

IBAT COLLEGE DUBLIN

# Quality Assurance Manual

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2012

## **FOREWORD**

This Quality Assurance manual represents a major update of the IBAT College Dublin document which was previously compiled for submission to [the Higher Education and Training Awards Council \(HETAC\)](#) in IBAT College's application for accreditation. The original manual was compiled in anticipation of what were perceived as the major Quality Assurance elements of running Higher Education programmes.

This revision is based on the ongoing review of practice, the experience of all staff involved in the implementation of HETAC policy, the management and administration of academic provision within the College. The manual also reflects more recent good practice initiatives within higher education, including HETAC developments since the last publication [e.g. [Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training \(2007\)](#), [Provider Monitoring Policy and Procedures \(2010\)](#), [Assessment and Standards \(2009\)](#), [General Programme Validation Manual 2010](#)] and the European [Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance within Higher Education Institutions](#) (abbreviated as [ESG](#)).

The ongoing feedback from staff, students, graduates and external stakeholders, including external examiners and strategic partners has largely contributed to the development of this revised edition. Consultation with students is conducted in accordance with the (HETAC-adopted) Irish Higher Education Quality Network [Common Principles for Student Involvement in Quality Assurance/Quality Enhancement \(2009\)](#). The College is committed to ongoing review and the gathering of feedback with a view to improving practice, raising standards and enhancing the student experience. The College is scheduled to complete a programmatic review in May 2011 and Institutional Review in April 2012.

The provision of high quality Higher Education and Professional programmes with a particular emphasis on Business and Accountancy is at the heart of what we do. Effective and ongoing Quality Assurance procedures underpin and guide our efforts to ensure the consistent and superior delivery of education and training.

**Shane Ormsby**  
**Director**

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# 1 Introduction and Policy Statements

## 1.1 Overview

The Institute of Business and Technology (IBAT College, the College) was established in May 2004 by Shane Ormsby and Stephen Walsh. IBAT College Dublin is located in the town of Swords, County Fingal (an administrative county in Ireland, which is one of the three such counties formed from the former County Dublin), which is close to Dublin airport, serviced by regular bus routes and is a thriving shopping, business and residential area. County Fingal had a population of 239,813 at the census in 2006, a 22% increase from the 2002 census and nearly 6% of the country's population now live in the Fingal area. IBAT College Dublin is the only higher education provider in County Fingal, boasting a student population of over one thousand students, comprising a growing number of full-time and part-time students.

IBAT College Dublin strives to create the best learner-centric environment for all its students and to provide a rounded quality education that maximises learners' career opportunities. Since its establishment the College has been keen to differentiate itself as a provider of high-quality higher education and has succeeded in attaining accreditation by over ten awarding bodies. IBAT College Dublin is committed to providing an education service consistent with the aims outlined in the Qualification (Education and Training) Act, 1999, which espoused among other things the establishment of consistent standards in education and training, the promotion of quality, increasing access, transfer and progression opportunities and the ability to understand and compare qualifications at home and abroad.

In June 2006, IBAT College Dublin was formally awarded HETAC approval to deliver a Higher Certificate in Business level 6 programme making it one of only a small number of private colleges that have achieved this accolade. This offering was complemented in January 2008 with approval to offer Level 7 Bachelor of Business, a 1-year add-on and 3-year *ab initio* programme. In turn, this was significantly augmented by the addition of the Bachelor of Business (Honours) Level 8 (with three sets of electives) in September 2008. IBAT College Dublin is listed as a member of the [Central Applications Office \(CAO\)](#) and utilises the CAO system to facilitate student application/admission to these HETAC-accredited programmes, since September 2008.

IBAT College Dublin is a [Further Education and Training Awards Council \(FETAC\)](#)-accredited college offering FETAC awards (levels 5 and 6) in Business Studies, IT, English Language and Law.

In September 2006 IBAT College Dublin was approved to offer [ACCA \(Association of Chartered Certified Accountants\)](#) programmes. The College has since been awarded ACCA Gold Status provider in June 2009. For the June 2010 series of examinations, the first time that examination results were formally compiled for the College by ACCA, IBAT College Dublin met the ACCA's Platinum pass rate targets. IBAT College Dublin is also an ACCA CBE (Computer Based Exam) centre.

The College has one of the largest intakes in the country of [ATI \(Accounting Technicians Ireland\)](#) with approximately 130 students across the two years of the programme.

In September 2009, IBAT College Dublin became a [Project Management Institute \(PMI\)](#) Registered Education Provider.

In 2010, the College became a member of [HECA \(Higher Education Colleges Association\)](#).

In January 2011, IBAT College Dublin formally became an 'institution of the University of Wales with Validated Provision' for its MBA programme.

Consistent with IBAT College's philosophy to provide a learner-centric environment, the College has, year on year, extensively augmented the facilities available to students and now boasts all of the facilities that one would expect from a modern higher education facility.

IBAT College Dublin (registered as IBAT Ltd) has ensured that Learner Protection arrangements are in place to provide insurance for students completing courses of greater than 3 months in duration run at IBAT, consistent with *Section 43* of the [Qualifications \(Education and Training\) Act, 1999](#).

The pastoral care of students is of utmost concern to all IBAT College Dublin staff. The College applies the Code of Practice and Guidelines for the Provision of Education to International Students (published by the [Irish Higher Education Quality Network, IHEQN](#)). All registered international students are covered by the College's health insurance plan. In addition, all programmes offered to international students by IBAT College Dublin have been placed on the Internationalisation Register.

## 1.2 Quality Assurance

As outlined in our mission statement, IBAT College Dublin considers quality assurance to be a core component of its business model. From a quality perspective, the College Director takes responsibility for the overall delivery of a quality service to our stakeholders – students, staff and Irish employers. Specific assurance procedures are implemented during the life cycle of our programmes to ensure the delivery of a superior and consistent product. These can be summarised under the seven areas identified in the European [Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance within Higher Education Institutions](#) (abbreviated as [ESG](#)), namely

- Policy and procedures for quality assurance
- Approval, monitoring, and periodic review of programmes and awards
- Assessment of students
- Learning resources and student support
- Quality assurance of teaching staff
- Information systems
- Public information

In addition to ensuring that policies and procedures are in place, the Director of IBAT College Dublin and senior staff ensure that adequate arrangements and resources are available to support the academic quality assurance systems and support structures. Along with the recruitment and selection of highly-skilled and qualified staff, which is considered the best assurance of a quality delivery, the College Director has significant input into the creation and validation of all course offerings, and also ensures that all course Lecturers and Assessors are aware of and capable of carrying out the College's learning, teaching, training and assessment policies. These quality procedures are referenced throughout this document.

## 2 Organisational Structure

### 2.1 Overview

Accurate, effective and timely communications among staff and between the college and its agents is central to the effective running of IBAT College. The College operates from a single centre with 18 full-time staff and approximately 55 part-time staff. As quality is at the heart of the organisation, it is imperative that an effective organisation structure is in place to maintain quality. Management decision making processes within IBAT College Dublin are implemented by a Corporate Management Board, an Academic Council, Director, Registrar, Programme Coordinators and the Student Administrator. The responsibilities of each of these are outlined below, and the schedule for the relevant academic meetings is provided in Appendix 12.1 of this document.

### 2.2 Corporate Management Board

The Corporate Management Board consists of the IBAT College Dublin Directors. The board has primary responsibility for the overall management and academic development of the College, including

- Monitoring action plans
- Ensuring resources are available for delivery of quality to stakeholders
- Reviewing the College's policies and procedures

### 2.3 College Director

The College Director takes responsibility for the overall delivery of a quality service to our stakeholders – students, staff and employers. In addition to ensuring that policies and procedures are in place, the Director has significant input into the creation and validation of all course offerings and also ensures that all course Lecturers and Assessors are aware of and capable of carrying out the College's learning, teaching, training and assessment policies.

#### 2.3.1 The College Director is responsible for:

- Quality Assurance policies and procedures and their adherence
- Arrangements and resources to support the academic quality assurance systems
- The recruitment and selection of highly-skilled and qualified staff

### 2.4 Academic Council

The Academic Council of IBAT College Dublin consists of the following:

- An independent Chairperson
- Registrar of IBAT College
- Four representatives of academic staff
- A student support representative

#### 2.4.1 The Terms of Reference of Academic Council

- To make recommendations for the establishment of any appropriate structures or procedures to ensure that the quality objectives of IBAT College Dublin are met
- To make recommendations for the selection, admission and retention of students

- To be responsible for the academic regulation of the College
- To approve new programme proposals
- To offer industry specific guidance and advice as to proposed programmes of study
- To review the Annual Programme Monitoring Report and make recommendations based on this
- To formally assess and approve programmatic and institutional review documentation

## 2.5 Academic Committee

The Academic Committee gathers once per week to discuss any 'operational' day-to-day problems that may arise from the operation of the programmes. The aim of the Committee is to identify and rectify any issues that could affect a student's performance on his/her course in a timely efficient manner. The Academic Committee also deals with any disciplinary issues as the need arises.

## 2.6 Registrar

The Registrar acts as a single conduit for all communications between IBAT College Dublin and external awarding bodies. It is the responsibility of the Registrar to communicate any changes in management and centre personnel to external awarding bodies.

### 2.6.1 The Registrar is also responsible for:

- Ensuring that all lecturers are aware of and have the capability to implement the learning, teaching, training and assessment policies of the College
- Monitoring the assessment process as outlined in this document
- Monitoring the internal moderation process
- Managing team meetings
- Managing assessment appeals and the complaints procedure
- College communication

## 2.7 Programme Coordinators

Each programme is assigned a Programme Coordinator who has responsibility for the management and development of their programme. S/he also acts as a visible and active link between the College and student body and as such is available to students during set office hours or by appointment.

