signed by the student
- In cases of group-assignments, all students must fill in and sign the Declaration of Authorship sheet (multiple sheets can be used if necessary)

#### 5.2.1.1.5: Make Digital Submission and Hard-copy Assignment Submissions as Required

- Students may be required to submit an assignment in multiple formats e.g.:
  - o Hard copy printout
  - o Online (e.g. Moodle or email)
  - o Verbal (e.g. PowerPoint and/or viva voce) presentation
- The nature of assignment submission format is at the discretion of individual lecturers
- Where practical, students will be required to submit assignments to plagiarism checking software (e.g. via Moodle)
- Lecturers reserve the right to:
  - o Request a resubmission of an assignment from a learner (e.g. if a learner has submitted a printout, a lecturer may subsequently also request a digital copy submission to assist in the grading process)
  - o Check any learner's assessment submissions for the presence of plagiarism
  - o Invite a student for a viva voce

#### 5.2.1.1.6: Be Available for Viva Voce

Viva voce:

- For any assignment, a learner may be invited to attend a viva voce in order to discuss the assignment, as a requirement for completion of the marking/grading process

- A viva voce is a meeting between at least one member of ICD staff and at least one student to discuss their performance and/or contribution towards completion of an individual or a group assignment (in any module, on any programme)
- The decision to hold a viva voce is at the discretion of the individual lecturer or examiner, who may consult with other members of staff on the need for a viva voce in a given case or may invite other members of staff to attend a viva voce to discuss a given assignment with a student
- If a lecturer intends to invite a student to a viva voce at which plagiarism will be discussed (i.e. that the lecturer suspects that plagiarism may be present in the assignment submission) then that lecturer must be accompanied by a second member of academic staff. If the lecturer does not intend to discuss plagiarism, then the lecturer may organise a viva voce to meet with the student to discuss the assignment, at which there is no requirement for a second member of staff to be present

### 5.2.1.2 Grading of Assessments

The guidelines within section 5.2.1.2 of this document (and subsections) also refer to QA Policy section 4.3 and its subsections (Moderating Assessment Instruments and Results) and section 4.4 and subsections (ICD's External Examination Policy).

In completion of grading/marking of any assessment (e.g. assignment, examination, coursework, presentation, continuous assessment) an Examiner or other member of staff may request further information from a student about their completion of the assessment. This information request may take the form of:

- Verbal discussions about the assessment
- Meeting(s)
- Emails
- Moodle messages
- Viva voce (see section 5.2.1.1.6)

If an examiner has concerns relating to plagiarism and/or academic misconduct (or any other breach of examination and assessment regulations), the examiner has the right to withhold the learner's grade (for the entire module and/or for a specific assignment) until the learner has communicated with the examiner to remove these concerns. In the event that these concerns persist, the examiner should refer to sections 5.2.1.1.2 and 5.2.1.6 (and its subsections) of the ICD QA Policy.

#### 5.2.1.2.1 Assessment Grading – QQI Honours Degrees (Level 8) & Masters (Level 9)

Grading of Assessments at ICD follows QQI (2013b, section 3) guidelines regarding sectoral conventions for assessment: "the sectoral conventions for assessment comprise a set of regulations and benchmarks, which in the interest of fairness and consistency, are agreed at the sectoral level by QQI and all associated providers."

For every QQI module, assessment must be designed to test the student's knowledge and understanding of the module outcomes. The module outcomes represent the knowledge and skills that the student is required to master to pass the module. QQI (the awarding body) provides a set of assessment criteria designed to test the student's competence regarding each outcome. Assessment

is designed in such a way as to be transparent. This means that it should be clear to the student what is expected of him or her to achieve the various grades.

A module that is completed satisfactorily can be graded at Pass 40-49, a H2.2 50-59, a H2.1 60-69 or H1 70+ for level 8 Honours Degree programmes. See Table 5.2.1.2.1a.

Classification of Honours Bachelor's degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 8)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009 - 2010 and following
First-class honours	3.25	70%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
Second-class honours Grade 1	3.0	60%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
Second-class honours Grade 2	2.5	50%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in some respects is significantly beyond this
Pass	2.0	40%	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

**Table 5.2.1.2.1a: Classification of Honours Bachelor's Degrees (Level 8) and Higher Diplomas (Level 8)**

**Source: QQI 2013b Section 3**

A module that is completed satisfactorily can be graded at Pass 40-59, a Second-Class Honours 60-69, a First Class Honours 70+ for level 9 Masters programme. See Table 5.2.1.2.1b.

Classification of Taught Master's degrees (Level 9)	GPA boundary values	PPA boundary values	Description 2009 - 2010 and following
First-class honours	3.25	70%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in most respects is significantly and consistently beyond this
Second-class honours	3.0	60%	Indicative descriptor: Achievement includes that required for a Pass and in many respects is significantly beyond this
Pass	2.0	40%	Definitive descriptor: Attains all the minimum intended programme learning outcomes

**Table 5.2.1.2.1b: Classification of Taught Master's Degrees (Level 9)**

**Source: QQI 2013b Section 3**

**Grading/assessing group (or team) based assessment tasks:**

As per QQI (2013b section 2.2.5) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines, all “individuals undertaking team-based assessment tasks [must be] assessed [i.e. graded] as individuals” at ICD. Grading of group-work assessments takes account of the fact that not all learners may contribute equally to group work. Where practical, team-based assignments, at ICD, should incorporate peer evaluation whereby students report their evaluation of their own work/contribution to an assignment task and also evaluate the contribution of other team members. These evaluations should be used as evidence when making grading decisions. However, the assessor will seek further evidence, as and when appropriate and/or necessary.

**Determination of Award Classification:**

Following QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines (Sectoral Convention 3 on Determination of Award Classification), at ICD, “calculation of the award classification shall be based on the credit-weighted mean value of the allowable grades (i.e. those that contribute to the classification) for modules...[undertaken by the student on] a specific programme which has been validated by QQI...for the purposes of making the award.” The percentage point average (PPA) for a stage is defined at ICD

as the credit-weighted mean of the percentage point values for the modules at that stage, as recommended by QQI (2013b). No credit is allocated to a learner in respect of modules that are failed outright (by that learner) (QQI 2013b).

To achieve a Pass a student must have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of all the outcomes included in that particular module.

A grade above a pass (e.g. H2.2 (level 8), H2.1 (level 8), H2 (level 9), or H1 (level 8 or 9)) would indicate a level of achievement beyond what is required to pass the module. The module lecturer has the primary responsibility for grading students' work. However, all grades are subject to approval by an examination board meeting chaired by the Programme Director or Registrar and agreed by an External Examiner. Grades must also be internally verified (second marked).

**Outright fails:**

In line with QQI's (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines, at ICD, an outright fail (or fail outright) is defined as follows. An outright fail in a module occurs when a learner's combined assessment grade for that module is below 35%. If a learner receives 35% (or more), but less than 40%, they may qualify for a pass by compensation, as described later in the ICD QA policy, and pending reference to the programme document to ensure that pass by compensation can be applied to the specific module (or is not precluded from applying the pass by compensation rule).

It may be the case that a learner must pass specific assessment elements in a module in order to pass a module. If this is the case, then the learner must:

- Pass all assessment elements in the module that they are required to pass (as described in the specific module descriptor)
- **Also** receive 40% or greater as their combined grade for the module



Whether or not learners can fail some assessment elements but still pass a module (provided they achieve an overall grade of 40% or greater in the module) will be indicated in the programme manual and module descriptors. In cases where this is not specified, the rule is that the learner's overall grade for the module must be 40% or greater (to pass), **but** they can fail any assessment elements (within a module) and still pass the module overall (again, provided their overall grade for the module is 40% or greater).

**Repeat Strategy:**

Students who fail an end of semester examination or a phased test have a right to repeat. Students also have a right to resubmit coursework which is considered below Pass standard. The grade for a second sitting or resubmitted coursework will be limited to a Pass grade. In the case of repeat assessments, a student will incur a repeat fee of €150.

Learners who fail a module will typically be offered three repeat attempts. Following QQI (2013b section 2.2.5) guidelines, "for an unseen examination (e.g. an examination paper which is not seen by learners until handed out at the time of examination), the repeat tasks" will not be the same as the original task.

**Repeat for Honours:**

ICD follows QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines (Sectoral Convention 3 on Determination of Award Classification) with regard to its repeat for honours strategy: "the existing approach to repeat for honours...[is that] it is not be offered."

**Honours Classification:**

Following QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines (Sectoral Convention 3 on Determination of Award Classification), at ICD, “honours classification, or any classification higher than ‘Pass’, shall be made based on first-attempt grades. Necessary procedures to allow consistent treatment of a repeat grade as a first-attempt grade, where exceptional mitigating circumstances exist, shall not compromise this principle.” A learner who repeats a module during the award stage of a programme will not be eligible for an award classification higher than a pass classification (unless that learner is repeating with approved extenuating circumstances).

**Pass by Compensation:**

Procedure and policy to apply compensation to pass modules is supervised and coordinated at ICD by the Registrar. ICD policies on this matter follow QQI (2013b e.g. section 4.4.1) *Assessment and Standards* guidelines: “a module can be passed by compensation (using passes in other modules from the same stage) unless this is specifically precluded in the programme assessment strategy.”

Passing by compensation requires a learner to achieve 35% in the respective module where compensation is being applied. Passing a module by compensation enables a learner to pass a stage on the respective programme. Passing by compensation is applicable (where relevant in modules that are not precluded from pass by compensation rule applications) when a learner’s grade in a module is “greater than or equal to 35% but less than 40% in the percentage system” used at ICD (QQI 2013b section 4.4.1). A grade of 35% or more, but less than 40%, indicates that “a learner has nearly (but not quite) demonstrated attainment of the relevant minimum intended learning outcomes” (ibid). For a pass by compensation to be applied, “the results of all modules in the stage...[must be] from first attempts” (ibid). “Performance at the first attempt [that receives a grade of 40% or higher] in modules in a given stage ([a stage] of at least 30 credits) may be used to compensate [for other modules] in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has been failed outright [which means a module grade of below 35%]” (ibid). If a student passes a module by compensation, their grade is classified as a pass by compensation and is credit bearing.

For pass by compensation to be applied, at ICD, QQI (2013b section 4.4.1) guidelines require that:

The overall...stage-aggregate of credit-weighted excesses of percentage marks (over 40) is greater than or equal to twice the stage-aggregate of credit-weighted deficits of marks (under 40) and the potentially compensatable results account for no more than one-third of the credit for the stage: i.e. 20 credits in a 60-credit stage or 10 credits in a 30-credit stage.

Learners who pass a module by compensation remain eligible for honours at the award stage, as per QQI (2013b) guidelines. However, compensation (where applied) does not change the result of the module (e.g. 35%) that has been passed by compensation. If a learner has passed a module by compensation, at ICD, they are offered the opportunity to repeat the module assessment(s), if they so wish, in order to improve their grade to a pass, rather than a pass by compensation. If the learner's repeat grades are lower than the first attempt grades, the first attempt grades will still stand. Where a learner's module grade is 35-39% and they pass by compensation, their transcript of results (and the Diploma Supplement) will show the actual result (e.g. 35%) along with an indication that the module has been passed by/with compensation applied. All students who qualify for a pass by compensation will receive a pass by compensation automatically, pending their receipt of an offer to reattempt the assessments as a repeat in the hope of improving their grade to a pass. If compensation cannot be applied in a specific module, this will be identified in the respective programme manual or module descriptor. Decisions to preclude modules from qualifying for pass by compensation, at ICD, must be based on reference to the minimum intended programme learning outcomes (MIPLOs) and ensuring that these MIPLOs are achieved for a candidate to receive an award. Examination board meetings and the Registrar are the primary parties/processes responsible at ICD for overseeing this procedure.

