

<b>PROVIDER NAME:</b> CCT College Dublin			
<b>Policy Area:</b> Standard 4: Approval, Design, Monitoring and Review of Programmes			
<b>Procedure Title:</b>	CCTP402: Programme Review and Revalidation Policy	<b>Policy Number:</b> CCTP402	<b>Version:</b> 1.3

### Policy

As part of the monitoring and enhancement activity in CCT College, and in accordance with requirements from QQI, CCT undertakes ongoing reviews of programmes. This takes the form of annual review, and the more substantial programme review which normally occurs every 5 years. Programme review can occur earlier than the five-year validation period allows for when requested by QQI or when determined as appropriate by the College. Programme review can be undertaken for a programme in isolation or for a suite of related programmes.

Programme review is intended as an opportunity to assess the ongoing suitability of a programme for its intended purpose and objectives, its continued relevance to industry or society, and its ongoing ability to provide a supportive and effective learning environment and an appropriate assessment strategy. Periodic programme review should be informed by the annual monitoring of the programme along with feedback from all key stakeholders and analysis of applicable data relating to enrolment, retention, progression and attainment.

According to section 3.3 of QQI's *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines*, programme monitoring and review is taken as an opportunity to:

- Ensure that the programme remains appropriate, and to create a supportive and effective learning environment
- Ensure that the programme achieves the objectives set for it and responds to the needs of learners and the changing needs of society
- Review the learner workload
- Review learner progression and completion rates
- Review the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners
- Inform updates of the programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods; learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners
- Update third party, industry or other stakeholders relevant to the programme(s)
- Review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme

Regular programme monitoring provides information for periodic programme review. The information collected is analysed and the programme adapted to ensure it is up to date. Revised programme specifications are published. (pp 11-12).

Programme review allows for the significant modification of a programme, but where the outcome is the development of a new programme rather than the modification of an existing one, this must be addressed as a new validation as per the CCT validation policy and QQI policy for the validation of programmes.

Permitted modifications within programme review include new minor awards, new exit awards, new electives and streams, new locations for programme delivery, new assessment strategies and new programme content, for example. If such modifications are proposed, upon completion of the review process, revalidation of the programme must be sought.

**Staff Involved:** Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Faculty, QA Office, Faculty Office, Lecturers, Programme Leader

Method(s) used to carry out this procedure	Responsibility	Evidence generated by this procedure
<p><b>The objectives of a programme review</b></p> <p>Programme review is intended as a means of evaluating a programme, applying CCT College’s experience of providing the programme to date with a view to determining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) What has been learned about the programme, as an evolving process (by which learners acquire knowledge, skill and competence), from the experience of providing it for the past five or so years?</li> <li>(2) What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage and overall?</li> <li>(3) What reputation do the programme and provider have with stakeholders (learners, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, communities of practice, employers, other education and training providers) and in particular what views do the stakeholders have about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the programme’s history and its future?</li> <li>(4) What challenges and opportunities are likely to arise in the next five years and what modifications to the programme are required in light of these?</li> <li>(5) Whether the programme considering its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes demonstrably addresses explicit learning needs of target learners and society?</li> <li>(6) What other modifications need to be made to the programme and its awards to improve or reorient it?</li> <li>(7) Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?</li> <li>(8) Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of</li> </ol>		



The Dean of Faculty and Programme Leader along with the Dean of Academic Affairs are required to meet to determine the approach and timeline for programme review. This planning phase should culminate in the drafting of a proposed terms of reference by the Dean of Faculty. This would normally involve consultation with QQI. The Dean of Academic Affairs will write to QQI to arrange consultation at this stage. It is imperative that terms of reference fully document the key parameters of the review, so all parties are aware of the framework within which the review is being undertaken. Annual monitoring, sectoral change, legislative change and industry developments should be considered and utilised to inform this. Where there is the potential for additional minor or exit awards, this must be stipulated as an area for consideration within the terms of reference.

QQI advise the terms of reference should:

- (1) Identify the programme to be reviewed.
- (2) Set out the review leader and team.
- (3) Set out the timetable for the stages of the review up to the application for revalidation.
- (4) Specify detailed objectives, strategies and plans for:
  - a. the Provider’s Programme Review; and
  - b. the Independent Programme Review.
- (5) Set out when, how and by whom the necessary programme documentation versions, reports and responses will be prepared and approved.
- (6) Identify the panel that will conduct the Independent Programme Review and (subject to QQI agreement) the Independent Evaluation Report following application to QQI for revalidation.

Any programme review should ask whether a programme should continue to be provided. Therefore, a programme review should always be planned to be capable of making and defending a recommendation to cease providing the programme in case this may prove necessary.

The review process should be designed to ensure that conclusions and recommendations are always based on valid, reliable evidence including quantitative evidence.