### 2.7.1 The Programme Coordinator has responsibility for:

- General academic planning, management and development of the programme
- Teaching and assessing the programmes and supporting learners to agreed standards
- Developing an assessment plan/schedule for the programmes (if not already provided)
- Examining the assessment instrument to be used in the programme to ensure that assessment and grading criteria are facilitated
- Assessing the programme to agreed standards and providing feedback to students within the agreed timescale of the assessment activity
- Maintaining agreed records
- Communicating with students and ensuring they are aware of resources and services
- Providing assistance, support, and guidance to students

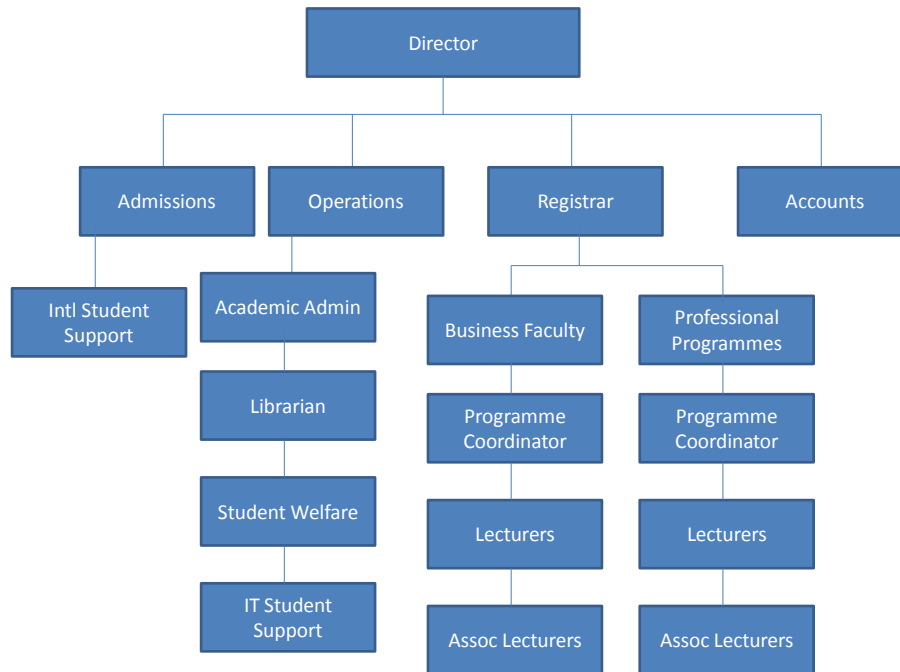
## 2.8 Student Administrator

The student administrator reports to the Registrar and is responsible for monitoring the maintenance of programme and student records.

## 2.9 Organisational Chart

The IBAT College Dublin Organisation Chart is presented in **Figure 2.9**.

**Figure 2.9** IBAT College's Organisation Chart



## 3 Procedures for the Design of New Programmes

### 3.1 Overview

A new programme idea can originate from many sources including:

- The Corporate Management Board of IBAT College
- Academic Council
- The College's Admissions Department
- The College's Lecturing Staff
- An External Stakeholder (e.g. local employer) who has a education and/or training requirement

Regardless of the origin, it is essential that procedures are in place to ensure that a new programme is feasible and is developed with clear and comprehensive objectives. A set of subjects must be identified that enable graduates to achieve these objectives and that the programme is line with IBAT College's strategy and the resources available. The design of a new programme involves submission of a new programme proposal to an awarding body in question. The process for the formal approval of the programme differs depending on the awarding body involved.

#### 3.1.1 Preliminary Approval

Before a new programme is progressed within IBAT College, to optimise the allocation of resources in relation to programme development, it is necessary for the programme proposal to be reviewed and approved by the Academic Committee. The review of the proposed programme is facilitated through the consideration of ideally a single page, but not more than two pages, outlining a rationale for the programme's development and includes the suggested programme format, level, structure, module composition, and access/transfer/progression options, etc.

### 3.2 Process Outline – HETAC Programmes

Once a new programme is initiated, a design team is established to develop the proposal. This team is responsible for the various activities involved in the process. The activities can be summarised as follows:

- Development of a new programme proposal as per the general programme validation template required by HETAC
- Preparation of self-assessment report
- Review by expert panel
- Approval of the new programme proposal by Academic Council
- Submission of the proposal to HETAC
- HETAC desk review of the proposal for completeness
- Expert panel formed by HETAC with some input from IBAT College
- Expert panel reviews proposal and documents initial impressions
- Site visit of panel
- Expert panel report submitted to HETAC
- Programme is approved with recommendations and/or conditions or programme is not approved

### 3.3 New Programme Design – HETAC Programmes

The programme team is responsible for the development of the new programme proposal in accordance with [HETAC's General Programme Validation Manual \(2010\)](#). The new programme proposal contains the following information:

- Programme rationale and background
- Programme learning outcomes and relevant [award standards](#)
- Programme structure, i.e. the modules (and relevant ECTS [[European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System](#)] credits) required to achieve the overall programme learning outcomes
- The target market
- Access, transfer and progression criteria
- Overall teaching, learning and assessment strategy
- Programme management arrangements
- Additional resource requirements
- Module descriptors including learning, teaching and assessment information
- Typical graduate opportunities.

Information for the new programme proposal is gathered by the programme team from a wide variety of sources. These sources may include:

- IBAT College Dublin lecturing staff
- Revision of similar programmes offered by other institutions
- Potential employers of future graduates
- Revision of other programmes which may offer access opportunities for graduates of the programme, for example postgraduate programmes
- Industry and third-party reports
- Government reports

Once this information is gathered and analysed, the new programme proposal is developed and circulated to the lecturing staff for feedback. A self-assessment, which is a critical assessment of the proposal including its strengths, weaknesses and assumptions, is also produced. The programme is reviewed by an expert 'mock' panel, constituted by the College for this purpose, before the documentation is submitted to HETAC for approval. Feedback from the expert panel is included in the new programme proposal and all documentation, including the following is submitted to the College's Academic Council for formal approval:

- new programme proposal developed in accordance with the new programme validation template
- proposed programme schedule
- critical self-assessment report

Upon its approval by Academic Council the documentation is submitted to HETAC for consideration.

### 3.4 Approval of Programmes – University of Wales

If IBAT College Dublin wish to broaden its portfolio of University of Wales' programmes, the College needs to submit notification of their intention to put forward an additional scheme for validation for

the approval of UoW's Taught Degrees Board, prior to any validation event taking place, by completing [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) - Appendix 51 of that document.

### **3.5 Collaborative Provision, Transnational Provision and Joint Awards**

Collaborative provision, transnational provision and joint awards play an important role in education and training particularly in the context of the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area. Within this context, and subject to the [Qualifications \(Education and Training\) Act, 1999](#), HETAC accredits or jointly accredits (with other authorities) collaborative programmes and transnational programmes and makes and recognises joint awards.

To facilitate this activity HETAC has developed its [Policy on Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards](#), with further clarification provided in HETAC's *Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes and Joint Awards (2010)*.

IBAT College Dublin has prepared a supplementary Quality Assurance Manual to describe the College's quality assurance for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards under the criteria defined in the 2010 document. While the engagement of the College's systems with those of third-parties is regarded as a developmental process, this document has been developed to describe and incorporate the quality assurance procedures and other working documents necessary to allow for the development in respect of HETAC awards offered as collaborative programmes, transnational programmes, and joint awards.

## 4 Admission Procedures

### 4.1 Overview

Students wishing to enrol for an academic programme at IBAT College Dublin must have achieved at least the minimum requirement for entry onto the programme or may be allowed advanced entry based on prior study (recognition of prior learning – RPL). The necessary entry requirements are defined at the time of programme development, consistent with the [National Qualifications Authority of Ireland \(NQAI\)](#)'s [Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners](#). The procedures involved at the point of entry ensure correct decisions are made in a clear and transparent manner.

### 4.2 Recruitment Procedures for EU Students

#### 4.2.1 Marketing

Before each intake, a marketing campaign is planned in order to generate awareness and to attract EU nationals (both in Ireland and abroad) to study at IBAT College. A typical marketing campaign consists of the following:

- Advertisements for press and radio which are organised prior to the commencement of an academic intake
- School visits that are conducted throughout the previous academic year
- IBAT College's attendance at regional exhibitions
- Open Days are organised prior to the commencement of an academic intake and focus on a group of programmes or students, e.g. individual Open Days are organised for full-time undergraduate programmes, part-time programmes, etc.
- Ongoing coordination with overseas agents in planning a marketing and recruitment campaign

#### 4.2.2 Application

EU students apply through the [CAO system](#). IBAT College Dublin operates an open admissions policy, however all applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements specified in **Table 4.2**.

Course Type	Levels	Minimum Entry Requirements
Undergraduate Courses	6-8	Leaving Certificate, <u>or equivalent</u> Relevant work experience
Post Graduate Courses	9	A primary degree and/or relevant work experience

**Table 4.2** Minimum Entry Requirements for programmes offered by IBAT College

Minimum entry requirements for IBAT College Dublin programmes are published in marketing material and are published with the programme information on the [College's website](#).

### 4.2.3 Registration of Students

Once a student is accepted onto an IBAT College Dublin programme of study, the student's details are entered and maintained in the Student Module in PearlWay (the College's student database system). The Student Administrator is responsible for ensuring timely registration of learners with the appropriate awarding body, in accordance with their requirements for registration.