### 5.2.1.3 Setting of Assessment Instruments

The guidelines on setting assessments at ICD are contained within ICD QA Policy section 4.3 and subsections (Moderating Assessment Instruments and Results), section 4.4 and subsections (ICD's External Examination Policy), and section 5.2 and subsections.

### 5.2.1.4 Feedback on Grades for Students

#### 5.2.1.4.1 Formative Assessment Feedback

It is every lecturer's responsibility to ensure all students are invited to participate in formative feedback mechanisms within modules. Given the variety of assessment methods used at ICD, there is no single formative assessment mechanism. However, the standard approach may include (but is not limited to):

- Allowing students to provide drafts of assignments to the lecturer for formative feedback (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- Allowing students to provide drafts of model exam answers to the lecturer for formative feedback (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- Setting in-class tests for formative feedback (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- Setting Moodle tests for formative feedback (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- Lecturer meetings with students during (or outside of) class time to discuss progress on assignments (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- In-class discussions about how to approach assignments or examinations (which will not contribute towards the final module grade)
- Formative feedback may be provided verbally or in writing
- It is important to note that summative feedback provided to learners (after a piece of summative assessment is graded) is also considered to be a form of formative assessment:
  - o Especially when provided in advance of other assessments (e.g. feedback on assessment 1 may help the learner improve their approach to assessment 2)
  - o Given the inter-related nature of modules within programmes, summative feedback in one module should be designed and delivered to help a learner to improve their approach in other future modules. This is confirmed in QQI (2013b, section 4.9)

guidelines. See quote in section 5.2.1.4.2 of the ICD QA Policy for elaboration on this.

#### 5.2.1.4.2 Summative Assessment Feedback

All lecturers are required to give summative feedback to students regarding the grade they have received for a piece of assessment. This takes direction from QQI (2013b, section 4.9):

“Following the issue of results, assessors involved in the specific assessment tasks should normally be available to meet individual learners to review their scripts etc. Such consultations aim to:

- Give formative feedback to learners, especially to those who need to repeat.
- Explain the basis of the learner’s grade/mark against the assessment criteria, especially where the learner believes that the assessor may have made an error in grading the work.

Such a consultation is distinct from a formal re-check or review of results”

#### **Verbally or in Writing:**

Summative assessment feedback may be provided verbally or in writing. The feedback should be designed and delivered to (but not guaranteed to) satisfy the student that the grade they have received is appropriate and fair.

#### **General feedback:**

A lecturer may provide general feedback on the performance of the overall cohort in the first instance, then encourage any individual student to contact the lecturer directly if further individual feedback is required.

**Two-week time-limit:**

If a student requires feedback, they are required to contact the lecturer within two (2) weeks of receiving their grade. If contact is made after that time, it is at the discretion of the individual lecturer(s) whether they can offer further feedback.

Students have the option to seek feedback, a recheck, or a review of grades received.

**5.2.1.5 Grade Appeals Policy**

Following QQI, ICD adopts the QAA definition of ‘appeal.’ According to the UK’s QAA (2013 p. 4) an academic appeal is “a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.”

There are invalid grounds for a learner appeal of a grade. Students have a right to be assisted/advised by their class representative in relation to the appeals policy should they so wish.

**Invalid grounds for a learner appeal of a grade:**

Following guidance from QQI, as provided by the independent QQI Reengagement Panel during 2019, ICD will not allow learner appeals of grades on the following grounds:

- i. Dissatisfaction with the grade received by the student in an assessment or module (this is not grounds for an appeal)
- ii. Disagreement with the academic judgement of examiner(s)/assessor(s) (this is not grounds for an appeals)

Any appeals lodged on either of the two above grounds will be disregarded/rejected. However, students are entitled to feedback on an assessment grade, a recheck of the marks calculation for an assessment, or a review of an assessment grade, as described below.

**Grade Feedback, Rechecks, and Reviews Procedure:**

While a learner cannot appeal a grade on the basis of a disagreement with the judgment of the assessor/examiner, the learner is entitled to feedback, for a grade recheck, and to a review, on request, according to the following stages:

**Stage 1 – Feedback:** The student should ensure they have received feedback on their grade from the examiner (e.g. the module lecturer). The student should contact the examiner within two (2) weeks of receiving their grade(s) for feedback. If the student is not satisfied with the feedback, they can move to stage 2.

**Stage 2 – Recheck:** “Re-check means the administrative operation of checking (again) the recording and combination of component scores for a module and/or stage” (QQI 2013b section 4.10.3). If a student wishes to have their mark rechecked, they should in the first instance contact the examiner (e.g. module lecturer) within one (1) week of receiving feedback. The outcome of a recheck may lead to the student’s grade increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 2, they may choose to move to stage 3.

**Stage 3 – Review:** A student who is not satisfied with the outcome of stage two has the option to request a review. Each time a student requests a review, they will incur a fee of €50 (payment process managed and recorded by the Registrar). If the review results in an increase in the student’s grade/mark, the review fee will be refunded. “Review means the re-consideration of the assessment decision, either by the original assessor or by other competent persons. Learners are required to state the grounds for the requested review” (QQI 2013b section 4.10.3). The student should indicate to the relevant lecturer and the Registrar that they wish for their grade to be reviewed. The student must contact the lecturer and Registrar within one (1) week of the completion of stage 2 to request a review. The lecturer is obliged, on request, to re-examine the work and reconsider the grade. The lecturer does have the power to change the grade having reassessed the work. The outcome of a review may lead to the student’s grade increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. The outcome will be communicated by the lecturer to the Registrar who will communicate the outcome to the student. A student can only request a review of an assessment decision once. Students are disallowed from requesting a second review of the same assessment decision/grade.

**Valid Grounds for a Learner to Make a Complaint Relating to Academic Process or Opportunities:**

If a student has an issue that is different to a specific disagreement over a grade, they should consult ICD's complaints procedures (section 7.2.1 of ICD's Quality Assurance Policy). Students may lodge an official complaint relating to the assessment process, the assessment criteria, the relevance of the assessment tasks to the intended programme learning outcomes, or other learning opportunities issues. However, students may not lodge a complaint specifically due to a difference of opinion regarding the grade received for an assessment.



### **5.2.1.6 Breach of Examination and Assessment Regulations**

When completing assessments, learners are expected to demonstrate academic integrity. This means that learners should:

- Make themselves aware of how to avoid plagiarism (e.g. referring to plagiarism avoidance materials provided by ICD and attending citation, referencing, and plagiarism avoidance workshops provided by ICD) and demonstrate this awareness by shunning plagiarism in all its forms
- Independently make themselves aware of how to avoid plagiarism through referring to reputable sources on the subject
- Complete assignments themselves (e.g. not outsourcing the work to other students or other organisations, except in cases where there is an element of group-work)
- Complete exams within exam regulations (e.g. not bringing notes on paper or on devices or any other type of notes to be used when completing examinations (except when specifically instructed to do so))
- Complete assignments according to assignment guidelines provided by ICD and by ICD staff and lecturers

The college offers a specially-tailored academic induction which is aimed at explaining key academic regulations – such as those which relate to plagiarism and referencing – in a way which is accessible to learners from diverse nationalities. It is expected that all learners who are new to ICD should attend these induction sessions as a mandatory part of completing stage 1 of all programmes. Continuing learners are also invited to attend induction sessions or refresher sessions about plagiarism, citing, referencing, and academic integrity, which are held every year on various occasions.

#### **Breaching examination regulations (academic misconduct):**

During examinations, an invigilator or other member of ICD staff reserves the right to inspect the possessions of an exam candidate. If a student refuses to allow this without reasonable grounds they are in breach of examination regulations.

A learner should be deemed to have breached these regulations if they are found to have attempted to engage in any of the following during examinations:

- Students are not permitted to enter the examination venue after the examination has commenced
- Students are not permitted to leave the examinations hall during the first hour of the examination
- Students are not permitted to leave the examinations hall during the final thirty (30) minutes of the examination
- Cheating (e.g. bringing notes or other materials to an exam (in any form e.g. on a device or written on the learner's person or on paper), which are not permitted)
- Talking or otherwise attempting to communicate with anybody (e.g. other students) at an examination (except for examination invigilators, lecturers or other ICD staff in attendance at the examination)
- Learners cannot move any of the papers on their designated desk before an examination, or until advised to do so by the invigilator
- Learners cannot bring bags or large coats to examinations (a cloakroom is provided at ICD)
- Learners cannot have any computing equipment (e.g. a mobile phone, smartwatch, tablet computer, laptop computer, electronic organiser, recording device, radio or similar device) in their possession at their desk during an examination
- Learners cannot have any notes, books, reference material, or computing equipment (e.g. a mobile phone, smartwatch, tablet computer, laptop computer, electronic organiser, recording device, radio or similar device) in their possession during comfort breaks (e.g. visits to the bathroom) during an examination
- Learners must have their student ID card available for inspection before, during, and after all examinations
- Learners must read the instructions for every exam before they begin to complete the exam
- Learners must comply with ICD Examination Invigilator's and ICD Staff directions at all times
- Learners, during examinations, may not use dictionaries, reference documents, reference books, or mathematical tables unless expressly permitted for that specific examination
- Learners are not permitted to borrow or loan materials from other learners during examinations
- Learners are not permitted to leave the exam venue (room) unless they have received permission from an invigilator
- Bribery (of a member of staff)
- Impersonation (e.g. a student completes an assignment for another student or a student uses the work of somebody else in the completion of an assignment without specifically

giving credit to that other party) (OR e.g. a student [person 1] knowingly allows another person [person 2] to complete their [person 1's] assignment or examination)

- Learners cannot remove answer books from the exam room

### **Breaching assessment regulations (academic misconduct):**

A learner should be deemed to have breached these regulations if they are found to have attempted to engage in any of the following during assessments:

- Plagiarism (defined in section 5.2.1.6.1)
- Falsification (e.g. claiming to have collected primary data for an assignment, when the learner has not in-fact collected this primary data, or has not used the methods the learner claims to have used)
- Untrue/inaccurate claims to have carried out secondary research
- Misrepresentation (e.g. the learner provides something (e.g. a fact, theory, figure, statement, research finding, opinion) along with a citation or reference that is irrelevant to it [e.g. the assignment contains a sentence along with a citation to back up this sentence, but the cited source does not validate or back up this claim in any substantial way] [or citations are irrelevant to the passages they appear within or alongside])

#### 5.2.1.6.1: Plagiarism

The purpose of ICD's Plagiarism Policy is to

1. **Prevent plagiarism:** this requires ICD staff to:
  - a. Actively build a culture that values and supports good academic conduct
  - b. Provide students with plagiarism training for students throughout academic years at all levels to inform students about academic integrity, academic misconduct, and plagiarism.
  - c. Ensure all students complete an induction module that covers plagiarism, academic misconduct, academic integrity and a variety of other important issues during stage 1 of all

programmes. The aim of this endeavour is to help students to avoid plagiarism and to prepare students for third level education in general.

d. Ensure that lecturers regularly alert students to the importance of avoiding plagiarism and where appropriate to recommend that students use the Harvard Style of citation and referencing in order to credit all sources used in their assignments.

