



Quality Assurance System 2018

**Mission, Vision, and Principles for Quality
Assurance**

CCT College Dublin (CCT)

FOREWORD

The 2018 revision of the CCT College Quality Assurance Manual brings it in line with the Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines developed by QQI for use by all Providers¹ and the Sector Specific Quality Assurance Guidelines for Independent/Private Providers Who Come to QQI on a Voluntary Basis², along with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, May 2015³.

The revision also takes into consideration the change in scope of programmes offered by CCT College Dublin leading to QQI awards, now encompassing policies and procedures applicable to programmes leading to awards up to level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

This most recent edition was informed by consultation with key stakeholders of the College including students, staff and faculty and following engagement with the wider higher education community. The manual was approved by the Academic Council and subsequently reviewed by an independent panel on behalf of QQI and approved as being appropriate for the scope of provision to which it applies.

Prior to this latest revision, the manual underwent a significant review encompassing substantial changes in 2015.

The College was first established in 2005 and the first edition of the QA Manual was published in 2008, following agreement of the College's QA system with the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), in Ireland, a major milestone for the College. While the original QA system manual, was revised and updated twice (with many continuous minor updates), this 2015 edition was complete revision, with input from all CCT staff, some CCT students, external peer review, and other external stakeholders.

A key driver for this re-write was the strategic decision by CCT in 2013 to only provide QQI validated higher education programmes and professional programmes in its areas of expertise. This decision was taken in the context of the overall Irish government strategy on internationalisation. CCT continues to be a QQI only provider of higher education programmes in the areas of ICT, Computing and Business.

The provision of high-quality higher education and professional programmes in ICT, Computing and Business, through a learner-oriented culture, is at the heart of what we do at CCT. Effective and ongoing quality assurance procedures underpin and guide our efforts to ensure the consistent and superior delivery of education and training, and related academic support services.

Neil Gallagher
College President

¹ QQI's Core Statutory QA Guidelines

<https://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Core%20Statutory%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines.pdf>

² QQI's Sector Specific QA Guidelines

<http://www.qqi.ie/Downloads/Sector%20Specific%20Quality%20Assurance%20Guidelines%20V2.pdf>

³ European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

CCT MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the CCT College Dublin (CCT) is to provide learners with accessible and flexible education opportunities, and professional development programmes that reflect current and emerging knowledge and practices relevant to the learner and to employers. CCT specialises in provision of computing and business related programmes of learning.

Through a learner-centred culture of enquiry, innovation and excellence, we challenge our learners, staff, and all other stakeholders to create, apply and share knowledge and values in a supportive, responsive, caring, and vibrant learning environment.

CCT is committed to developing graduates with personal and professional knowledge and skills that will enable them undertake the roles, responsibilities and challenges posed by business, industry, the professions, public service and society.

CCT VISION

CCT's Vision is to be a leading specialist college of teaching and learning excellence, inspiring individuals and transforming lives.

We will do this through:

- inspiring a lifelong passion for learning, exploration and discovery that will ensure leadership with a global outlook and innovative approaches to sustainable economic, social, cultural and personal development.
- embracing access, equality of opportunity and progression in order that our diverse learner population is empowered to succeed as citizens of a challenging world.
- blending theory with applied enquiry, industry-aligned, scholarly, professional and vocational pursuits with scientific and creative expression in the broad disciplines of Business and Information Communications Technology. Through these we serve to improve our region, our country and our world.
- championing a co-operative teaching and research culture that connects with other higher education institutions, schools, industry, local communities, government and non-governmental development agencies.
- actively nurturing continuous enhancement of all of our relationships to progress excellence in innovation, knowledge transfer and reputation in an international higher education landscape.

SECTION 1 - QUALITY CULTURE

CCT College Dublin (CCT) has committed itself to embracing an inclusive Quality Assurance (QA) culture.

As an independent, third-level educational institution, providing full-time and part-time ICT, Computing and Business programmes, CCT has ownership of its QA policies and procedures. In this context, it aims to be benchmarked against the most reputable institutions in national, European and global contexts. CCT is conscious of its obligations, as a provider of programmes leading to Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) awards, requiring it to agree its policies and procedures for QA with QQI, to continuously improve its quality assurance instruments and to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness for ensuring standards in programmes and the learning experience.