## 4.3 Admission policy for Non-EU Students

IBAT College's Non-EU Admission policy and procedures are as follows:

1. All non-EU student applicants are required to complete an international student application form. Original academic transcripts must accompany the completed application form for said applicant.
2. Non-EU applicants are interviewed by a member of the International Admissions office or a nominated IBAT College Dublin representative. Nominated representatives who are officially appointed as IBAT College Dublin agents are required to follow the policy and procedures as outlined below.
3. At interview, non-EU applicant documentation is verified and an initial assessment made of the applicant's suitability for the selected programme. Ideally all applicants' original documentation are presented and verified as to its authenticity at the initial interview stage. Photocopied evidence of the applicant's academic transcript information is then attached to the standard international application documentation. In all cases, this photocopied documentation is signed by the interviewer and labelled as 'originals seen'. At this time a provisional letter of acceptance can be offered to the applicant.
4. Until the above process has been completed, no formal student application is deemed to have taken place.
5. In situations where a student is unable, due to timing circumstances, to furnish the required academic transcript information with the completed application form, a provisional letter of offer can still be made. The provisional offer letter is subject to the verification of the documentation at a later date. This requirement must be expressly stated in the provisional offer letter.

All applicants are issued with a Provisional Offer letter. The tuition fees and other administrative requirements are specified in the Provisional Offer letter. Before the submission of an International Student visa application all tuition fees must have been received by IBAT College Dublin or a nominated representative of IBAT College Dublin must confirm in writing that the fees have been received. Upon IBAT College Dublin receiving tuition fees, applicants are issued with a receipt of payment letter. All student visa applications are submitted accompanied by an IBAT College Dublin cover letter summarising the details of the application.

### 4.3.1 Student Assessment

The applicant may be assessed to ensure that he satisfies all academic entry requirements for the programme of study chosen. This assessment is based on the applicant satisfying the minimum entry requirements for the programme and having the prerequisite level of English language required to commence the particular programme of study. Assessment of academic entry and English language requirements are made by reference to the standard admission process set by IBAT College. The standard admission process comprises of:

1. Verification that the applicant meets the requisite English language requirement with evidence being provided by applicants prior to the submission of a visa application. Applicants must meet one of the following criteria:
  - the applicant has achieved the required TOEFL score, which has been awarded within the period of two years prior to the application
  - the applicant has received the required IELTS score
  - the applicant holds a relevant Cambridge First Certificate of English score
  - the applicant holds satisfactory academic marks in English
2. Verification that the applicant meets the entry requirements for the programme selected.
  - the academic verification process involves consideration of equivalency of international qualification and approval of prior learning by reference to the International Comparisons Framework of UK NARIC (The British Council's International Guide to qualifications and International Comparisons)
  - in all International Student applicant situations, a copy of the relevant listing from UK NARIC should be attached to the student application documentation
3. Based on the outcomes of the above procedures a decision is made on the admission of the applicant.
4. Non- EU admissions procedures are subject to periodic review.

#### **4.3.2 Management Control Systems**

As many of these procedures are conducted by agents and not IBAT College Dublin staff, the following management control procedures are in place with regard to appointed agents:

- All appointed agents are visited in their place of employment to ensure that they operate as *bona fide* agents
- Formal IBAT College Dublin training is provided to all appointed agents who are also provided with necessary back-up documentation
- A formal written agency agreement outlining terms and conditions of appointment is prepared and signed by IBAT College Dublin and the respective agent
- All approved agents of IBAT College Dublin only have authority to communicate and interview prospective students. All official letters of offer, fees, etc. are centrally managed, issued and controlled by IBAT College Dublin Admissions Office in IBAT College Dublin in Swords
- Members of the Admissions Office periodically visit approved agents for review purposes

#### **4.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)**

Applicants to IBAT College Dublin can receive recognition for awards received prior to admission to the College. The College's RPL procedure is based on HETAC's [Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) in the Further and Higher Education and Training area](#) (June 2005). The procedures are updated annually when appropriate.

IBAT College's RPL process enables students who have already achieved the appropriate learning outcomes for a subject/module on their chosen course to apply for an exemption from taking that subject/module again.

If an applicant has previously completed a course of study at another college, the award obtained may be recognised by IBAT College Dublin if it meets the standards of the course applied for. This is only possible if the application is for admission to the same or a very closely related course.

Applicants wishing to transfer study credits from a non-Irish college, must submit all study certification (transcript of records, etc.) when applying to study at IBAT College. A list of previous courses of study must be included in the application form.

Recognition of prior learning includes:

1. Recognition of Prior Certificated Learning which refers to formal learning for which certification has been awarded through a bone fide educational institution or training provider.
2. Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning which refers to informal or non-formal uncertified learning gained through work or other experience. It should be noted that academic credit is awarded only for attainment of learning outcomes, not experience *per se*.

The College's RPL process enables students who have already achieved the learning outcomes for a subject/module on their chosen course to apply for an exemption from taking that subject/module again.

#### **4.4.1 Application for Credit for Previous Studies**

An applicant seeking credit for previous studies is required to support his/her claim by providing information to the College for every module of study previously completed. These supporting documents should be accompanied by English translations if they were not originally issued in English.

Evidence required to facilitate credit for previous studies requests includes:

- Interview/professional conversation with the admissions team and/or Registrar
- Portfolio of work which may include completed assessment items from previous study
- Supplementary assessment tasks or challenge test - oral, written or practical
- Authentication of evidence of work related experience by the applicants supervisor or employer
- Description of each module studied (this should include a full unit outline on what the learning objectives are, including the number of contact hours)
- Method of assessment of each module studied (this should include a breakdown of assignments, exams and any other assessment required for completion of the unit)

All documents must be issued by the relevant educational institution and properly certified as genuine copies.

#### **4.4.2 Application for Recognition of Prior Learning**

An applicant seeking Recognition of Prior Learning is required to complete an application form which contains four sections:

- Section A: Personal Information
- Section B: Education History
- Section C: Subject for which Recognition of Prior Learning is sought
- Section D: Other Training (Any other training programmes completed by the applicant)

IBAT College Dublin reserves the right to seek supporting evidence from the named Education Providers referred to in the application and in the case of mature applicants to request reference documentation from their employer.

## 4.5 Monitoring and Review of Admission and RPL decisions

Standard admissions and also decisions made regarding RPL are monitored and reviewed in various manners including:

- Admissions reports are reviewed by Academic Council. These reports display standard and non standard admissions as well as RPL decisions.
- Assessment statistics are reviewed after each exam period as part of the Annual Programme Review process
- Performance of students over time are reviewed during a programmatic review
- Feedback is given to the Admissions Officer regarding decisions made in this area

## 5 Procedures for the Management of Programmes

### 5.1 Introduction

After a programme is approved, it is imperative that effective procedures are in place for planning and management of the delivery of the programme. This part of the document addresses the various activities involved in programme delivery from programme scheduling to monitoring. The Programme Coordinator plays a key role in the effective delivery of a programme.

### 5.2 Role of Programme Coordinator

As indicated in Chapter 2, the Programme Coordinator has overall responsibility for the management of the programme. Specifically, the Programme Coordinator has responsibility for:

- General academic planning, management and development
- Teaching and assessing the programmes and supporting learners to agreed standards
- Developing an assessment plan/schedule for the programmes they are responsible for (if not already provided)
- Examining the assessment instrument to be used in the programme to ensure that assessment and grading criteria are facilitated
- Assessing the programme to agreed standards and providing feedback to students within the agreed timescale of the assessment activity
- Maintaining agreed records
- Communicating with students and ensuring they are aware of resources and services
- Providing assistance, support, and guidance to students
- The Programme Coordinator also has a critical role to play in the monitoring of standards in the programme. The Programme Coordinator monitors formal and informal feedback on the programme and where necessary coordinates actions required to ensure the programme delivery achieves agreed standards.

### 5.3 Programme Team

The Programme Team consists of the Programme Coordinator and all lecturers delivering subjects on the programme in question. The Programme Coordinator ensures that all subjects being delivered are assigned to lecturers at the earliest opportunity. Prior to the start of the academic year, a staff plan is developed for a programme and is approved by the Academic Committee.

The programme team meets before the beginning of term to confirm the timetable, teaching and learning strategy and assessment schedule. A key consideration at this meeting is the coordination of all subjects to ensure the student workload is effectively and efficiently distributed. The programme team also meets in the middle of semester delivery to monitor student progress to date. The programme team's final meeting is at the consideration of assessment results at the exam board.

### 5.4 Student Support

#### 5.4.1 Induction

Students receive an induction session prior to the commencement of each academic year. The Programme Coordinator delivers the induction session and the student handbook is distributed at

this session. Students receive general and programme specific information at this session including the timetable, the assessment schedule, and overview of the subjects being delivered that semester as well as the teaching and learning strategies. The student handbook is distributed at induction.

#### 5.4.2 Student Handbook

The student handbook is essentially a written copy of information communicated at induction. The student receives information on the programme itself, the assessment regulations, code of conduct, deferral information and other such important information.

#### 5.4.3 Pastoral Care

The pastoral care of students is of utmost concern to all IBAT College Dublin staff. The College applies the Code of Practice and Guidelines for the Provision of Education to International Students (published by the [Irish Higher Education Quality Network, IHEQN](#)). All HETAC registered international students are covered by the College's health insurance plan and all programmes offered to international students by IBAT College Dublin have been placed on the Internationalisation Register.

### 5.5 Student Complaints' Policy

A complaint from a student refers to any dispute other than one regarding assessment (which is outlined in **Section 6.8: Examination Appeals Procedure**). Any such complaint cannot be referred externally unless and until the internal processes of the College have been exhausted. The only exception to this is the case where internal processes have become overly protracted.