**1. Detect plagiarism:** This requires ensuring:

- a. Plagiarism detection software is used (e.g. through Moodle digital assignment submission systems) by lecturers (and students) to receive assignments
- b. Lecturers report any concerns they may have to colleagues and Programme Directors in order to deal with any issues that may arise.
- c. No assignment at ICD is knowingly graded by an examiner if it contains plagiarism.

**When can plagiarism arise?**

Plagiarism is not limited to text and can be found to arise in assessments of all types, which includes but is not limited to:

- Written final examinations
- In-class tests
- Assignments (also known as coursework or continuous assessment)
- Oral examinations (e.g. presentations or viva voce)
- Project work
- Essays
- Reflective diary assessments
- Primary and/or secondary research assignments
- Dissertations or theses
- Any other form of assessment used to assess a learner's achievement of module or programme learning outcomes

## What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism arises when a learner (in completing an assessment) displays any of the following (but is not restricted to these examples):

- **Poor scholarship (Lack of Citation/Referencing):** A learner uses extracts from some other party's work (published or unpublished) without specific acknowledgement that the other party's work has been used (e.g. citation and referencing). This includes the paraphrasing of another work without adequate attribution (citation and referencing).
- **Unattributed quotations:** A learner quotes another party's work (published or unpublished) without specific acknowledgement that the other party's work has been used (e.g. citation and referencing)
- **Substantial similarity to another work (including paraphrasing without adequate referencing):** A learner structures their assignment submission (or sections of it) in a substantially similar fashion to another party 's work (published or unpublished) without specific acknowledgement that the other party's work has been used (e.g. citation and referencing). Sections of an assignment that contain high degrees of similarity to sections of another work (e.g. another assignment, a journal article, website, book, thesis or dissertation, YouTube video content, and more) are likely to be judged to contain plagiarism unless adequate credit is given through specific citation and referencing to the correct source(s) (even when paraphrasing is used [without adequate citation and referencing])
- **Presents the work of others as their own:** A learner presents the findings (secondary or primary research) or opinions of another party as their own without specific acknowledgement that the other party's work has been used (e.g. citation and referencing)
- **Self-plagiarism:** A learner submits the same or substantially similar work in multiple assignments (in multiple modules and/or within the same module). The previous/original assignment(s) may have been submitted at the current or a previous institution in a case of self-plagiarism.

In cases where parts of an assignment are plagiarised, these parts may include:

- Text
- Graphics (e.g. figures, tables, charts)
- Photographs/images

- Videos
- Audio files
- PowerPoint or similar presentations
- Computer code
- Tables

**Policy on Intentional or Unintentional Plagiarism:**

It is important to note that, particularly in cases of plagiarism, if a student is found to breach regulations, their intention or lack of intention to cheat is not a centrally important matter. For example, if a learner submits an assignment that is found to be substantially similar to the work of another party, whether or not they intended this level of similarity (i.e. plagiarism) is not a centrally important matter. Deliberate intent to cheat or plagiarise is a breach of regulations. However, deliberate intent is not a requirement for a sanction to result. Accidental or unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism nonetheless and appropriate sanctions will result.

**Policy on a Learner's Lack of Knowledge about Plagiarism:**

If plagiarism results from lack of learner knowledge regarding citation and referencing, then this is the learner's responsibility and sanctions may still result. ICD provides supports to students for them to familiarise themselves with how to avoid plagiarism. Equally, there are plenty of reputable sources available for students to consult in this regard. It is a student's responsibility to make themselves aware of how to avoid plagiarism. This includes seeking support and assistance from ICD staff. However, if a learner engages in plagiarism, knowingly or unknowingly, then sanctions may result. These sanctions may include the student needing to attend plagiarism awareness sessions and the completion of an assignment on how to avoid plagiarism, in order to ensure they improve their knowledge on how to avoid plagiarism.

**Major or Minor Plagiarism Decisions:**

A finding of plagiarism being present in a learner's assessment includes:

- An entirely plagiarised assignment
- Parts of an assignment may be plagiarised, and other parts may be original
- In either of the above cases, plagiarism may be found, and sanctions may result

The distinction between minor plagiarism and major plagiarism depends on the specific assignment and the nature of plagiarism displayed. ICD entrusts the judgment to what constitutes minor and major plagiarism in specific cases to its academic staff. Decisions regarding major or minor plagiarism must involve careful consideration (by the decision-makers) regarding the following:

- **Are sections of the student's assessment submission plagiarised (yes or no)?** The qualitative nature of the plagiarism (e.g. is it poor scholarship, or any of the types of plagiarism outlined earlier in this document (above)). First and foremost, the judgment here is that plagiarism is plagiarism, where detected. Whether it is major or minor plagiarism depends **somewhat** (but not entirely [see below]) on the proportion of the assessment submission that is found to contain plagiarism (see the next question below)
- **What proportion of the document (assessment submission) is plagiarised?** The quantity of plagiarised sections within an assignment submission should be analysed. High percentage similarity between an assessment submission and another source does not automatically constitute plagiarism; where similarity is detected, similar sections must be analysed by the assessor to clarify whether plagiarism exists, then moving on to clarifying roughly what proportion of the document contains plagiarism. The assessor is **not** required nor expected to provide an exact percentage analysis of the amount of plagiarism present. This quantitative analysis can be carried out by a combination of plagiarism detection software and manual plagiarism checking (e.g. by an experienced staff member or lecturer). There is no definitive percentage of a submitted assignment that must be plagiarised to amount to 'major' or 'minor' plagiarism. However, if greater than 50% (approximately) of an assignment shows evidence of plagiarism, then it is likely that this submission can be decided to contain major plagiarism. However, such a decision must be based on qualitative analysis of the relevant sections found to be similar to other work, to be certain they contain plagiarism. Equally, it is possible for an assignment containing less than 50% similarity to be judged to contain major plagiarism (e.g. if a research thesis containing 100 pages, contains a 10 page chapter that is predominantly plagiarised by being almost verbatim copied from

another source – while this is only a 10% similarity, it is almost certainly major plagiarism to entirely reproduce a chapter from another source (or sources)). There is no definitive percentage for an assessment submission to be defined as major or minor plagiarism.

Therefore, ICD trusts the professional judgements of assessors in this regard. The greater the proportion of an assessment submission that contains plagiarism, the greater the likelihood that it constitutes major plagiarism (provided the sections containing similarity are qualitatively analysed by the assessor / decision-maker to ensure they do constitute plagiarism). The lesser the proportion of an assessment submission that contains plagiarism, the greater the likelihood that it constitutes minor plagiarism (provided the sections containing similarity are qualitatively analysed by the assessor / decision-maker to ensure they do constitute plagiarism).

- **It is essential to note the following:** plagiarism software can provide percentage similarities. These similarity percentages are **not** definitive indicators that plagiarism is present. Similar sections **must** be qualitatively analysed by the lecturer/assessor to make a decision as to whether similarity is plagiarism or whether similarity is not plagiarism. For example, a short student assignment may contain various quotations that are correctly attributed (cited and referenced) to their sources. Urkund plagiarism detection software may therefore indicate that this assignment contains high similarity because it contains quotes. However, if these quotes are correctly attributed, it is highly unlikely that plagiarism is present. For any further advice regarding plagiarism avoidance, learners and lecturers are advised to contact the Head of Academic Development at ICD.

#### 5.2.1.6.2 Plagiarism Detection Handling Process

If a student or staff member wishes to find more information about plagiarism, they should refer to section 5.2.1.6.1 of the ICD QA policy. If a lecturer suspects that there may be a problem with a student's submission relating to plagiarism, they should follow this process. Before stage 1 the lecturer has the right to (but not the requirement to) communicate with the student about their concerns and to consult with colleagues. If the lecturer still has concerns, they should follow the process outlined below. Students have a right to representation (e.g. student rep) at stage 2 and stage 3 below:

**Stage 1: Contact Registrar:** The lecturer should contact the Registrar to discuss the issue. If as a result of this (and any related) discussion, plagiarism is still suspected, the staff member



should proceed to stage 2 of this process. Another point of contact and consultation at this stage is the Head of Academic Development (but this is not a requirement). It is not a requirement to contact the student at this stage.

**Stage 2: Viva Voce Consultation Meeting regarding Plagiarism:** A viva voce may be called for any assessment submitted by any student in order to discuss the contents of the student's/students' submission for grading purposes and this may (but is not required to) include discussion about any plagiarism concerns that an examiner(s) may have.

- Plagiarism related viva voce: If an examiner(s) has concerns about plagiarism specifically and wishes to call a viva voce, then it is a requirement that a viva voce, at which plagiarism will be discussed, will be attended by at least two members of ICD staff (e.g. two lecturers (one of whom may be the examiner)). **The Registrar cannot attend this meeting.**
- Viva voce not related to plagiarism: If a viva voce is not called to discuss plagiarism, then only one staff member need attend (to meet with the student).

Before calling for a viva voce to discuss plagiarism, the staff member in question must complete the Academic Integrity Referral Form (see Appendix 5.2.1.6.2) and submit this form to the Registrar, who will organise a second member of staff to attend this plagiarism related viva voce, and will invite the student to attend. It is not a requirement that the student is informed of the purpose of the viva voce meeting because they will be informed at the viva voce meeting itself. However, it is a requirement that the Registrar informs the student that they have a right to request the presence of a student representative to attend any viva voce. The student(s) in question must be invited to any viva voce meeting. However, if they choose not to attend, a decision will be made in their absence, which will then be communicated to them by the Registrar. The aim of such a viva voce will be an evidence gathering meeting for the staff and will provide the learner with an opportunity to formally hear the concerns of two academics (one of whom may be the examiner of the specific assignment in question) and also provide the learner with an opportunity to explain/respond. The outcome of this plagiarism related viva voce meeting may be:

- **No plagiarism / inconclusive:** Plagiarism concerns are unfounded (or there is inadequate or inconclusive evidence) and the assignment should be graded as normal. Staff will report the outcome of the meeting to the Registrar. The Registrar will inform the student of the outcome.

- **Student agrees with staff that there is plagiarism present:** Plagiarism is agreed to be present between the student and the staff members present at the meeting. If this is the case the student may be offered the opportunity to resubmit the assignment (either in full or with parts altered to remove plagiarism concerns). Staff will report the outcome of the meeting to the Registrar. The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting. This letter will contain a possible sanction (see section 5.2.1.6.3 of the ICD QA Policy). The student will have one (1) week to respond whereby they either accept the outcome letter or they request a review (appeal) of the decision regarding plagiarism (see stage 3 of the present process). If the student does not respond within the required time-frame, the decision stands and the student cannot later appeal this decision.
- **Student disagrees with staff regarding presence of plagiarism:** In this case, staff conclude that plagiarism is present within a submission, but the student does not agree. The outcome in this scenario depends on the level of staff agreement as follows:
  - **Unanimous staff agreement:** If all staff present at the meeting are unanimously agreed regarding the level of plagiarism (i.e. that there is minor plagiarism; or that there is major plagiarism), they report this decision to the Registrar along with a recommended sanction (see section 5.2.1.6.3 of the ICD QA Policy). The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting. This letter will contain a possible sanction (see section 5.2.1.6.3 of the ICD QA Policy). The student will have one (1) week to respond whereby they either accept the outcome letter or they request a review (appeal) of the decision regarding plagiarism (see stage 3 of the present process). If the student does not respond within the required time-frame, the decision stands and the student cannot later appeal this decision.
  - **Staff not unanimous:** If staff are not unanimously agreed regarding the level of plagiarism or the sanction, then staff must recommend (to the Registrar) stage 3 of the present process. The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting to refer the matter to a plagiarism review meeting (stage 3 of the present process).