**Approval of Terms of Reference**

On completion of the draft terms of reference, these are submitted to Academic Council for consideration. This may be done by email circulation where a meeting is not scheduled in the specified timeframe. Academic Council has the authority to approve or reject the terms of reference. Where they are rejected, specific feedback detailing concerns and requirements must be provided to allow for corrective action. Once terms of reference are approved by Academic Council, the Dean of Academic Affairs will submit them

Dean of Faculty,  
Programme Leader, Dean  
of Academic Affairs

Terms of Reference

Academic Council

Confirmation of approval

<p>to QQI with a request for approval. QQI must formally agree (in writing) the Terms of Reference for the Programme Review before the review is started if it is proposed to use the same external panel for the Programme review phase and the revalidation phase.</p> <p><b>Self-Evaluation</b></p> <p>The self-evaluation is undertaken by the Dean of Faculty, the Dean of Teaching and Learning, and the Dean of Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the Programme Development Team and departmental heads evaluating their areas of responsibility. A workshop approach is used for the self-evaluation. In the workshop process the ABC Learning Design model is used to re-design the programme and modules. This supports designing module Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) that is aligned with UDL principles. ABC Design is based on the pedagogic theory of Professor Diana Laurillard’s Conversational Framework (2002) and her concept of “learning types”. Her six learning types have proved to be a very effective method to help lecturers understand, describe and discuss the student learning process. The six learning types are acquisition (i.e.to read/watch/listen); investigation; practice; discussion; collaboration and production. UDL aims to improve the educational experience of all students by introducing more flexible methods of teaching, assessment and service provision to cater for the diversity of learners in our classrooms. The three principles are to provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression. These principles are incorporated into programme design to ensure that the diversity of learners are engaged across the lifecycle of the programmes, and their needs are anticipated and accommodated where necessary. It is also important to include a broad and diverse suite of assessment methods so that all learners have an equal opportunity to showcase their learning.</p> <p>The self-evaluation must include an in-depth analysis of all available data relating to the programme. Outcomes should not be pre-determined and must be evidence based. The continuation of a programme and approval to progress to re-validation will be determined by the evidence of ongoing demand by potential learners and by employers, the progression and success rates and factors that influence those, the financial viability of the programme and the ongoing availability of resources and any specialist regulatory or professional body requirements.</p> <p>The self-evaluation must take in the views of all stakeholders, internal and external, and should seek to include a representative sample. Records of all feedback sought must be retained and provided as supporting documentation. Stakeholder feedback can be obtained through any variety of means including surveys and focus groups. The self-evaluation should be recorded using the template provided by QQI and must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Baseline qualitative and quantitative information on the previously validated programme</li> </ul>	<p>Dean of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Dean of Faculty Dean of Teaching and Learning Dean of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Dean of Faculty</p>	<p>Self-evaluation records e.g. minutes of focus groups, survey outcomes, etc. and self-evaluation report</p> <p>SER and Programme Documents Submitted</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An evaluation of the programme management and evolution over the past five years including details of any specific QA policies applicable to the programme and the fitness for purpose of these.</li> <li>● A contemporary evaluation of the programme by stakeholders</li> <li>● An analysis of the programme in light of the findings</li> <li>● Documented revision of the programme and action plan</li> </ul> <p>The self-evaluation report must also be accompanied by a proposed programme, documented using the QQI Validation Template, including an independent evaluation against the validation criteria. On completion the documents must be submitted to the Dean of Academic Affairs who will arrange for a review and evaluation against the core validation criteria. Normally this comprises a desk review by a QA expert and / or subject matter expert(s). The Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty may also act as reviewers.</p> <p>On completion of the review and evaluation the Independent Evaluation Template must be completed in full. This should identify how the criteria are met and where this is evidenced. Where criteria are not met or not evidenced this should also be recorded and the Programme Development Team will be required to act upon this and provide a response. Once a response has been issued, detailing the corrective action taken, the documentation will be submitted to the QE Committee for a recommendation to Academic Council.</p> <p>The completed programme self-evaluation and supporting documents must be submitted to the QA Office for review by the QE Committee.</p> <p>The QE Committee is required to review the self-evaluation and determine whether it feels the review is as fulsome as it could be, whether the recommendations and proposed actions are evidence-based and that alternative actions have been considered but set aside for justifiable reason, that the proposed modifications are within the parameters of programme review, that operational impacts of proposed modifications. Upon completion of the review, the QE Committee may make a recommendation to Academic Council for the submission of the review documents on to the independent review panel. Equally a recommendation could be made that determines the programme is no longer viable.</p> <p>Academic Council is required to undertake its own review and endorse or reject the recommendation of the QE Committee. The self-evaluation may be returned to the programme review team at any stage in</p>	<p>Dean of Faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs</p> <p>QE Committee</p> <p>Academic Council</p> <p>Dean of Academic Affairs</p>	<p>Minutes</p> <p>Minutes</p> <p>Notification/ Q-Help Record</p> <p>Panel Membership</p>
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the approval process with recommendations to be addressed. Only when endorsed by the Academic Council can the documentation be submitted to the independent review panel. The QA Office acts as a point of contact with the Chair and Secretary of the independent review panel. Where a recommendation to discontinue a programme is approved by Academic Council, the Dean of Academic Affairs is required to notify QQI.