#### 5.5.1 Complaints' procedure

IBAT College Dublin operates a specific complaints procedure relating to issues not covered by the appeals procedure. Disputes may involve issues such as alleged discrimination, non-professional practice, course schedule or complaints regarding the facilities. There may also be an issue regarding the assessment such as the process, conduct of the assessment process, the assessment criteria, or relevance of the assessment task to the intended programme learning outcomes.

#### 5.5.2 Stage 1 - Informal Procedure

The complainant raises the grievance with/against a member of staff. Where possible this should be resolved informally between the individuals concerned. Where resolution is not possible or where the complainant feels it is appropriate, the procedure may proceed to Stage 2.

#### 5.5.3 Stage 2 - Formal Procedure

The following steps outline the formal complaints procedure:

- The student makes a complaint against a member of staff or action or policy of the organisation
- The student makes a complaint in writing and addresses it for the attention of the College Director
- The Director/nominee acknowledges receipt of the complaint within 5 working days
- The Director/nominee investigates the complaint and seeks to resolve the complaint within 30 working days

The Director's decision is final as far as the internal procedure is concerned.

All candidates have the right to fair, valid and reliable assessment decisions and to the provision of clear and constructive feedback. Candidates have the right to pursue an appeal where they feel any of the above criteria have not been met. All candidates receive details of the appeals procedure

upon registration and this is part of the student information pack. The procedure for appeals is detailed in **Section 6.8: Examination Appeals Procedure** of this document.

#### **5.5.4 Stage 3 – Formal Complaint to the Awarding Body**

IBAT College Dublin ensures that each registered student is aware of the existence of the relevant awarding body's Student Complaints Procedure and the College will provide each student who requests a copy with the most current version of that Procedure.

Any student enrolled on a validated programme leading to an award of the University of Wales is eligible to use the University's [Student Complaints' Procedure](#). The procedure covers many areas of the student experience and may apply to complaints arising from a student's educational experience, complaints in respect of academic or administrative support and allegations of harassment or discrimination by staff. Wherever possible, the University expects complaints to be resolved as close as possible to its point of origin, and with a minimum of formality, but this procedure may apply where this has been investigated and found to be not possible.

### **5.6 Formal Programme/Subject Monitoring**

There are formal and informal methods for monitoring the progress of a programme applied within IBAT College, details of which are provided below.

#### **5.6.1 Class Representative**

Each class elects a class representative. The Programme Coordinator keeps in regular contact with the class representative to discuss any issues arising during the semester. The Programme Coordinator meets with the class representative prior to the programme team meeting and provides an update from the class representative to the team. The class representative also receives feedback after each programme team meeting.

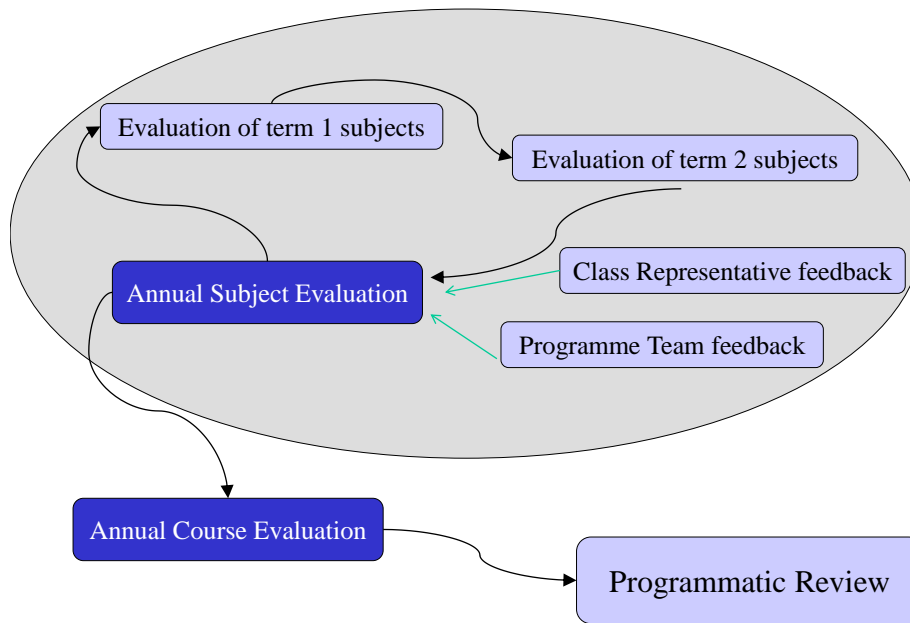
#### **5.6.2 Continuous Assessment Results**

The monitoring of results is an important indicator of student progress on a programme. Problems with a subject can be identified when the performance of students in continuous assessment are reviewed. In such situations, the Programme Coordinator discusses the results with the lecturer and agrees a plan of action to deal with the issues. Examples of such actions include extra tutorials and the provision of extra support materials for students. The procedures relating to the quality control of assessment are discussed in *Chapter 6: Procedures for the Assessment of Learners*.

#### **5.6.3 Programme/Subject Evaluation**

An overview of the monitoring procedure is outlined in **Figure 5.1** below.

## Annual Programme Review Cycle



**Figure 4.1** Overview of the Annual Programme Review Cycle Procedure

Subject evaluation forms are distributed and returned for each subject. The Programme Coordinator reviews the completed forms to analyse the satisfaction of students with the subject and monitor their progress. The Subject Evaluation Process is as follows:

- Review of the effectiveness of previous actions by Programme Coordinator
- Review of the evaluation forms by Programme Coordinator with recommendations for actions arising out of this review
- Report of the Programme Coordinator submitted to the Registrar
- Feedback compiled, changes reviewed and future actions agreed between the Registrar and relevant Programme Coordinator
- Summary and actions communicated to students

### 5.6.4 Annual Subject Evaluation

This process involves a number of elements including:

- Analysis of subject evaluation reports
- Assessment outcomes, including a review of exam results and External Examiner feedback
- Review of Programme Team feedback where relevant

### 5.6.5 Annual Programme Review

The College's annual programme monitoring report details the monitoring and evaluation activities carried out to maintain and enhance the quality and relevance of the learning experience. This report is prepared annually for each programme by the Programme Coordinator and aims to capture

all relevant feedback and information about the programme in a concise and clear format. The main components of this report are:

- Applicants and enrolment
- Resources
- Student performance
- Implementation of previous recommendations
- A review of programme team meetings
- Programme feedback review
- Final comments and current status review
- Graduate performance and industry feedback

Under IBAT College's reporting responsibility as an institution with validated provision of the University of Wales (UoW), the College prepares an Annual College and Course Review (ACCR) ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) - Appendices 44 & 45 of that document), for submission to the University.

The annual programme monitoring report/ACCR is considered by Academic Council and recommendations and resulting actions are approved where appropriate. The Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the actions are implemented.

IBAT College's submits the completed Annual College and Course Review (ACCR) to the University of Wales for consideration, in conjunction with reports by the programme Moderators and External Examiners ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#)- Appendices 36/37 and 31 of that document respectively).

#### **5.6.6 Informal Methods**

IBAT College Dublin prides itself on its communication and contact mechanisms with its students. The College therefore constantly receives informal feedback on every aspect of its programmes. Students are actively encouraged to highlight their concerns to any member of staff in the College.

## 6 Procedures for the Assessment of Learners

### 6.1 Overview

IBAT College Dublin is fully committed to operating a policy that delivers assessment practices that are demonstrably fair, valid and consistent. The College's policy ensures that learners are kept informed of what is expected of them, their progress, and their academic achievements. This policy for the assessment of learners has been developed to be consistent with [HETAC's Assessment and Standards document \(2009\)](#) and the [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures \(Appendices 19-39\)](#). The policy is understood by College staff and learners, is consistent across Assessors and is in line with best practice nationally.

### 6.2 Assessment Components

Each subject typically consists of multiple assessment components, a combination of coursework and examination. All required assessment components are clearly communicated to Students. The relevant syllabus for each subject a student undertakes is distributed at the earliest possible time usually in the course outline distributed to students at the beginning of their programme of study.

### 6.3 Examination Regulations

Examination regulations are given to each student registered on a programme with IBAT College. The current version of the College's assessment regulations is included in Appendix 12.4 of this document. These regulations cover all aspects of assessment including conduct at examinations, marks and standards relating to the programme, rules regarding the submission of coursework, procedures relating to extensions and deferrals and information relating to plagiarism.

### 6.4 Responsibilities Relating to Assessment

All assessment mechanisms are validated internally and externally during the initial programme/subject development and during the programme/subject review cycle. The lecturer and Programme Coordinator are responsible for the assessment of students. All assessments are written to reflect the subject syllabus and to examine the extent to which students have reached the learning outcomes. The Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that each subject Lecturer makes an appropriate amount of time available for assessment and verification activities based on an evaluation of the assessment and verification requirements of each subject. The final decision regarding the design of assessment components rests with the Programme Coordinator. This includes an examination of the assessment instruments to ensure that they facilitate the achievement of the relevant assessment and grading criteria.

### 6.5 Continuous Assessment

Programmes delivered at the IBAT College Dublin are assessed according to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria specified for each subject in the module descriptor. Before teaching begins, the lecturer submits the coursework specification for their subject to the respective Programme Coordinator. The coursework specification includes a description of the assignment, the mark breakdown, submission date and other relevant information for the student. While varieties of continuous assessment formats exist, IBAT College Dublin lecturers are encouraged to choose from the following:

- Answers to set questions

- In-class examination
- Oral presentation
- Individual project work
- Group project work
- Case studies

### 6.5.1 Assessment Submission Procedures

For both hard and soft copy assessment submissions, the relevant submission form must also be submitted. Soft copy submissions are e-mailed to the Student Administrator who then forwards them to the relevant Lecturer.