**Stage 3: Plagiarism Review Meeting:** this is a possible outcome of stage 2, as outlined above. A plagiarism review meeting will consist of two members of academic staff (or more). **Staff members present at the meeting at stage 2 are not allowed to attend the meeting at stage 3. The Registrar cannot attend this meeting.** They may be consulted as part of the overall review evidence gathering process but are not given a vote in the decision-making process at stage 3. The student in question must be invited to this meeting and be informed that they can bring a student representative if they so choose. However, if the student chooses not to attend, a decision will be made in their absence, which will then be communicated to them by the Registrar. During this meeting, the student can hear the concerns of the staff and respond. As a result of the meeting, staff must come to a unanimous decision regarding:

- Whether or not plagiarism is present
- The level of plagiarism (major or minor) (if any)
- The sanction (if any)

a) **If staff are not unanimously agreed**, then the outcome is inconclusive and the student must receive their assignment grade without any sanction (excepting sanctions relating to possible lateness penalties, which are a separate matter). The staff present at stage 3 must inform the Registrar of the outcome/decision of the meeting. The Registrar will inform the student.

b) **If staff are unanimously agreed**, they communicate this to the Registrar and recommend a sanction where appropriate. The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting. This letter will contain a possible sanction (see section 5.2.1.6.3 of the present document). The outcome of stage 3 cannot be appealed by the student.

The outcome(s) of plagiarism meetings at stage 2 or stage 3 above will be communicated, by the Registrar, to the Academic Council and the Head of Academic Development, who are responsible for reviewing policy and procedures surrounding plagiarism prevention, detection, and sanctions.

### 5.2.1.6.3: Sanctions Due to Breach of Examination and Assessment Regulations

Sanctions will result from any learner breach of Examination and Assessment Regulations (including academic misconduct during examinations or assessments or plagiarism). Sanctions are decided upon on a case by case basis and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repeat of a specific assignment (or assignments) or assessment(s) or examination(s)
- Repeat of a module in full beginning at the next available opportunity (as indicated by ICD)
- Suspension of the student's studies at ICD for one semester or more
- Expulsion (removal of the student from the programme(s) and/or module(s) in question)
- Any requirements to repeat assessments or examinations or modules may carry fees
- In any of the above cases, the student's result may be listed as a fail for an assessment and/or module for the relevant attempt (depending on how severe the breach of regulations is)
- In minor cases, the sanction for a breach of regulations may be a penalty applied during the grading/marking process
- In the case of repeat assessments, a student will be required to pay a repeat fee of €150
- In cases where a student is found to have demonstrated plagiarism, the sanction (as well as any sanction above listed) may include an additional requirement that a student attend or reattend plagiarism prevention and academic integrity classes and may also include an additional requirement to complete a mandatory assignment regarding plagiarism to ensure they demonstrate their understanding of what plagiarism is, why to avoid it, and how to avoid it

If the sanction results from a plagiarism detection handling process (section 5.2.1.6.2 of the ICD QA Policy), then the decision of the staff to apply a sanction during that process will not require a disciplinary committee. If the sanction possibility results from academic misconduct other than plagiarism, then there must be a disciplinary committee formed to review the matter. **A disciplinary committee is formed as follows:**

**Please note: the disciplinary committee (stage 1 below) and the disciplinary review (stage 2 below) are not to be used in cases of plagiarism. In cases of plagiarism, please refer to the Plagiarism Detection Handling Process in section 5.2.1.6.2.**

- **Stage 1 – Disciplinary Committee:** Any staff member who suspects a student has engaged in academic misconduct (including breach of assessment and examination

regulations [other than plagiarism]) must contact the Registrar and submit the Academic Integrity Referral Form (see Appendix 5.2.1.6.2). The Registrar will invite two academic staff (or more) to meet to discuss a possible case of academic misconduct. The student will be invited to this meeting (and has the right to representation [e.g. a student rep]). If the student does not attend the meeting, then the matter will still be reviewed by the staff in the student's absence and a sanction may result. If the student does attend the meeting, they will hear the staff concerns regarding possible misconduct and can respond. Staff must unanimously agree an outcome. Otherwise, no sanction can result. The list of sanctions is outlined above. Staff will report the outcome of the meeting to the Registrar. The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting including a possible sanction. The student will have one (1) week to respond whereby they either accept the outcome letter or they request a review (appeal) of the decision/sanction (see stage 2 of the present process). If the student does not respond within the required time-frame, the decision stands and the student cannot later appeal (or seek review of) this decision.

- **Stage 2 – Disciplinary Review:** The Registrar will invite two academic staff (or more) (none of the staff members present during stage 1 can be present at this meeting) to meet to discuss a possible case of academic misconduct and to consider the outcome of stage 1, above. The student will be invited to this meeting (and has the right to representation [e.g. a student rep]). If the student does not attend the meeting, then the matter will still be reviewed by the staff in the student's absence and a sanction may result. If the student does attend the meeting, they will hear the staff concerns regarding possible misconduct and can respond. Staff must unanimously agree an outcome. Otherwise, no sanction can result. The list of sanctions is outlined above. Staff have the option to either:
  - Uphold the decision from stage 1
  - Or apply a different sanction from the sanctions list
  - Or to remove all sanctions

Staff will report the outcome of the meeting to the Registrar. The Registrar will send the student a letter (or email) outlining the decision of the staff members present at the meeting including a possible sanction. The student cannot appeal the decision of stage 2 (a disciplinary review).

If a student receives a sanction, they will receive a letter (or email) from the Registrar. The outcome(s) of disciplinary meetings at stage 1 or stage 2 above will be communicated to the Academic Council, who are responsible for reviewing policy and procedures surrounding examination and assessment regulations and sanctions for breaches of these regulations.

## **5.3 Learner Diversity & Accommodation**

### **5.3.1 Students with Special Needs**

This policy must be continuously updated based on the feedback ICD receives from students. In preparing this policy, extensive resources have been referred to including:

- DAWN (Disability Advisors Working Network): *Everything you wanted to know about Reasonable Accommodation and supporting students with disabilities but nobody bothered to tell you... (2013)*
- AHEAD and Higher Education Authority, 'Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning' (2013)
- DARE: Disability Access Route to Education Handbook (2018) available at <http://accesscollege.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Dare-2019-Handbook-Web.pdf>
- The Equal Status Act 2004
- Disability Act 2005

### **Policy Statements**

It is the policy of ICD Business School to offer our courses to everyone who can attain the entrance requirements and to allow open access onto our programmes to all applicants. ICD supports the participation of learners with disabilities on all of their courses including QQI awarded programmes.

### **To Whom does this Apply?**

- a) This policy applies to all programmes delivered by ICD Business School
- b) The policy applies to all students with a disability or long-term illness as defined below.

### **Definitions:**

Definition of disability is a 'physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on someone's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

The Equal Status Act 2004 defines a disability as;

- i. The total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions, including absence, malformation, or disfigurement of the person's body.
- ii. A diagnosed chronic or potentially chronic disease.
- iii. A condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction or a condition which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgements or which results in disturbed behaviour.
- iv. In the context of providing reasonable accommodations, a disability or illness must be long term, generally it must last more than a year.

Students with special needs (specific learning needs) are requested to confidentially disclose the nature of their needs at the beginning of the academic year, and, where appropriate, to provide supporting documentation. The primary point of contact in this regard is the Registrar who both coordinates the assessment process (with the assistance of externally sourced needs assessors) and coordinates internal notifications to lecturers and other staff, as appropriate, to ensure staff are aware of specific student learning needs and to ensure that reasonable accommodations are made to teaching, learning, and assessment strategies as appropriate to ensure all learners have equal (or equivalent, with reasonable accommodations provided) learning (and demonstration of learning) opportunities. Where possible, the college will establish appropriate alternative arrangements, either to access classes or in the assessment of coursework and examinations. As external approval may be required, late notification may result in the college being unable to accommodate certain special needs, but ICD endeavours to accommodate every student's needs in every case wherever practically possible. All records will be treated in strict confidence.



### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Reasonable Accommodation: the provision of additional supports, facilities, resources or amendments to assessment tasks and activities to enable a learner with a disability or specific learning need to have a comparable opportunity to demonstrate attainment of learning outcomes as any other learner.

A Reasonable Accommodation will allow learners to show what they know and do without changing the integrity or the demands of the assessment, for example by using a reader or scribe. Reasonable Accommodation is approved before an examination or assessment and they allow candidates/learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment.

It may include:

- candidates with known and long-standing learning difficulties
- candidates with physical disabilities, permanent or temporary
- candidates with sensory impairment
- candidates who have difficulties at, or near the time of assessment that may have affected their performance in the assessment.

It is the policy of ICD Business School to grant Reasonable Accommodations as per QQI policy Assessment and Standards and also with regard to the European Standards and Guidelines.

### **Reasonable Accommodation Procedures:**

- i. Learners seeking a Reasonable Accommodation must inform the Registrar's Office upon registration with ICD Business School.
- ii. Reasonable Accommodations cannot be applied retrospectively (e.g. after an assessment has been completed)
- iii. ICD Business School is aware of its responsibilities under GDPR and relevant legislation. It may however have to disclose to certain members of staff a learner's disability or long-term illness if a Reasonable Accommodation is requested.

- iv. ICD Business School will where reasonable and possible absorb all costs in relation to Reasonable Accommodations.
- v. It is the responsibility of the learner and or their family to apply for a Reasonable Accommodation.
- vi. Only Medical documentation from a verifiable source (Registered Medical Practitioner/Consultant) will be accepted as proof of the disability or long-term illness.

The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered for the purposes of facilitating reasonable accommodations, as long as they do not impact on any competence standards being tested:

- adapting assessment materials;
- adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes;
- adaptation to equipment;
- assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille;
- assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format;
- changing or adapting the assessment method;
- changing usual assessment arrangements;
- extra time, e.g. assignment extensions;
- language modified assessment material;
- practical assistant;
- prompter;
- providing assistance during assessment;
- reader;
- scribe;
- use of assistive software;

- using assistive technology;
- use of CCTV, coloured overlays, low vision aids;
- use of a different assessment location;
- use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

It is important to note that not all of the Accommodations (as above) will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed the same accommodation for all assessments. Learners will be fully involved in any decisions about accommodations. This will ensure that individual needs can be met, whilst still bearing in mind the specified assessment criteria for a particular qualification. As the needs and circumstances of each learner are different, ICD Business School will consider any request for a reasonable adjustment on a case by case basis. Evidence of need will be required.