Stage 2: Independent Evaluation

**Panel Membership**

The panel of independent evaluators are proposed to QQI by CCT, having been approved by Academic Council, as part of the agreement of terms of reference.

Panel members must be independent of the College, and any pre-existing relationships must be declared. Where potential perceived or actual conflicts of interest exist, individuals will not normally be able to act as panel members.

Independent evaluators are required to have the necessary qualifications, experience and expertise to enable them to make judgements against QQI criteria with a view to making a recommendation on whether or not a programme should be validated and provide justification for their decisions.

The expertise of a panel is determined by its membership. Expertise will normally reflect the programme's discipline area but will also include generic areas such as pedagogy, assessment, and quality assurance but may also include relevant industry, sectoral or legislative matters applicable to the review.

The panel should include:

- a secretary, independent of the College, who will agree the agenda and draft the report in consultation with the panel.
- a chairperson who is a subject matter expert or experienced in quality assurance. The Chair should be knowledgeable of QQI policy.
- A learner representative
- An industry / sector representative
- Academic experts (normally not less than 2)

<p><b>Independent Panel Review and Site Visit</b></p> <p>Except where agreed otherwise, the approved panel should normally be provided with a minimum of 2 weeks to review documentation for programme review in advance of the site visit. Arrangements for panel members' accommodation will be made by the College. The panel will meet the evening prior to the site visit to share their observations and agree their approach to the site visit.</p> <p>The review of documentation and the site visit must enable the panel to conduct a systematic review. The panel is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the Programme Review considering the self-evaluation report, the programme documentation, and any information obtained through the site visit, and evaluate the programme and any proposed modifications against QQI's validation criteria. On conclusion of the site visit the Panel must prepare an Independent Programme Review Report. This can include recommendations and conditions along with the overall finding. The panel will submit the report to the Dean of Academic Affairs for factual accuracy prior to the formal provision of the report to the College.</p> <p><b>Formal Consideration of Panel Report and College Response</b></p> <p>Upon receipt of the final report the QA Office will circulate this to let / Management and the Programme Leader. The Dean of Academic Affairs will oversee the preparation of the response to the report and the creation of an implementation plan. The Programme Leader is normally responsible for compiling this and ensuring all required action is taken, except where the actions required fall within the authority of senior management.</p> <p>Once the proposed response and implementation plan is drafted this is submitted to the Dean of Academic Affairs for an initial review. The Dean of Academic Affairs may return the submission to the Programme Leader or submit it to Academic Council for review with a view to approving for submission to the review panel.</p> <p>Only when Academic Council is satisfied that the panel report has been responded to appropriately, including the provision of a realistic implementation plan, and the updated proposed programme documents, will it be approved for submission to the panel.</p>	<p>QA Office</p> <p>Panel</p> <p>QA Office Dean of Academic Affairs Programme Leader</p>	<p>Panel report</p> <p>Panel response</p>
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Monitoring		
Monitor (Job Title)	Frequency	Monitoring Method(s)
Dean of Academic Affairs / QA Office  Academic Council	As per review schedule	Minutes of Academic Council Mock panel reports Panel reports Response to panel Actions implementation

**POLICY CONTROL SHEET**

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Programme Review and Revalidation Policy</b>
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Dean of Academic Affairs, QA Office, Programme Leaders
<b>Issuance Date</b>	09 March 2026
<b>Effective Date</b>	09 March 2026
<b>Last Review Date</b>	July 2025
<b>Supersedes</b>	Version 1.2
<b>Next Review Date</b>	July 2027
<b>Designated Reviewer(s)</b>	Dean of Academic Affairs, QA Office
<b>Scope</b>	Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of Faculty, QA Office,

**Revision History**

<b>Revision</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Revision Description</b>	<b>Originator</b>	<b>Approved By</b>
New Policy	April 2018	New policy to reflect the revised validation policy of QQI and to provide detailed guidance to staff	QA Committee	Academic Council
Version 1.1	September 2019	Update to reflect replacement of Head of Faculty with School Manager.	SMT	Academic Council
Version 1.2	June 2025	Minor updates for presentation purposes	Dean of Academic Affairs	Academic Council
Version 1.3	March 2026	Updates to include explicit references to UDL and the ABC Model of learning design	Dean of Academic Affairs	Academic Council

**References upon which the Policy section is based**

<b>CCT Policy area</b>	Student Centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
<b>Statutory &amp; System Wide Basis</b>	The Irish Qualifications and Quality Act (Education and Training), 2012; European Standards and Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area, QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013
<b>Related CCT Policies / Forms</b>	CCTP401 – Validation Policy