In the case of presentations and group work, the Assessor is required to keep the marking scheme for each group/individual. If there is a discrepancy between the written and oral work, or between individual members of the group, this is examined for any (positive or negative) bias on behalf of the Lecturer. Any student who feels it is necessary may avail of the appeals procedure.

### 6.5.2 Quality Control of Assignment Marking

Transparency in grading is essential. Feedback is documented by the lecturer for each assignment displaying where marks were awarded and lost in as much detail as is possible. The main purpose of such feedback is to enable the student to use the assignment process effectively in preparation for their final exam and to ensure transparency in the process. The Programme Coordinator reviews the assignment grades for the purpose of quality control prior to their communication to students.

Documentation and assignments are available for the External Examiners and University of Wales External Moderators to review where/as requested.

### 6.5.3 Assignment Feedback

Results and feedback from assessment work are posted on the College notice boards and Moodle using student identity numbers only as soon as is practicable. When possible, Lecturers should make themselves available for student consultation in relation to feedback on the assignment/assessment.

### 6.5.4 Recording Results and Return of Certification Data

Results from assignments/assessments are entered into the College's student management system, PearlWay, by the lecturer and verified by the Student Administrator.

## 6.6 Examination Procedures

Examination procedures in IBAT College Dublin adhere to the procedures required by the respective awarding bodies, namely, [HETAC's Assessment and Standards document \(2009\)](#) and the [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#).

### 6.6.1 Examination Papers

An important responsibility of subject Lecturers is the writing of examination papers. Lecturers are required to draft examination papers by a date specified by the Programme Coordinator. The aim of the examination paper is to assess the extent to which students have achieved learning outcomes of a subject. Lecturers are required to submit a marking scheme with their exam paper. In the drafting of exam papers, Lecturers are encouraged to consider the learning outcomes for the subject and to ensure that the format is as per previous years. Where a change to a paper format is required, students should be given a sample paper to allow them adequately prepare. The Programme

Coordinator reviews all papers prior to sending them to External Examiner. The External Examiner reviews the exam papers and returns feedback. The feedback is normally incorporated into a revised exam paper which is then considered final.

## 6.6.2 Internal Grading

The Primary Grader, usually the subject Lecturer, receives a Primary Grader Package which includes completed exam scripts, the exam paper and marking scheme, a blank Primary Grader's Report and any special grading instructions.

When correcting scripts, examiners are transparent in their grading, recording any necessary comments.

The Primary Grader delivers the completed Primary Grader Package to the Secondary Grader, who selects a proportion of assessments to grade from each grade range and also selects the borderline cases. The Primary and Secondary Graders meet to discuss the findings and to adjust grades if necessary. Any difficulties should be resolved by the Programme Coordinator. The Secondary Grader completes a secondary grader report and this report, with the graded scripts and the primary grader report, is delivered to the Student Administrator.

### 6.6.2.1 External grading

A representative sample of scripts is sent to the relevant External Examiner. The sample should include all borderline and fail cases for each subject. Other documentation for the External Examiner includes:

- Cover letter from the Registrar including the date of the exam board meeting and return date for the assessments
- The completed Primary and Secondary Grader reports
- A copy of the grade sheets containing all assessment results
- A blank external examiners feedback form (HETAC external examiner feedback form) or [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) - Appendix 31, as appropriate)
- Student numbers of all assessments sent

External Examiners return all assessments with a completed external examiner feedback form. Feedback from External Examiners is communicated to the relevant Internal Examiners. Changes and recommendations for future subject delivery are considered where appropriate within the Programme Board. Any feedback from this process is discussed at the examination board meeting, which takes place as soon as is practicable, after the final assessment is completed. The procedures applied for examination boards and the consideration of results are in compliance with [HETAC's Assessment and Standards Document \(2009\)](#).

Additionally, each University of Wales Moderator is required to submit a report of each relevant Examination Board to the Chair of the Academic Board of the University.

## 6.7 Recheck and Review Procedures

Students may request reviews and rechecks on any piece of assessment. There is a charge for both activities which is reimbursed should the assessment mark change as a result of the process. A recheck is the administrative operation of checking of the recording and combination of component scores. A review is the reconsideration of the assessment decision, either by the original Assessor or

other competent persons. Students are required to state the grounds for the requested review. The grounds for review are normally that the student suspects that the assessment was erroneous in some respect. Reviews and rechecks are completed in time for the granting of an award date set by HETAC.

The candidate should raise the issue with the Student Administrator within 5 days of the publication of the assessment result and indicate whether a review or a recheck is requested. The Student Administrator can perform a recheck directly with the assessment material. In the event of a review, the Lecturer should review the assessment with the grounds for review in mind. A written report is provided for the student indicating if the Lecturer is recommending the result remains unchanged or is to be revised. If the Assessor is upholding the original assessment decision, then the candidate must be provided with full information describing what is required to demonstrate their achievement. This should be provided in writing and relate specifically to the standards relevant to the assessment decision. If the candidate remains unhappy with the decision, the candidate may complete an appeals form which is forwarded to the Registrar. Details of the appeals procedure in IBAT are outlined in **Section 6.8** of this document.

## 6.8 Appeals Procedure

Candidates should have access to fair and reliable assessment in which s/he plays a full part. If this 'access' opportunity is to be meaningful the candidate must have the right to appeal against assessment decisions that are unclear or seem unfair. The Appeals Procedure is required to provide an appropriate audit trail of the process and be clearly logged with concise detailed information at each stage. If a candidate is dissatisfied with an assessment decision then they must have a right of appeal.

An Internal Moderator is appointed by the Programme Coordinator as someone not directly involved with subject delivery. The Internal Moderator reviews all evidence and assessment records in order to consider the appeal. A decision should be made within 5 working days and the candidate and Assessor must be informed orally and in writing. If the candidate is dissatisfied with the decision, the appeal proceeds to the final stage.

The third and final stage involves the right of appeal to an Assessment Appeals Panel. The Internal Moderator passes all records to the Programme Coordinator. The Programme Coordinator convenes an Appeals Panel consisting of, for example:

- The Programme Co-ordinator
- An Alternative Assessor
- An Independent Assessor/Internal Moderator

Both the candidate and Assessor are invited to make their case to the Panel. The Panel reaches its decisions within 10 working days. Results of the appeals panel are final.

If the College's appeals procedure has been exhausted and the candidate is still dissatisfied, s/he can make a final appeal to the relevant external accreditation/quality body (HETAC or University of Wales, as appropriate).

## 7 Programmatic Review

### 7.1 Overview

IBAT College Dublin is committed to delivering current and relevant material to our students. It is policy to formally review programme offerings every three to five years as needed. The objective of this review is to evaluate the achievement and improvement of educational quality. The following section describes the specific objectives of a programmatic review, the process followed and the deliverables expected in accordance with HETAC's [Provider Monitoring Policy and Procedures](#) (2010) document.

Within its remit as an institution of the University of Wales (UoW) with Validated Provision, IBAT College Dublin also conducts a Quinquennial Review in relation to relevant UoW-validated programme provision. The Quinquennial Review is the process whereby the progress of a validated course is critically appraised at five yearly intervals. Any proposals for change are considered by a review panel representing the University of Wales in order to confirm that the course remains academically valid and continues to meet the conditions for an award of the University of Wales. Quinquennial reviews are conducted within IBAT College Dublin in accordance with the [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 53 of that document).

### 7.2 HETAC Programmatic Review Objectives

The specific objectives of a programmatic review are to:

- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each validated programme, including details of learner numbers, retention rates and success rates
- Review the development of the programme in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments.
- Evaluate the response of IBAT College Dublin to market requirements and educational developments
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programmes
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes
- Evaluate feedback from employers of the programmes' graduates and from those graduates
- Review any research activities in the field of learning under review and their impact on teaching and learning
- Evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme(s)/field of learning under review.

### 7.3 HETAC Programmatic Review Process

As per HETAC recommendations, all programmes within a suite/field of learning/discipline area are reviewed as part of a programmatic review, irrespective of whether or not the original validation period has expired for all programmes. This helps synchronise programmatic review activity and ensure greater consistency across and between related programmes in terms of teaching and learning methodologies, assessment etc. The terms of reference for each programmatic review are agreed in advance with HETAC before the process starts.

The programmatic review process can be broadly divided into two major phases which are described in the following sections.

### **7.3.1 HETAC Programme Review Self Evaluation**

During the self-evaluation phase, IBAT College Dublin reflects on its objectives and critically analyses its activities and how these lead to the achievement of these objectives. It requires an analysis of all functions, resources, services and administration as they impact on the provision of the programme. The end result of the self evaluation phase is the production of a Self Evaluation Report (SER). A review coordination team is established consisting of the programme coordinator, a senior manager and a lecturer and this team is responsible for co-ordinating all aspects of the self-evaluation phase and producing the SEF. The SER should contain information on the programme(s) being evaluated including:

- A statement of the programme's strategic objectives
- A review and critical analysis of the quality systems and processes which are in place to enable the achievement of its objectives
- The views of teaching staff, past and current learners, administrative staff servicing the programme, views of other staff that have any association with the programme or those involved with/on the programme
- An analysis of the programme's strengths and weaknesses
- The identification of potential opportunities and threats, together with the possible actions to be taken
- An analysis of the success of the programme to date, including access statistics, performance of learners at each stage (including grade profiles and trends), completion rates by stage, graduate performance etc.
- The identification of resources required for the delivery of its programmes
- A review of reports from programme boards and student feedback forms
- A review of employment/advancement opportunities for learners
- A review of the teaching, assessment and learning strategy for the programme
- A review of the assessment strategies for each programme
- A review of its links with employers, industry, professions, the business and wider community
- Details of programme changes proposed and the rationale behind the changes
- A review of all modules included in the programme(s) under review
- Draft programme schedules, incorporating the proposed changes.