ICD Business School is based in Wicklow House, Dublin 2. The building is fully compliant with all disability legislation (Disability Act 2005) allowing for access to all facilities in the building (classrooms, restrooms, and different floors of the building via the elevator). ICD operates a Loop Induction System for the aurally impaired in its lecture halls and administration offices. As a small college, ICD is open to all student requests and we do our utmost to provide for and accommodate for all students' diverse needs.

### **5.3.2 Language Competency**

All prospective learners who do not qualify by the CAO route, and where English is a second language, must have an IELTS minimum score of 6.0. Equivalent English Language tests (Cambridge, TOEFL, Pearson and QQI's TIE\*) are also considered.

#### **Evidence sought:**

All applicants are asked to provide original copies of their results from the relevant English language testing body or educational institution. Applicants are also required to attend an interview in which the college's admissions staff informally assess their English language speaking competence.

#### **Language supports:**

- If not fully provided in-house, ICD must maintain an ongoing relationship with an appropriate language school (e.g. the Centre of English Studies) for the purposes of providing extra language supports for any students who require it by request.
- During induction sessions, students must be directed to English language support availability
- ICD staff and lecturers must be continuously made aware of the need to advise cohorts of the need to continuously improve their English language skills in order to gain maximum benefit from their educational experience at ICD.

#### 5.4 The Learning Environment at ICD

ICD's learning environment planning must continuously follow best practice, taking direction from research into teaching and learning. The goal of ICD's learning environment planning, resourcing and management is to provide students with the best possible platform to stimulate learning both hard (e.g. subject area knowledge) and soft skills. This follows increasing employer advice (e.g. from businesses ICD consults when devising and improving programmes) and empirical evidence regarding business school teaching, skills-learning, and graduate employability. The latter indicates that "business schools across Europe need to make sure business graduates are equipped with more than *hard* business-focused skills and competencies....an ability to utilise *softer* business-related skills and abilities are also vital" (Andrews & Higson 2008 p. 420). The following lists the eleven soft skills, identified in a review of the literature (Andrews & Higson 2008), which ICD focuses on helping learners to develop:

- Professionalism
- Reliability
- The ability to cope with uncertainty
- The ability to work under pressure
- The ability to plan and think strategically
- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Good written and verbal communication skills
- Information and Communication Technology Skills
- Creativity and self-confidence
- Good self-management and time-management skills
- A willingness to learn and accept responsibility

The learning environment at ICD must be designed to optimally develop students' soft skills (above) and hard skills, specifically to achieve programme-level and module-level learning outcomes. Continuous enhancement of the learning environment at ICD follows these principles:

- Small-class sizes
- Technology-enhanced learning facilities
- Highly accessible lecturing staff and a focus on the benefits of face-to-face meeting attendance

- Peer-learning through comprehensive contact-hours
- Focus on peer-working and team-working
- Facilities for collaborative working
- Flip (flipped)-classroom and learning off-campus
- A focus on formative feedback
- Focus on and facilities for multiple diverse assessment methods
- Respect-based and equality focused cultural environment

Alongside each principle of the ICD learning environment (outlined below) are the key soft skills (from above) that each element is focused on developing with each learner.

- **Small-class sizes:** traditional classroom-based learning situations at ICD strategically maintain low student-teacher ratios (typically no more than 40 students in a lecture cohort and no more than 20 students in a tutorial cohort) to maximise the possibility for individual learners to feel engaged in the learning experience and to foster student engagement in peer-learning through discussions with classmates and lecturers. This choice is based on evidence-based empirical research studies which indicate that “there is an inverse relationship between class size and student learning as measured by test scores and self-reports” (Karakaya, Ainscough, and Chopoorian 2001 p. 86).

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking

- **Technology-enhanced learning facilities:** ICD must continuously enhance its teaching, learning, and assessment technologies. This includes continuously enhancing:
  - Class-room technologies (e.g. smart boards)
  - Computer rooms with printing facilities,
  - The dedicated library resource centre
  - Software (e.g. Microsoft Office applications),
  - Online research facilities and journal repositories.
  - Access to and use of the ICD Moodle’s online learning environment (Virtual Learning Environment [VLE]) by staff and students in teaching, learning, and assessment (e.g. Moodle discussion groups and Wiki’s should be considered for use on modules, particularly for the purposes of peer-learning and formative lecturer feedback). The

rationale behind increasing (where beneficial) the usage of Moodle discussion groups and Wiki's lies in its ability to increase student participation in study outside of routine contact hours, to provide added opportunities for peer learning, and to give a 'voice' to those students who may be more inclined to be silent in face-to-face class discussions (Baker 2000). ICD recognises the need to promote what Martin and Grudziecki have called the 'digital bildung' model', which proffers that it is essential for modern learners to develop digital literacy as an essential 'aspect of lifelong personal development' (Martin and Grudziecki 2006 p. 260).

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Information and Communication Technology Skills

• **Accessible lecturing staff and a focus on the benefits of face-to-face meeting attendance:**

This requires:

- High contact hours between staff and students enabled optimum opportunity to students to learn and receive formative feedback on progress. The strategic choice is based on research which finds empirical evidence that contact hours between faculty and students through lecture attendance is an important facilitator of academic success (e.g. Durden & Ellis 1995; Lamdin 1996).
- Attendance monitoring in every class in order to encourage students to maximise face-to-face contact hour attendance. This follows research empirical evidence that finds "attendance does matter for academic achievement...What really seems to matter is excessive absenteeism" (e.g. "five or more misses...is associated strongly with poor academic performance") (Durden & Ellis 1995 p. 345). ICD's goal is to minimise student absenteeism given the potential reduction in student performance it can create.

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Professionalism
- Reliability
- Good self-management and time-management skills

- **Peer-learning through comprehensive contact-hours:** This requires ensuring higher than average contact hours to stimulate peer-interaction between students helping them build networks and engage in peer-learning and collaborative work (e.g. group projects) opportunities

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Reliability
- Good self-management and time-management skills

- **Focus on peer-working and team-working:** ICD lecturers should use interactive teaching methods where lecturers engage students directly in discussions and ongoing formative feedback activities in order to provide students with optimal opportunities to improve their team-working skills. This is a direct response to the increased importance placed on team-working skills in business organisations. Where practical and beneficial, modules, across all programmes, should also use group-work assignments to foster students' collaborative project working skills

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Professionalism
- Reliability
- Good self-management and time-management skills
- Creativity and self-confidence

- **Facilities for collaborative working:** ICD must continue to allow students to use its facilities (e.g. computer labs, library resource centre) during business hours for the purposes of learning and completing assignments, both individually and in teams.

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Good self-management and time-management skills
- Information and Communication Technology Skills





- **Flip (flipped)-classroom and learning off-campus:** through ICD Moodle, the pedagogical approach across all programmes at ICD must continue to evolve to incorporate technology enhance teaching, learning, and assessment in order to foster learner-centred independent learning. Lecturers must find and use opportunities to integrate technology into modules to facilitate learning outside of and inside of the classroom. This approach enables ICD’s learning environment and students to achieve the following goals (Baker 2000):
  - “Focus more on understanding and application than on recall”
  - “Provide students with more control over their own learning”
  - “Give students a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning”
  - Classroom contact hours are opened up for more active learning

<p><b>Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking</li> <li>- Good self-management and time-management skills</li> <li>- Information and Communication Technology Skills</li> <li>- A willingness to learn and accept responsibility</li> <li>- Creativity and self-confidence</li> <li>- The ability to cope with uncertainty</li> <li>- The ability to work under pressure</li> <li>- The ability to plan and think strategically</li> </ul>
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- **A focus on formative feedback:** ICD module lecturers must incorporate formative feedback for students to ensure assessment for learning and assessment as learning, and not just assessment of learning. This should where possible incorporate formative ungraded assignment work.

<p><b>Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking</li> <li>- Good self-management and time-management skills</li> <li>- A willingness to learn and accept responsibility</li> <li>- Creativity and self-confidence</li> <li>- The ability to cope with uncertainty</li> </ul>
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- The ability to work under pressure
- The ability to plan and think strategically
- Good written and verbal communication skills

- **Focus on and facilities for multiple diverse assessment methods:** Across programmes, within programmes, and within modules, all academic staff at ICD must work together to ensure that multiple approaches to assessment are used (not just class-tests and/or examinations) including:

- Individual and group/team presentations
- Group assignments
- Assignments that include peer evaluation
- Moodle discussion groups and wikis
- Graded in-class discussions in flipped-classroom contexts
- Essays
- Business-oriented reports
- Roleplay and dramaturgical demonstration of learning
- Independent secondary research assignments
- Reflective logs and blogs

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Good self-management and time-management skills
- Information and Communication Technology Skills
- A willingness to learn and accept responsibility
- Creativity and self-confidence
- The ability to cope with uncertainty
- The ability to work under pressure
- The ability to plan and think strategically
- Good written and verbal communication skills

- **Respect-based and equality focused cultural environment:** This requires:
  - ICD's culture must continue to be focused on mutual respect between students and staff.

- ICD's staff and student culture will not include or tolerate discrimination on the basis of age, race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability or disability status.
- Ensuring equal access to education. A prospective student's disability should not be an impediment to their access to ICD programmes. ICD must continue to enhance the accessibility of its facilities to ensure equal access and to ensure all possible reasonable accommodations are available to learners who need them
- Minimising or removing differential tuition/registration fees for Irish citizens, EU, and non-EU international students. ICD business school does not participate in price/fees-based discrimination; academic fees are the same for all students irrespective of nationality. The only exception to this is explained in section 7.5 of the ICD QA Policy.
- Assisting international learners with their visa applications. ICD acts as an advocate for international students regarding visa requirements to maximise the potential for all potential students to access a high-quality education. International student or international learner is defined as "a person who is not an Irish citizen but is lawfully in the State primarily to receive education and training" (Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, Revised 2014 p. 8).