This Quality Manual describes the key structures, processes, policies, procedures, and quality assurance mechanisms that facilitate a systematic approach to embedding a continuous quality improvement ethos within CCT. This revision has been conducted to take on board feedback from internal and external sources over last two years.

The CCT quality system is all encompassing, incorporating the academic and commercial activities of the College and including clearly defined roles and responsibilities. It is underpinned by a sound governance structure that separates academic and commercial governance and values the input of all stakeholders, including providing for formal learner representation within the governance system.

CCT has invested substantial time and resource to ensure the quality system is tailored to the needs and activities of CCT and is reflective of the organisation's strategic objectives. Furthermore, the quality system integrates with CCT's legal obligations as a College and an employer in the areas of health and safety, data protection, immigration, and employment law.

The primary focus of CCT's quality assurance policies and practices is the maintenance of academic standards and relate to the direct activities of the College. The College is, however, mindful of the potential impact of peer relationships and external partnerships on academic standards and the quality of our graduates as well as the practice and reputation of CCT as a reputable education provider. CCT therefore ensures appropriate consideration is given by the governance structures of the College for any potential partnerships and peer relationships and the potential impact or influence on the College, its reputation, and stakeholders. The College does not presently engage in any collaborative provision or joint awards. Should it seek to do so in the future appropriate quality assurance procedures will be agreed with QQI. Existing partnerships and external relationships are with reputable bodies including:

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)
- The Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- The Higher Education Colleges Association
- The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
- The International College of Business
- International Conference on Engaging Pedagogy
- Edexcel – Pearson, UK
- Microsoft Academy
- The Irish Computer Society

1.1 PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AT CCT

The following principles underpin the college's Quality Assurance strategy.

- Transparency and Accountability
- Communications and Information
- Equality and Diversity
- Stakeholder engagement
- Learner Participation
- Access, Transfer and Progression
- Quality of our graduates
- Dynamic and Active Learning
- Learner Support
- Fair and Consistent Assessment
- Engaging and Innovative Teaching
- Programme Development, Delivery and Review
- Lifelong Learning
- Staff Development
- Campus Learning Environment
- Verifiable Data and Monitoring Mechanisms
- Provision and Maintenance of Resources
- Continuous Improvement
- Research, Development, and Innovation
- Quality and standards of QQI awards

Quality Assurance in CCT College draws on overarching principles, as set out in QQI Quality Assurance Guidelines and Criteria for Provider Access to Initial Validation of Programmes Leading to QQI Awards⁴:

a) *The Learning Outcome Principle*; Higher and Further Education and Training exists principally for the purpose of enabling people to learn and accordingly, provision should be designed, implemented and evaluated with learning outcomes in mind.

b) *The Implementation Principle*; Quality Assurance procedures should be fully implemented by providers.

c) *The Externality Principle*; A provider-owned quality assurance system makes appropriate use of external persons who are independent of the provider and who are expertly qualified to make national and international comparisons.

d) The ESG Principles⁵;

- Providers have the primary responsibility for the quality of their provision and its assurance,
- The interests of society in the quality and standards of higher and further education, need to be safeguarded,
- The quality of academic programmes needs to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of education,

⁴ QQI Guidelines for Initial Access to Validation, <http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/QA%20Guidelines%20and%20Criteria%20for%20Provider%20Access%20to%20Initial%20Validation%20of%20Programmes%20Leading%20to%20QQI%20Awards%20-%20HET.pdf#search=externality%20principle%2A>

⁵ ESG, http://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

- There needs to be efficient and effective organisational structures within which those academic programme can be provided and supported,
- Transparency and the use of external expertise in quality assurance processes are important,
- There should be encouragement of a culture of quality within higher and further education institutions,
- Processes should be developed through which institutions can demonstrate accountability, including accountability for the investment of money,
- Quality assurance for accountability purposes is fully compatible with quality assurance for enhancement purposes,
- Institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality at home and internationally,
- Processes should not stifle diversity and innovation.

e) The Irish Higher Education Quality Network (IHEQN) Principles as outlined in the following documentation,

- IHEQN *Principles of Good Practice in Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement for Irish Higher Education and Training 2005*,
- IHEQN *Principles for Reviewing Effectiveness of QA Procedures in Irish Higher Education and Training 2007*,
- IHEQN *Common Principles for Student Involvement in QA 2009*