The review coordination team gather information relating to the areas above by consulting with:

- The lecturing team
- Minutes of programme boards and exam boards
- Students on the programme
- Graduates of the programme (and their employers)
- Similar programmes delivered by other institutions
- External examiners
- All relevant staff within IBAT College
- Statistical reports relating to the programme relating to admissions and examinations.

The draft SER is produced by the review coordination team and circulated to the lecturing team for feedback. The Programme Team reviews the final draft before it is submitted to Academic Council for consideration. Once approved, the process moves into the external phase.

### **7.3.2 HETAC Programmatic Review Peer Review**

An independent Peer Review Group (PRG) is set up comprising experts from relevant fields of learning. These experts should be capable of making national and international comparisons with regard to the specific suite of programmes. At a minimum, it comprises the following:

- Chairperson – experienced in higher education and training; preferably with knowledge of programmatic review
- a secretary
- academics (minimum 2) experts in relevant field of learning
- representatives from industry or a relevant profession
- a learner representative
- a HETAC representative if appropriate

It is essential that the panel members are free from any real or apparent conflicts of interest. The panel is agreed in advance with HETAC along with the terms of reference.

The functions of the PRG include

- Studying the SER
- Visiting the provider to meet with teaching staff, learners (past and present where possible), administrative staff, employers and any other category of internal and external stakeholders
- Clarification and verification of details in the SER
- Considering how well the identified aims and objectives of IBAT College Dublin are being met
- Consideration of proposed programme changes in the context of all other information provided and recommending acceptance or otherwise of the proposals
- Consider the quality assurance arrangements which affect the programmes under review
- Presenting its findings at the end of the visit
- Preparing a report on the findings of the PRG, to include recommendations for the provider in respect of the suite of programmes under review.

The programmatic review report produced by the PRG addresses the quality of the provision and makes recommendations for improvement and/or change based on a combination of the SER and findings during the site visit and meeting with relevant stakeholders. It also includes a recommendation positive, negative or conditional, in respect of the continuing validation of the programme. The report should specify the duration of the revalidation recommended, not exceeding five years.

### **7.3.3 HETAC Programme Review Implementation Plan**

A formal response to the report and an implementation plan is prepared by the College. The implementation plan addresses the findings and recommendations in both the SER and in the report of the PRG. It contains specific achievable actions with measurable outcomes and the date by which outcomes should be realised. Where necessary, specific detail on the phasing in of changes

proposed an in particularly transitional issues should be addressed. This document and the programmatic review report is used by HETAC to monitor the programme and IBAT College.

The programmatic review report, implementation plan and a formal request for validation is forwarded to HETAC for approval. The SER and peer review reports, together with the related implementation plans are published at this stage.

## **7.4 University of Wales - Quinquennial Review Objectives**

The specific objectives of a programmatic review are to;

- Analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of each validated programme, including details of learner numbers, retention rates and success rates
- Review the development of the programme in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments.
- Evaluate the response of IBAT College Dublin to market requirements and educational developments
- Evaluate the feedback mechanisms for learners and the processes for acting on this feedback
- Evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programmes
- Evaluate the formal links which have been established with industry, business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes
- Evaluate feedback from employers of the programmes' graduates and from those graduates
- Review any research activities in the field of learning under review and their impact on teaching and learning
- Evaluate projections for the following five years in the programme(s)/field of learning under review.

## **7.5 University of Wales Quinquennial Review Process**

The review process begins with the regular monitoring exercise by the institution itself which is formally reported in the Annual College and Course Review (ACCR) Form. This evidence and the Annual Reports submitted by the External Examiner and the Moderator, which accumulate over the interim five-year period, provide the background to the course overview and critical appraisal submission which is prepared for consideration by the review panel. The Quinquennial Review document provides an accurate record of the course as it operates and provides background details for the course overview and critical appraisal.

The Quinquennial review process can be broadly divided into two major phases which are described in the following sections.

### **7.5.1 University of Wales Quinquennial Review Self Evaluation**

This critical appraisal, in which all members of the Programme Board engage, is of central importance to the review process and in its written form provides crucial evidence for the review panel. The most effective appraisals present a balance between statistical information and objective evaluative comment, incorporating feedback from students and other sources and providing a clear indication of the action taken to solve problems that have been identified.

However, the course review is not just a backward-looking evaluation confined to judgements on past performance. It provides an opportunity for the College to propose possible future developments, which may include consideration of substantial changes in the structure and content

of the course, although detailed information should be given in the course overview/critical appraisal submission to enable any new provision to be validated. The review provides an opportunity for a frank and constructive discussion and an exchange of ideas between the panel and the Programme Board in the spirit of professional partnership.

During the self-evaluation phase, IBAT College Dublin reflects on its objectives and critically analyses its activities and how these lead to the achievement of these objectives. It requires an analysis of all functions, resources, services and administration as they impact on the provision of the programme. The end result of the self evaluation phase is the production of a Quinquennial Review Self Evaluation Document (QR-SED) – the outline of which is defined in the [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 53 of that document).

The Review will focus on the following in order to ensure that the arrangements for maintaining the standards and enhancing the quality of UoW awards are being met. It also ensures course quality is being maintained according to established criteria and procedures namely:

- Staffing and Staff Development
- Students
- Resources
- Course Rationale, Structure and Content
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment
- Course/College Management
- Relationship with the University of Wales

The draft QR-SED is produced and circulated to the Programme Board for feedback. The Programme Team reviews the final draft before it is submitted to Academic Council for consideration. Once approved, the process moves into the external phase.

### **7.5.2 The University of Wales Quinquennial Review Peer Review**

The Quinquennial review will be conducted by a review panel comprised, in accordance with [UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#), of the following:

- Member of the Academic Faculty (Chairperson)
- Two Expert Assessors (from outside of the University of Wales)

The final composition/membership of the review panel shall be approved by the Chairperson using a proforma ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 55 of that document).

Whilst not appointed as formal members of the review panel, the External Examiners play an important role in the review and assist the review panel throughout the process. However, they are not expected to participate in the private panel meetings. The Moderator(s) also play an important part in the exercise and in the follow up of any conditions set as a result of the review exercise. The panel hold formal meetings with him/her, to determine if s/he is discharging his/her Moderator duties in a satisfactory manner ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 32 of that document). Wherever possible, the timing of a Quinquennial review visit shall coincide with the period of the Exam Board meeting at the College. Review panel members shall be

issued with Notes of Guidance prior to undertaking the exercise ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 54 of that document).

The Quinquennial review report produced by the panel is prepared based on a combination of the QR-SED and findings during the site visit and the meetings with relevant stakeholders. The review panel shall submit a detailed report to the UoW Taught Degrees Board, which will be reported to UoW's Academic Board. In conducting its review and drawing its conclusions, the review panel enter into a fair but rigorous appraisal with the aim of identifying strengths and weaknesses and making recommendations upon which the College will take action.

The report is sent to IBAT College Dublin for a factual accuracy check by the Programme Team and Academic Council before it is finalised.

### **7.5.3 UoW Quinquennial Review Implementation Plan**

A formal response to the report and an implementation plan is prepared. The implementation plan addresses the findings and recommendations in both the QR-SED and in the report of the QR Panel.

Following a QR and (if required) the submission of any additional documentation, panel members are required to confirm, by means of a pro forma ([UoW Validation Unit Quality Handbook: Policies and Procedures](#) – Appendix 56 of that document), whether or not they are satisfied that the conditions set have been met and that the scheme(s) should continue to be validated. The report is sent to IBAT College Dublin for a factual accuracy check before it is finalised.

The QR report, QR panel report, together with the related implementation plans are published at this stage.

## 8 Procedures and Policy for Evaluating Quality Assurance

### 8.1 Introduction

The goal of evaluating the effectiveness of our quality assurance procedures is to identify what works and what doesn't in the achievement of objectives, to consider the nature of any 'shortcomings' and to determine corrective action. The intention is to objectively measure actual performance versus desired performance as outlined in this document. The primary methods of assessing adherence to quality assurance procedures are self-evaluation and assessment. This process is complemented by periodic external Quality Assurance Effectiveness Reviews.

### 8.2 Self Evaluation Policy and Procedure

The College is committed to a policy of self evaluation of all its programmes and services on an annual basis which encompasses a quality self assessment. These procedures are outlined in **Section 5** of this document.

### 8.3 Review of Quality Assurance Procedures

Feedback is gathered from every quality assurance procedure as to the effectiveness and appropriateness of that procedure. Annual updates are made to this Quality Assurance Manual to ensure fitness for use. Additionally, a thorough review of this Manual takes place within the context of the Institutional/Quinquennial Review. Updates of the Quality Assurance Manual are reviewed through the Academic Committee and Academic Council.

### 8.4 HETAC Institutional Review

A condition of being a HETAC accredited college is that IBAT College Dublin conduct an Institutional Review on at least a five year basis. The following College procedures are based on and extracted from HETAC's [Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training \(2007\)](#).

#### 8.4.1 Objectives of Institutional Review

A HETAC organised Institutional review is intended to:

- Enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the institution and the standards of the awards made
- Assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution
- Confirm the extent that the institution has implemented the national framework of qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression
- Evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted
- Provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution
- Contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution.

#### 8.4.2 Institutional Review Process

The HETAC review consists of six phases:

- HETAC sets terms of reference following consultation with institution
- Self-study by the institution
- Visit by expert panel appointed by HETAC and written panel report
- Institutional response including implementation plan

- Panel report and response published
- Follow-up report submitted by the institution.