**Soft-skill(s) developed (including but not limited to):**

- The capability to communicate and interact with others, either in teams or through networking
- Creativity and self-confidence
- A willingness to learn and accept responsibility
- The ability to work under pressure
- Reliability
- Good self-management and time-management skills
- Professionalism

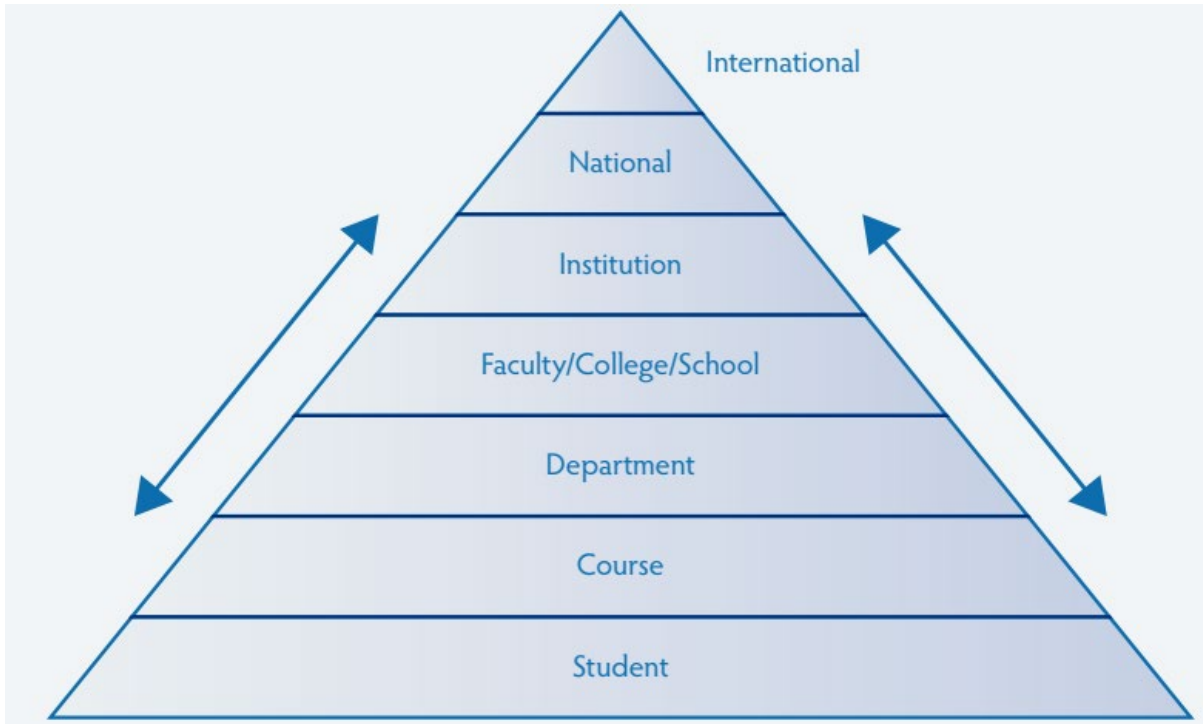
## **5.5 Policy on Learner Feedback and the Role of the Student Voice and Communications at ICD**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure learners are at the centre of all decision making and planning at ICD to continue to build a strong culture of partnership with the student population at ICD

### **Principles of Learner Engagement (PLE) at ICD**

**PLE 1 Learners are to be treated as Partners:** Following the recommendations made by the Council of Europe as part of the Bologna Process (see European Committee on Culture, Science and Education 2003), ICD defines the role of ICD's learner community, "students as competent, active and constructive partners, [who] must be seen as one of the driving forces for change" and continuous improvement within and beyond the institution through developing an increasingly cooperative relationship across the college.

**PLE2 Formal structures must be continuously enhanced to build student engagement:** ICD must continuously enhance its formal structures to ensure continuous and enhanced student engagement in decision making at all levels of the college. ICD's strategy to continuously improve learner engagement is informed by research on higher education, including the national Irish Survey of Student Engagement (StudentSurvey.ie 2018), and the *Enhancing Student Engagement in Decision-Making* Report of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education as published by the Higher Education Authority (HEA 2016). Formally and informally, ICD must continue to promote democratic student involvement in decision-making at all governance levels. Figure 5.5a presents the HEA (2016) pyramid of student engagement in governance levels.



**Figure 5.5a:** Seven governance and management levels offering opportunities for student engagement

**Source:** HEA 2016 p. IX

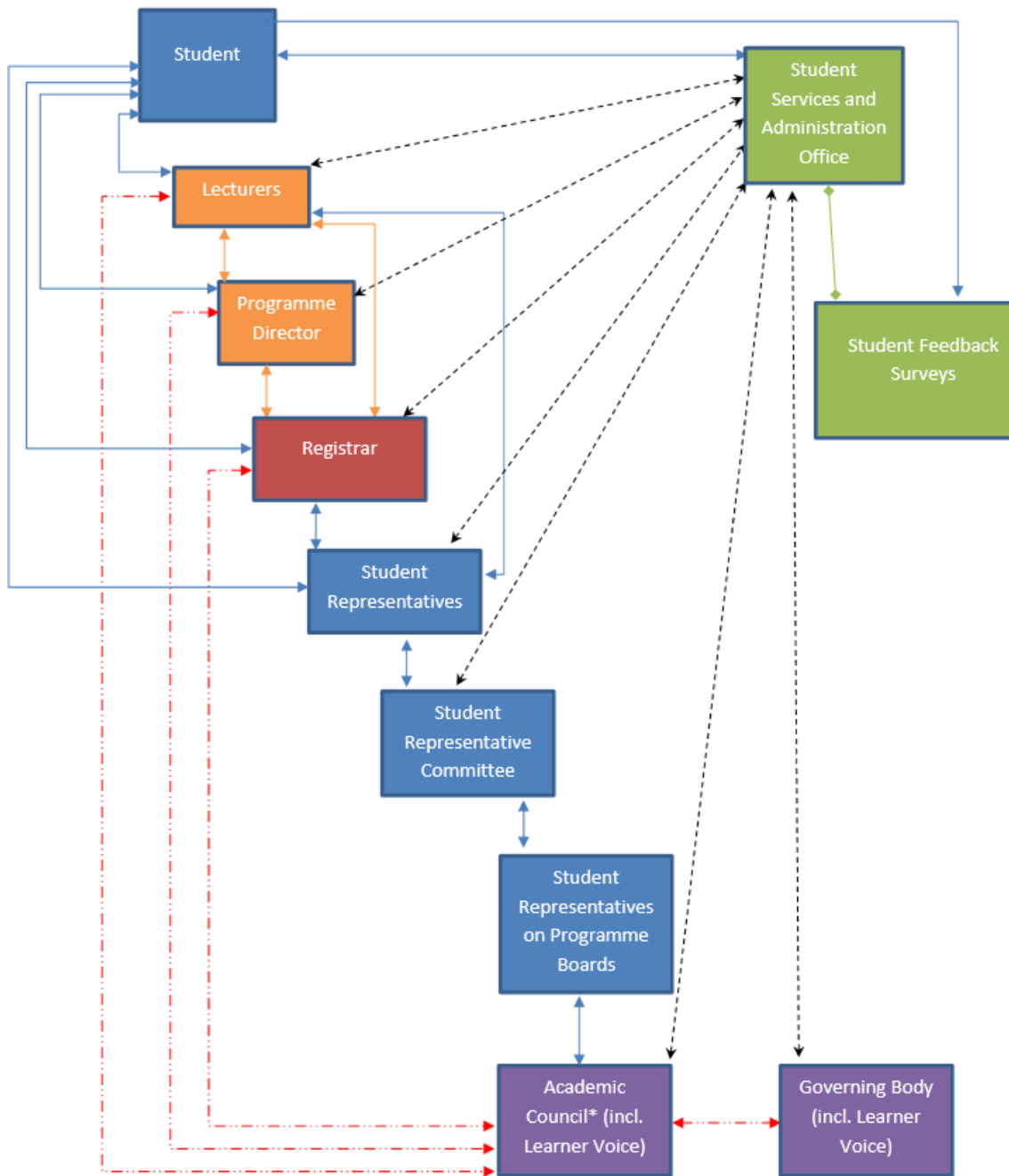
At ICD, to achieve optimum student engagement, formal and informal structures to facilitate student engagement at all governance levels must include:

- **At the student level:** all ICD students must be given a vote in electing student representative committee (SRC) members
- **At the course level:** all ICD students must be provided the opportunity to provide feedback on every module through student feedback surveys.
- **At the department level:** One SRC member per programme should be elected (by the SRC) to represent each programme at semesterised Programme Board Meetings to represent student voice, needs, and welfare.
- **At the faculty/college/school level:** ICD must continue to hold regular student engagement initiatives (e.g. social events, sports initiatives/teams, excursions)
- **At the institution level:** There must be one Graduate Learner Voice (an ICD graduate) who is a full member of the Academic Council and Governing Body to include a student perspective in the highest levels of decision making at ICD. There must be one Enrolled Learner Voice

(currently enrolled learner) who is a full member of Academic Council who will provide a key communications mechanism between the current student body and the most senior academic decision making committee at the college.

- **At the national level:** ICD must maintain a membership of and relationship with external student bodies (e.g. ICOS, the Irish Council for International students) for continuous feedback and advice on student welfare matters to ensure that ICD follows best practice, national and international education policy, in order to deliver a quality education that is firmly focused on the educational and social needs of all ICD students
- **At the international level:** ICD must continue to encourage its students to participate in international events and initiatives (e.g. the government-recognised *Education in Ireland Student Ambassadors Programme*)

ICD will follow the proposal of Professor Tom Collins, Chair of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education, that “it is axiomatic that higher education institutions (HEIs) in democratic societies have a responsibility to model democratic practices in their decision-making and routine functioning” (HEA 2016 p. 1). The communications system within the ICD community is illustrated in Figure 5.5b below.



**Figure 5.5b:** Illustration of the Communications System at ICD

**\*Please note:** The Academic Council includes various members as described elsewhere in ICD's QA Policy documents not specifically included in the above diagram for simplicity (i.e. Director of Academic Affairs; Head of Academic Development)

**Democratically Elected Student Representatives:**

Every year/stage of every programme must be given an opportunity to elect at least one student representative. Cohorts can opt to have more than one student rep at their discretion and ICD encourages, where possible and selected by the students, that all cohorts should consider gender balance in their representation. Student representatives convene meetings (the Student Representative Committee (SRC)) ideally at least once per semester. ICD provides a high degree of autonomy to its SRC enabling meeting convening, agendas, and ad-hoc meeting setting to be controlled by the students (representatives) themselves. ICD facilitates the committee with rooms and any other resource requirements wherever possible and requested. Providing both autonomy to and support to the student body and its representatives follows the recommendations of the HEA (2016 p VII) report on enhancing student engagement:

Student engagement is now understood to be a two-way process. While students are ultimately responsible for their own learning and level of engagement, student engagement is also dependent on institutional conditions, policies, and culture that enable and encourage students to get further involved.

Student representatives play a vital role in supporting the student body at ICD, e.g.:

- informing students about and helping students with their day-to-day studies and related;
- providing, on-request, representation and support for students who may be involved in academic misconduct, plagiarism, appeals, or complaints processes;
- providing information, support, and representation for students who may have specific needs or requests or personal circumstances



**One Elected SRC Representative Per Programme to Sit on Programme Boards:**

Every year, the SRC is to be given the opportunity to elect one member of the SRC per programme to be a full member of Programme Boards, invited to attend all respective Programme Board meetings, to represent a learner perspective in programme decision making and planning. Each SRC member of a Programme Boards holds a one year term of office and may be re-elected.

**One Elected Enrolled Learner Voice on Academic Council:**

Every year, the SRC is to be given the opportunity to elect one member of the SRC to be a full member of Academic Council, invited to attend all Academic Council meetings, to represent a learner perspective in academic decision making and planning. The Elected Enrolled Learner Voice on Academic Council holds a one year term of office and may be re-elected.

**Appointed Graduate Learner Voice Member on the Academic Council & Governing Body:**

Academic Council and Governing Body must appoint a Graduate Learner Voice (an ICD graduate) member to provide a learner perspective/voice on the two most senior governance committees at ICD. This initiative follows recommendations of the HEA (2016 p. VII) Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education:

The concept of student engagement refers to student involvement in decision-making processes in higher education institutions in relation to governance and management, quality assurance, and teaching and learning.

**Learner feedback surveys:**

Every semester, in the final weeks of every module, a member of ICD staff must visit a scheduled lecture to distribute feedback surveys to every student present (see appendix 5.5 for the survey [at August 2019]).

Rather than viewing “the student as a consumer” (HEA 2016 p. VII) or simply external stakeholders or users of the institution with consumer rights alone, ICD places the consumer at the centre of the organisation, an internal “partner in a learning community” (ibid). ICD adopts a developmental model for our educational strategy emphasising that ICD, its staff, and its students all have “both the rights and the responsibilities of citizens...[in] a learning community [where] students contribute to the success of their institution [and their own success] as ‘co-creators’ of their own learning” (ibid).

The goal of the student survey at ICD is to learn from the feedback to place the students’ needs at the centre of all decision-making and use student feedback to continuously improve ICD’s learning environment, teaching and learning strategies, modules, programmes, physical facilities, technological facilities, and staff and student resourcing.

After survey data is collected, it is then analysed and reported to:

- The Academic Council
- The Registrar
- The respective module lecturer
- Programme Director(s)

The findings of these surveys are beneficial in numerous ways, including, but not limited to:

- **Lecturer** Module level planning so the relevant lecturer can learn what works well and how the module or its delivery might be improved as recommended by the students
- **Programme Director** Programme level planning, including updating and improvement of module descriptors, teaching strategies, assessment strategies, and other resourcing, where beneficial and recommended by the students
- **Academic Council and Registrar** use data to improve overall teaching and learning strategies and quality assurance procedures across the entire college learning environment and across all programmes

**Drivers of student engagement at ICD:**

The above elements (democratically elected SRC members; SRC members on Programme Boards; Current Learner Voice on Academic Council; Graduate Learner Voice on Academic Council and Governing Body; learner feedback surveys) of formal learner voice/feedback/communications infrastructure at ICD enable the institution to continuously improve towards our objective of instilling the three drivers of student engagement (identified by HEA 2016) as pillars of ICD’s teaching and learning culture:

1. **ICD as a site of democratic citizenship** through fostering a sense of civic responsibility in the student body, fostering debate, and enabling participation in decision-making structures and processes
2. **ICD as a learning community** where students are encouraged to engage with staff and students as in-group learning community members and students are encouraged to “voluntarily seek to improve structures within the institution for all students, present and future” (HEA 2016 p. VIII)

3. **ICD as a critical institution** where students' "academic freedom is an essential principle...[which] guarantees the right to pursue knowledge without fear of sanction [excepting cases of academic or other student or staff impropriety]...[and encourages staff and students'] ability, and duty, to speak truth to power...[and where all staff and students have a shared responsibility to build and maintain a two-way] culture of challenge, critique and free speech" (HEA 2016 p. VIII). Students and staff as members of the learning community at ICD learn the beneficial role of providing and receiving constructive feedback and criticism on how teaching [and all staff], learning [and related infrastructure], student engagement and performance can be improved.

## 5.6 Learner Induction Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure ICD has specific structures in place to provide learners with all the information, resources and support they require to be in the best possible position to succeed in their studies at ICD.

The following learner induction principles (LIPs) apply at ICD.

**LIP 1 All learners must have access to an up to date and accurate student handbook:** Upon registration, all learners must be provided with copies of the ICD Student Handbook, which will contain information on:

- a. assessment methodologies,
- b. examination procedures,
- c. college services and facilities,
- d. key academic regulations,
- e. term calendars.

Key owner: it is the responsibility of the Admissions Office, under the supervision of the Registrar to ensure all new learners are provided with the student handbook during registration. It is the responsibility of the Management Team to ensure the up to date student handbook is available on the ICD website.

**LIP 2 All learners must have access to informative and relevant information on ICD's VLE:** This requires:

- a. module notes, readings, reading lists, module descriptor, assessment information, and past exam papers to be made available to all enrolled learners via Moodle through module Moodle pages. It is the responsibility of each individual module lecturer to ensure module Moodle pages are populated and updated comprehensively and accurately.

- b. the continued updating of a Student Document Store on Moodle, accessible to all students that will contain:
- the quality assurance policy
  - all other key quality assurance documents (e.g. forms students may need to complete for different processes)
  - relevant internal reports,
  - student tutorials and resources about study skills, research skills, Harvard referencing
  - the Student Handbook

Key owners: It is the responsibility of the Head of Academic Development and the Head of Quality Assurance to ensure the materials available on the Student Document Store on Moodle are continuously, comprehensively and accurately updated to ensure all learners are fully informed.

**LIP3 All learners (prospective and enrolled) must have access to full programme information.** This requires that, through the ICD website and the ICD VLE (Moodle), learners must be informed fully about:

- a. learning outcomes
- b. expectations of learners on the programme
- c. entry requirements
- d. assessment strategies/techniques

The Management Team and Academic Council share responsibility for monitoring information provided to current and prospective learners to ensure they are fully informed.

**LIP4 All Stage One Learners Must be Provided with (and must attend) a Mandatory Induction Module:**

In semester one of year one of all programmes all learners are required to complete a mandatory (but non-credit bearing) module. It is the responsibility of the Head of Academic Development to plan, and

coordinate delivery of, this module, to ensure it provides learners with an informative experience that enhances their knowledge, skills, and competencies, which specifically pertain to succeeding in higher education settings. The induction module must provide learners with adequate induction on, among other things,

- academic writing skills,
- IT skills (particularly pertaining to email, ICD Moodle, MS Office applications),
- study skills,
- research skills online and offline,
- how to use the ICD library facilities,
- English language education and language supports available through ICD,
- academic integrity,
- assignment/examination policies (regulations and procedures),
- plagiarism (including training on using the Harvard referencing style, understanding what plagiarism is, how and why to avoid plagiarism).
- Different culturally informed understandings of plagiarism

The mandatory induction module is designed to take account of the QQI (2013b section 2.1.1) assessment standards principle that “learners are responsible for demonstrating their learning achievement...with the support of the provider...each learner is expected to strive for academic integrity, and to undertake assessment tasks honestly and truthfully, shunning plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty or impropriety.”

## 5.7 Work-based Learning Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all work-based learning elements of programmes provide learners with:

- A valid, authentic learning experience that enables learners to achieve the respective programme and module learning outcomes
- A supportive and protective work-based learning setting where the learner is protected from all risks
- A rigorous assessment of achievement of learning outcomes specifically to be demonstrated by the learner as part of, and as a result of, the work-based learning

All work-based learning (WBL) modules or components of modules or programmes must have a dedicated module coordinator who is an ICD member of staff that will ensure the Principles of Work Based Learning are followed. Academic Council is responsible for continuously enhancing policies and supports for all WBL at ICD.

### Principles of Work Based Learning (PWBL) at ICD

**PWBL1 Assessing evidence of learning outcome accomplishment for the programme's work placement is approached with the same rigour as any other module.** Multi-modal assessment should be used to ensure comprehensive evidence of achievement of work-based learning outcomes by the learner. Example assessments to be considered include (but are not limited to):

- a series of structured seminars for both formative and summative feedback/grading,
- essays,
- a reflective placement journal
- e-portfolio assessment –which ensures demonstration and assessment of academic and practical learning,

**PWBL2 Reflective and feedback oriented approaches to learning and assessment should be used.**

This requires:



- Learning and assessment activities which encourage students to reflect on their own experience, decisions and actions within their respective placement and engage in critical self-appraisal. Learners must be provided with formative and summative feedback
- Employer and learner dialogue and feedback: As effective WBL requires good partnerships between all stakeholders, employers are also invited to complete a report on individual placement, 'sign off' on learners' learning through interim and summative review (the 'exit interview'), and provide feedback to ICD on the placement process generally.

**PWBL3 Technology should be used to enhance learning, assessment, and support for the learner:**

This requires:

- Using Moodle to continuously generate interaction between learners on placement and their lecturer (module coordinator). Given the 'distance' created between learners and between the learner and their lecturer (module coordinator), the Moodle VLE should be used to create a continuous communication mechanism:
  - between learners to ensure peer learning where they can share reflections on their experiences
  - between each learner and their lecturer/module coordinator to ensure the learner is supported and given regular feedback on their progress in their placement and their progress towards completing the WBL assignments/assessments to ensure evidence is provided to satisfactorily demonstrate achievement of WBL learning outcomes
  - between the learner and the module coordinator to ensure the learner is fully supported during periods not attending the college
- Using the Moodle VLE for assessments in order to streamline submissions of assessments regularly across the period of WBL to ensure timely feedback is provided to the learner. A further potential benefit will be an enhancement of learners' digital literacy skills.

**PWBL4 All prospective employers must be rigorously assessed before being approved**

**PWBL5 Students must be prepared for work placement through a formal work placement preparation course/module**

**PWBL6 Students must be made aware of ICD's expectations of learners and employers**

**PWBL7 Students on placement must be in regular communication with the module coordinator to ensure learner protection and to ensure sufficient progress toward achieving and demonstrating WBL learning outcomes**

### **Rationale for the inclusion of Work-Based Learning**

Work-based learning (WBL) is sometimes described as an essential component of the undergraduate student learning experience. WBL can benefit students provided it is designed in programme and module descriptors, and implemented/delivered on programmes, in a manner which ensures that it:

- **Provides students with an opportunity to engage in experiential learning** through problem-solving in real-world settings, and allows them to connect theory with practice by applying learning in practical settings.
- **Enhances employability:** Contextual learning from real work-based experiences can also enhance employability and personal development, help learners to sharpen and clarify their career plans, and develop their capacity for life-long learning.
- **Provides authentic learning experiences and assessments:** Pedagogically, engagement in real-life, work-based scenarios – and the problem-solving and interpersonal skills these entail – can provide authentic experiences that support student learning. In particular, the completion by students of a reflective learning journal throughout the duration of their placement facilitates assessment *as* and *for* learning, whereby ongoing self-assessment by students engages their metacognitive faculties and their awareness and understanding of their own learning styles and requirements.
- **Enhances problem solving skills:** Through gaining practical experience in a real-world business setting, students will develop their ability to solve problems collaboratively, identify information needs, balance and prioritise their work, share and communicate information, and work confidently and ethically within complex and internally diverse groups.