### 8.4.3 Terms of Reference for Review

The review is based on the European [Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance within Higher Education Institutions](#) (abbreviated as [ESG](#)), and incorporates the features required by statute in respect of review of the effectiveness of quality assurance procedures that the Council has agreed with providers offering HETAC awards. The seven elements of internal quality assurance in Part One of the [ESG](#) should be addressed by the review process:

- Policy and procedures for quality assurance
- Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards
- Assessment of students
- Quality assurance of teaching staff
- Learning resources and support
- Information systems
- Public information

The terms of reference also examine the implementation of the College's procedures for access, transfer and progression. The College's research activity, if any, comes within the terms of the review. The review may also address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall strategic planning. Other terms may be added to meet the needs of the College or of HETAC in particular circumstances. Examples of such circumstances include significant organisational change, such as merger; accommodating joint review with other statutory or non-statutory bodies from Ireland or overseas; and integrating institutional review and review of programmes (as required under Section 28(2) in the case of small, specialised institutions having a single (or few related) programmes. HETAC consult with the College before publishing the terms of reference for its review.

#### 8.4.3.1 The Institution Self-study

The key role of self-study in the process is that it emphasises that quality derives from the activity of the College. External review builds on internal quality assurance processes and any previous institutional reviews. The self-study should be based on broad consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the College, including and especially students. The report should be analytical and succinct with substantiating evidence retained for examination by the expert panel. The College publishes the self-study report.

#### 8.4.3.2 The Expert Panel

Evaluation by peers and stakeholders is central to external evaluation. HETAC appoints a panel of experts to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. HETAC also appoint a chair and a secretary to the panel. HETAC consult with the institution prior to appointing the panel, which are normally announced at the same time as the terms of reference for the review. The recommendations of the panel inform any decisions the Council makes on foot of the review. Panel members are chosen on the basis of their expertise and independence. Panel members receive training for the task. Panels normally consist of 5-7 members. The membership of each panel includes persons reflecting the perspective of learners and of the world of work and persons with senior management experience of

higher education and training provision. At least one member from outside Ireland is also required to bring an international perspective to the review.

#### ***8.4.3.3 The Site Visit***

The panel schedule a visit or visits to the College. The panel meet with members of the College, learners and other stakeholders according to an agenda drawn up by the panel in consultation with the College. The panel may also review documentary evidence relating to the institution.

#### ***8.4.3.4 The Panel Report***

The panel prepare a report following the site visit(s). A draft report is submitted to the College to comment on factual inaccuracies before the final version is drafted. The College prepare a response to the report including a plan with a timeline for the implementation of any changes. The Academic Committee of HETAC consider the panel report, the College's response and the views of the HETAC Executive and make recommendations to its Academic Council for adoption. HETAC's Academic Council may impose conditions on the College arising from the review. When considered and adopted by HETAC's Academic Council the report and response are published in full on the HETAC's website. Sanctions available to HETAC include withdrawal of programme validation, but these sanctions normally only arise in circumstances where serious problems were evident in advance of the review and flagged in the terms of reference. The relevant criteria are set out in the HETAC's policies on programme accreditation.

#### ***8.4.3.5 Follow-up Report***

The IBAT College Dublin is required to submit a follow-up report to HETAC not more than twelve months after the publication of the institutional report. This outlines how the College has implemented the plan contained in its response to the report and evaluate the initial impact of such implementation. The College's follow-up report is considered by the Academic Committee of HETAC, along with a commentary by the HETAC Executive. The Academic Committee may adopt the follow-up report and/or may impose further conditions. Following adoption by the Academic Committee of HETAC, the follow-up report and any further observations by the Council are published on HETAC's website.

## **9 Procedures for Selection, Appointment, Appraisal and Development of Staff**

### **9.1 Overview**

The Director considers the quality of its people to be a critical success factor within IBAT College. This includes our capacity to attract, develop and retain management and staff with the necessary talent and expertise required to support the continuing academic and commercial development of a successful organisation. IBAT College Dublin is committed to the timely selection of employees in a consistent and professional manner throughout the organisation irrespective of age, race, gender or disability. The college strives to ensure provision of job satisfaction, professional development, career advancement and fair financial rewards within a progressive educational environment.

### **9.2 Selection and Appointment Procedure**

The decision to recruit an employee is made in response to an identified need within the company. The needs of the organisation are reviewed annually as part of the business planning process.

When the need for a new employee is identified a job analysis, job description and person specification are produced. A job analysis is performed to clarify the duties, responsibilities and other job demands of each role. It helps to identify the ideal employee profile to satisfy the needs of the organisation. The job description outlines the goals and objectives of the job including the main activities and reporting relationships involved in its performance. The job description is sufficiently flexible to allow the roles, tasks and responsibilities to evolve. The person specification sets out the requirements of the job in terms of qualifications, personal skills, and experience.

Selection procedures commence at this stage. The position is advertised internally and applications from internal candidates are considered. If a suitable internal candidate is not identified an external hiring strategy is formulated. Other internal candidates may still apply for an open position and their applications may be considered until a hiring decision has been reached. All CV's based on the job criteria are reviewed to identify potentially suitable candidates.

The job interview is the primary selection method used to assess candidates' suitability for a particular post. Interviews are conducted in a professional, fair and consistent manner. A minimum of two interviews with a panel of interviews are conducted to reduce potential bias in the interview process. The College expects all interviewers to be adequately prepared for the interview process; therefore, each interviewer is required to know the specification for the job they are interviewing for. The use of clear interview notes on each candidate is an absolute requirement.

The decision to hire a candidate is made by consensus and involves all of the interviewers. Candidates are ranked in terms of suitability and the process proceeds to offer stage with the most suitable candidate.

### **9.3 Employment Offer Generation**

When a suitable candidate is identified the following procedures must be followed prior to an offer being extended

- A background check should be completed to verify candidate details

- Professional references, including phone numbers of suitable referees, are obtained from the candidate (peer and written references are unsuitable)

## 9.4 Extending an Offer of Employment

When a suitable candidate is identified and when all of the pre-hire activities have been completed satisfactorily, an Offer of Employment is extended verbally to the successful candidate by the Direct Manager. A formal Letter of Offer, including the Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment, is sent to the successful candidate. The candidate must respond within seven days of receipt of the offer. The offer may be withdrawn if the candidate does not meet this requirement. A file must be completed on both successful and unsuccessful candidates. Successful candidate files should contain the following data:

- Candidates most recent CV
- All interview notes
- Completed and signed contract of employment

## 9.5 Recruitment Code of Conduct

To avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest, company personnel involved in the hiring process, should avoid interviewing and/or making hiring decisions which involve family members, relations or friends.

## 9.6 Procedure for Induction

Fast and effective assimilation of new employees into the organisation is a priority. All new staff must complete a company orientation programme. The following are the primary components of the orientation programme:

- Overview of safety requirements
- Introduction to the organisation including background, ethos, structures, strategies and plans
- Roles and responsibilities of academic staff
- Academic and administration procedures and regulations
- Overview of the IT system
- Terms and conditions of employment

## 9.7 Procedure for the Appraisal and Development of Staff

### 9.7.1 Staff Appraisal

The formal staff appraisal process reviews the performance of roles, the achievement of goals and objectives and the implementation of development plans by staff. It also focuses on future goals, objectives and development plans in the context of evolving operational responsibilities and career development.

On an annual basis, at a minimum, the College Director with senior management sets goals for the organisation based on the output of the business planning process, which include:

- Individual goals and objectives set for each employee
- Individual development plans formulated, negotiated, approved and implemented in support of the achievement of these goals

- Semi-formal reviews, carried out to review progress and updated based on evolving business plans and objectives
- formal annual appraisal

### **9.7.2 Staff Development**

Staff development plans and initiatives are considered in the context of each individual staff member. As an integral part of the annual academic staff appraisal, individual and organisational staff requirements are identified and a development plan for each staff member is agreed.

It is the policy of IBAT College Dublin to encourage and facilitate the development of the knowledge, skills, and general competence of its academic staff. The objective of the staff development policy is to improve the quality and performance of academic staff, to enhance their value and contribution to the College and to contribute to the realisation of their own career development plans. These objectives are achieved through:

- Completion of formal further education programmes
- Attendance at relevant seminars and conferences
- Involvement in other developmental activities or programmes

The staff development policy supports courses, seminars, conferences and any other programmes identified in the employee development plan, which meet the following criteria:

- Short-term employee development objectives focused on current faculty needs
- Long-term development goals which meet both individual and organisational requirements

## **9.8 Equality and Diversity Policy**

The College maintains a policy of non-discrimination towards all employees and applicants for employment and learners.

As an equal opportunity employer, in accordance with its Equality of Opportunity Policy the College treats all its employee, potential employees and learners equally irrespective of the following nine grounds:

- Gender
- Marital status
- Family status
- Age
- Race
- Disability
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Membership of the Traveller community

### **9.8.1 Objectives of Equality Planning**

The purpose of the equality/diversity policy is to enhance a place of learning that provides for equal opportunities for all current, future and potential staff and students and where their dignity is protected and respected at all times.

### **9.8.2 Responsibility**

Senior Management is committed to the active implementation of this equality/diversity policy.

All employees receive a copy of the equality/diversity policy. Senior management have responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the policy in the workplace and promoting a culture that supports the policy.

### **9.8.3 Recruitment and Selection**

The objective is to target the widest possible pool of potential applicants and to ensure that all candidates have equal access to the College's positions. Recruitment methods, documentation and all associated publicity material are reviewed to ensure it contains nothing of a discriminatory nature and encourages applications from all potential candidates.

Selection is based on merit and those who are successful demonstrate their suitability for appointment according to predetermined job-related selection criteria which is consistently applied throughout the recruitment process. The application of the equality/diversity policy also includes accommodating as much as possible the special needs of individuals to facilitate their participation in the recruitment and selection process.