### Preparing Students for Work Experience:

All work experience or work-based learning components or modules on programmes must:

- Be overseen by an ICD work experience coordinator who will maintain regular contact with each learner on WBL placement
- Incorporate self-directed continuous assessment methodologies to be submitted over the course of work placement to ensure formative feedback and summative feedback opportunities for learners
- Ensure learners are fully informed: learners must be provided with a module descriptor, assessment briefs, and a clear outline of criteria for assessment. Learners must be furnished with details of ICD's and employers' expectations with respect to their conduct while in placement. This includes information about what learners should do in case of illness, absence, injury, or unfair treatment while on work experience. Prescribed readings and learning activity briefs must be provided via Moodle.
- Incorporate a structured and formal preparation course for learners who are tasked with engaging in WBL as part of their learning on the programme. The preparatory WBL courses must be mandatory for all learners preparing for WBL. Such a preparatory course must:
  - Prepare students for placement by familiarising them with the college's work-based learning policies, procedures, and assessment methods.
  - Introduce learners to a range of theoretical perspectives on work-based learning, knowledge and skill development, and lifelong learning.
  - Facilitate student engagement in reflective learning activities in preparation for placement.
  - Make learners' conversant with a range of core skills and competencies required for successful engagement in the contemporary workplace.
  - Enable learners to undertake a personal skills and competencies audit, and prepare a high-quality curriculum vitae.
  - Ensure all learners are engaged in topics that will help them prepare for, and to engage in, work placement in a safe and effective manner including:
    - How they organise safe transportation to work
    - Who they should contact about any problems they are having with placement (ICD and/or the employer)
    - The importance of punctuality but what to do if they are late
    - Who to contact if they cannot attend work

- What to do if they are injured in work
- Occupational health and safety and legislation: What to do if they do not feel safe or comfortable at work and who to contact if their welfare or well-being are negatively impacted by work
- Fair and unfair expectations of employers and how to report the latter to ICD
- Giving and receiving feedback in work environments

### **Securing Placements**

The WBL module coordinator/lecturer will be responsible for:

- Assisting students in communicating with potential employers and securing placements.
- Ensuring learners have an up-to-date and 'employer ready' CV,
- Providing a full class briefing on the placement process
- Preparing learners for interview through providing interview skills training workshops
- Approving or rejecting all prospective employers as a result of a desk review followed by a site visit to the employer before approval is provided

In some cases, students may be permitted to undertake their work experience in an existing place of employment, but only if the following conditions are met:

- Their role at the existing place of employment is relevant to their studies and future career plans.
- The role can support meaningful engagement in the self-assessment activities required for students to meet module learning outcomes.
- If necessary, their employer is willing to expand their existing role so that it allows learners to deploy - and reflect on - the kinds of key competencies outlined in the work experience journal.
- The employer agrees to formally engage with ICD Business School, accommodate staff monitoring visits, and carry out the interim review and exit interview assessments.

ICD will use the services of a professional recruitment agency where beneficial to locate suitable employers and to provide their expertise and experience in matching a learner's desired type of work placement, the learner's CV and skills, with a suitable employer. While this is beneficial in sourcing *possible* work placement opportunities, all work placement employers must be assessed by ICD staff before a student is put in contact with that prospective employer.

Learners are to be encouraged to source their own placements wherever possible, but, all employers must be approved by ICD before the learner undertakes placement work. Approval will only be provided for specific placement as a result of:

1. An initial rigorous desk review of the details provided by/about the employer, including the job description for the role
2. A site visit from the module coordinator to the premises where work placement will occur to ensure the environment is suitable and to provide the module coordinator with an opportunity to meet the designated employer/supervisor (who will supervise the learner) to ensure the module coordinator can assess the suitability of the work placement location, job role, and supervisor for an ICD learner. See later in the present section (protecting students) for more detail on the requirements for approval of an employer

### **Supporting Students and Ensuring Learning Outcome Achievement During Placement**

During placement, learners will receive at least two site visits per semester from ICD's academic and administrative staff for the purpose of monitoring. Further to this, one-to-one discussions will take place between employers and learners in the context of an interim, mid-placement feedback dialogue, and an exit interview. These discussions will be documented in the learner's logbook and shared with the module coordinator. Several mandatory seminars will be held each semester, with students also required to complete a number of low-stakes formative online learning activities as part of their assessment.

Throughout the course of their placement, students will be asked to undertake a number of online learning activities which will require them, firstly, to record observations and reflections in their journals, before inputting their findings using a variety of tools on the Moodle LMS (such as Wikis, discussion boards, questionnaires, and assignments). The learning journal itself will also have to be submitted via Moodle, with instructor feedback received primarily online.

During the course of placement, students will attend several evening workshops at ICD and complete a number of online learning activities, both of which will be overseen by the academic coordinator. This ensures the learner is provided with regular contact with the module coordinator so that they can report any difficulties with the placement to receive feedback and also so that the learner can receive feedback on their progress towards completing the continuous assessments (formative feedback) to ensure the learner makes adequate progress in providing evidence to demonstrate WBL learning outcome achievement.

### **Protecting Students: ICD's Expectations of Work-placement Employers:**

To protect students during work placement

- ICD rigorously reviews all prospective work placement employers before approval is provided.
  - This includes making employers aware of ICD's requirements regarding the role and responsibilities of employers taking ICD students, both from the perspective of student learning and student welfare.
  - Employers must agree to ICD's expectations regarding the protection of learners on WBL placements and also regarding the key role that employers will play in providing feedback to learners on placement (formative feedback) and feedback to ICD both during and at the end of placement to ensure learners are achieving the WBL learning outcomes effectively, and that remedial action can be taken by the module coordinator, the employer, and the learner where necessary
  - All employers must nominate an allocated workplace supervisor to the student on placement. The primary role of the workplace supervisor is to agree and monitor learning plans with students and to provide the conditions in which effective work-based learning can take place. The workplace supervisor – typically the student's line

manager or a member of human resources department – takes responsibility for building development activities into day-to-day work by structuring tasks to challenge learners, create the conditions for the acquisition of new knowledge or skills, and provide opportunities for self-reflection and evaluation.

- ICD provides a training workshop for workplace supervisors, delivered by the ‘Work Experience’ academic/module coordinator.

On commencement of placement, it is also expected that learners’ workplace supervisor(s) will provide a briefing during which employers provide students with:

- A position description or outline of the student’s expected duties
- General information about daily work routines
- Details about pay, expenses, and leave/holiday arrangements (if applicable).
- Policies with respect to attendance, punctuality, and sick leave.
- The history of the organisation, the nature of its business/products and services, its culture and mission statement
- Important workplace policies and regulations (i.e. health and safety, ICT usage, mutual respect, code of conduct, disciplinary policies etc.)
- Key people within the organisation or students’ department/ supervisors and reporting relationships
- Any other important information typically provided to employees during induction.

In addition to providing general support to placement students, workplace supervisors also have a crucial role to play in evaluating learner progress and reporting to the academic coordinator. The main methods used for evaluating students’ performance and progress are the interim review and exit interview. Both of these reviews take place at specific junctures in the placement process, though the exact date and time are to be agreed between the workplace supervisor and placement student.

In addition to their responsibility for evaluating student performance and liaising with the academic coordinator, the workplace supervisor will take on a pastoral role in their interactions with learners. Though learners are encouraged to take a proactive approach in seeking support from placement supervisors, supervisors are equally expected - where possible – to:

- Oversee the student's day-to-day work and provide regular informal feedback and consultation
- Assign work to the student that facilitates quality learning opportunities
- Keep track of issues with student attendance, punctuality, motivation, and discipline
- Make appropriate time available to the student for effective supervision
- Monitor their completion of the placement journal and progress in achieving agreed improvement goals
- Act as an advocate who will ensure that the learner's interests and concerns are appropriately addressed
- Meet with the student periodically to discuss their experiences and sound out their concerns
- Liaise proactively with the academic coordinator in relation to any problems that may emerge in the course of the student's placement

The academic coordinator has a liaison and support role throughout the duration of placement and functions as the first point-of-contact at ICD for the workplace supervisor and the student. In addition to sharing milestone reports (e.g. the interim review, exit interview) with the academic coordinator, the workplace supervisor is encouraged to contact them about any questions or concerns that they may have about the placement process or individual student.

In emergencies, or when the academic coordinator is not available, employers and students are advised to contact the college's Registrar.



## **Health and Safety**

Employers maintain overall responsibility for the health and safety of learners while they attend placement at their premises and are responsible for creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace and providing information, training and instruction to employees. For the purposes of placement, ICD expects employers to treat students with the same duty of care as any other employee. However, as learners remain registered ICD students during the course of their placement, we require employers and appointed workplace supervisors to contact the college about any matter related to a learner's health or wellbeing. The first point of contact for such communication is the academic coordinator, followed by the college Registrar.

### Appendix 5.2.1.1.4: Declaration of Authorship Sheet

To be submitted by all learners along with all assignment submissions (except examinations).



#### Declaration of Authorship

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of (insert course title here:)

\_\_\_\_\_ is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

I also certify that all primary and secondary research (where applicable) has been carried out by I (the undersigned) as described within this document.

I have made myself aware of how to avoid plagiarism and how to ensure academic integrity with regard to research and completing assessments.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Candidate) ID No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5.2.1.6.2: Academic Integrity Referral Form



**Academic integrity (plagiarism OR academic misconduct [breach of assessment and examination regulations]) referral form** (please submit to college Registrar)

<b>Referrer</b>		<b>Programme director</b>	
<b>Programme</b>		<b>Module</b>	
<b>Assessment/examination</b>			
<b>Learner</b>		<b>Date alleged</b>	
<b>Narrative (detailed description of concern or incident) (e.g. plagiarism, or other form of academic misconduct)</b>	Please note: in cases of plagiarism, please refer to section 5.2.1.6.2 of ICD's QA policy. In cases of academic misconduct <u>not including plagiarism</u> please refer to the disciplinary committee procedure in section 5.2.1.6.3 of ICD's QA policy.		
<b>Have you met with the learner? (this is not a requirement before or after submitting this form)</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>
<b>If yes, what was the purpose/outcome of this meeting?</b>			

<b>Is this a repeat 'offence'? If so, please explain below</b>			<b>Yes</b>	
<b>Has the learner been informed of this referral? (it is not a requirement that you inform the learner, but, you, or other ICD staff may need to contact (or meet) this learner after you submit this form to discuss the matter)</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	
<b>Please list and describe any attached documents</b>				
*If you need any assistance with this or any other section of this form, please contact the Head of Academic Development and/or the Registrar				
<b>Signed</b>		<b>Date</b>		

## Appendix 5.5: Student Feedback Survey

### International College Dublin Business School

#### *INTERIM Quality Assessment Form*

Thank you for enrolling in ICD. To ensure the sustained quality of the lectures, material and support provided, I would be grateful if you would complete the following questions in relation to your module.

*Completion of this section is optional:*

Participant's Name:- \_\_\_\_\_ Course Module:- \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Telephone No: \_\_\_\_\_ Lecturer's Name:- \_\_\_\_\_

		Very	Good	Good	Fair	Poor
1.	Preparation for Lecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Pace adopted in lecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Logical approach to course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

		_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	Delivery of Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Ability to deal with questions during lecturers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Ability to highlight major points for study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Was lecture time used to maximum advantage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Lecturers interest in course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	General Comments				

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**Student Support / Facilities**

*Please tick the box with the most appropriate response;*

- ◆ I am satisfied with the quality of service provided by course administration to date.  
**Strongly Agree** ☐      **Agree** ☐      **Disagree** ☐      **Strongly Disagree** ☐

- ◆ I was happy with enrolment, fee payment and material distribution procedures at commencement.  
**Strongly Agree** ☹      **Agree** ☹      **Disagree** ☹      **Strongly Disagree** ☹
  
- ◆ I have experienced a satisfactory level of service at ICD  
**Strongly Agree** ☹      **Agree** ☹      **Disagree** ☹      **Strongly Disagree** ☹
  
- ◆ I am satisfied with the level of cleanliness of the college/toilets etc.  
**Strongly Agree** ☹      **Agree** ☹      **Disagree** ☹      **Strongly Disagree** ☹
  
- ◆ I have a favourable impression of the college so far and would recommend it to colleagues.  
**Strongly Agree** ☹      **Agree** ☹      **Disagree** ☹      **Strongly Disagree** ☹

**Suggestions?**

*If you have any suggestions which you feel would improve the quality of our courses in ICD, please outline these below for my attention:-*

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***Thank you for taking the time to undertake this quality audit***

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