All aspects of the recruitment and selection process (job description/specification; advertising; short listing; interviewing; reference checks) is based on the principle of assessing competencies and attributes (abilities) of applicants against those which have been determined to be required for the effective performance of the job.

### **9.8.4 Career Development**

All staff are encouraged to prepare, plan and consider themselves for career development. Conditions governing access to career development does not discriminate, directly or indirectly, on any of the nine grounds as outlined in **Section 8.8** of this document.

### **9.8.5 Conditions of Employment**

All employees receive the same treatment in relation to disciplinary measures, grievances, etc.

The induction process is used as an opportunity to discuss with new employees any special needs that they may have arising from one of the nine grounds and to explore how these needs may be accommodated. Where practicable, measures are taken to accommodate special needs arising from a disability, race, family status, or any other characteristics covered by the nine grounds. For example, requests for flexible working hours/atypical attendance patterns are accommodated where practicable.

### **9.8.6 Role of Staff**

All staff have an important role to play in ensuring equality/diversity throughout the Institution. All staff have a particular responsibility to engender respect for difference and to accommodate diversity where appropriate.

Additionally IBAT College Dublin staff have an important role to play in supporting the College's commitment to maintaining a work and student environment free of harassment and workplace bullying.

#### **9.8.7 Equality Training**

All staff receive training on the equality and diversity policy at the induction stage and whenever updates are made to the policy in this area, and are aware of the College's equality/diversity principles, the legislation, and senior management/staff roles in implementing the policy.

## **10 Procedures for Evaluating Premises, Equipment and Facilities**

### **10.1 Overview of Facilities and Services**

The aim of the College is to provide and maintain a safe, well-resourced building, available and accessible to all staff and students of the College. The College attempts to cater for and provide adequate space for the many different learning and teaching styles and techniques available. All lecture rooms consist of at least one white board with accompanying dry makers and erasers. Lecturers also have access to overhead projectors and PCs as required. The student administrator ensures that there are sufficient desks and chairs to accommodate all participants in each class and that each room has satisfactory heating for both lecturer and student. The Student Administrator is also responsible for classroom scheduling within the college. Lecturers work closely with the Student Administrator to ensure that appropriate classrooms are assigned to each class group. The Student Administrator is responsible for ensuring that all teaching and supporting aids are available to all lectures when delivering classes. The College Director is responsible for planning and directing all building and maintenance work in the College, and providing and maintaining all furniture and equipment in safe and working condition. S/he is also responsible for ensuring that all current Irish and European Health and Safety legislation is adhered to strictly, in accordance with the College's Health and Safety Statement. Evaluation of existing facilities including lecture rooms, audio-visual aids, library, and staff facilities is performed on an ongoing basis.

### **10.2 Performance Measures**

Feedback from both staff and students is necessary for the efficient and effective running of the college. Staff may make suggestions for the improvement of college facilities during staff meetings. Audits of all physical resources are performed periodically to ensure optimum performance of physical resources.

Additionally, the University of Wales Moderator is charged with a quality enhancement and programme development role for the College and the relevant UoW validated programme, and has responsibility to report to the University as to whether practices and procedures at IBAT College Dublin equate to those pertaining to the University of Wales itself and that adequate resources are in place.

### **10.3 Procedures for Evaluating Services and Resources**

These procedures relate to the services and resources provided by, or on behalf of, IBAT College Dublin to enhance the student's learning experience. These resources include Library resources and IT resources (teaching labs and equipment).

Each of these learning and support services has their own aims, objectives and work practices and shall be considered separately in relation to quality assurance practices.

#### **10.3.1 Library**

The role of the Library Service at IBAT College Dublin is to provide information services to support the College's approach to teaching and research.

Objectives for the library service are to:

- Identify and provide access to the learning resource services required to support the learning, teaching and research activities of the College

- Manage those resources efficiently, effectively and economically
- maintain effective links with staff of the College in order to understand and, where necessary, respond to changes in education, approaches to learning, and corporate policy

### **10.3.1.1 Library Resources Strategy and Planning**

The Library and Information Service in IBAT College Dublin incorporates a single library, which provides the student with basic book-lending and reading facilities. The library catalogue is relatively modest due to the small numbers of students currently studying in the College but the current procurement strategy seeks to substantially enhance the number of catalogues, periodicals and journals available. At the start of every academic year a reading list is produced for each of the taught modules. All lists are updated on an annual basis. The library aims to provide the best possible resource to its user population and consistently strives to maintain an equitable book to student ratio as per **Table 9.1** below.

<b>Student figures</b>	<b>Copies required</b>
1-20	3 (minimum)
21-75	8 (minimum)
75 – 100	12 (minimum)
100 – 150	16 (minimum)

**Table 9.1: IBAT College Dublin Library book to Student Ratio**

The library books available encompass the full curriculum for all current IBAT College Dublin programme offerings including all core and many supplementary readings. Emphasis is also placed on providing the most current and up-to-date information available, including updated and newest editions of all texts. Students are also provided with access to many online learning resources.

### **10.3.2 IT Facilities**

The goal of the IT department is to provide excellent computing facilities that support the requirements of both students and staff.

#### **10.3.2.1 Resources for Students**

The College is continually upgrading its IT resources with the latest hardware and software. All workstations have high-speed Internet access with printing facilities for all workstations. All students have access to these facilities to assist research, enhance knowledge and improve correspondence.

Technical support services are available from 9am to 730 pm. All registered students and staff of IBAT College Dublin may use the computer facilities during the scheduled opening times.

#### **10.3.2.2 Administrative Procedures**

All software is selected to reflect and enhance the learning outcomes of the taught modules in the academic programmes. The IT department constantly looks to source either additional software or more efficient methods of using existing software. This is an ongoing process and is driven by evolving industry trends as well as input from various college bodies, including programme boards,

academic committee and programme evaluation forms. Lecturers may also request software be made available for teaching or student purposes. The IT Manager, prior to the commencement of each academic year, determines the software requirements. The IT manager is also responsible for ensuring that all software is properly licensed and copyright protocols are respected.

#### **10.3.2.3 Maintenance and Support**

The objective of IT maintenance is to have minimal downtime for any piece of computing equipment within the college. This involves ongoing maintenance on PCs in addition to ensuring staff that are on hand to deal with any issues or problems that may arise during teaching or student open access times.

#### **10.3.2.4 IT Security**

The IT department is responsible for maintaining firewall and antivirus software and for performing backups. Each of these is described below

- **Firewall** This is in place to guard against unauthorised outside access to the college network
- **Anti Virus** Software licence and upgrades are automatically downloaded from the web to ensure that the latest antivirus software is in use throughout the organisation. Confirmation that the latest antivirus download has occurred is performed on the server.
- **Backup of all network drives** Backups are performed on a daily basis with offsite storage to ensure that data can be recovered. Backup logs are checked on a daily basis to ensure the correct data backup has occurred. Backups are run on one server "IBAT.IE" and are performed using TapeWare backup software. There are currently ten tapes in use and the table below outlines the purpose of each. Tapes are taken off-site on a weekly basis.
- **Backup of Mail** The back-up of mailbox records is performed as part of normal procedure. The MS Exchange 2003 system has additional daily backup on the mail server for security and speed of recovery. This is performed using the servers own internal backup device and backed up using TapeWare.

#### **10.3.2.5 Staffing**

All aspects of support and maintenance across both student and staff networks are carried out by the IT Manager. The IT Manager is also responsible for the following;

- Designing and implementing IT policy
- Updating and developing the college website

#### **10.3.2.6 Staff Development**

Training and development is usually dependent on implementation of new systems or technology. Staff training is provided by an internal or third-party for the support of new or existing services as required.

## 11 Appendices

### 11.1 IBAT College Dublin Examination Regulations



# IBAT College Dublin Examination Regulations

This booklet contains the Examination Regulations for IBAT College Dublin and includes IBAT College's Policy on Submission of Course Work, Academic Standards, Plagiarism and Deferral of Exams or a Programme of Study.

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## 1.1 Registering for Examinations

In advance of the examination sessions, the examination timetables are displayed in the College and on the web through the student portal pages. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that s/he is aware of the date, time and location of examinations.

It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that s/he is registered with the college where/as necessary for repeat examinations.

## 1.2 General Regulations

Each candidate is required to arrive and be seated in the examination room at least fifteen minutes before the start of the examination.

No candidate is admitted to the examination room more than thirty minutes after the start of the examination and no candidate may leave the examination during the first thirty minutes of the examination.

All candidates are required to have their student card at all examinations.

Candidates are not allowed to bring into the examination room, or have in their possession while in the examination, any computing equipment including electronic organisers, programmable calculators, mobile phones, books, note paper or any source of information that might influence examination performance. Any unauthorised material found by the invigilator is deemed as a breach of exam regulations and treated as such (whether the material is relevant to that examination or not).

Candidates must ensure they have no written material on their hands, arms and legs as this is assumed to be in breach of examination regulations and treated as such (whether the material is relevant to that examination or not).

Students are reminded that severe sanctions are attached to any breach of exam regulations (reference *section 1.4: Breaches of Examination Regulations* below).

Personal effects such as coats or bags must be deposited wherever the invigilator directs.

Candidates must comply with the instructions printed on the examination paper and on the answer book. Students are reminded to put his/her name, student number and subject on each answer book.

## 1.3 Conduct during Examinations

Candidates may not use electronic dictionaries, reference books or notes during the examination.

Candidates may not bring blank paper into the examination room - all paper is supplied by the invigilators.

Candidates wishing to leave the examination room temporarily may not do so unless accompanied by an invigilator. In any event, no person may enter or leave the examination room without the invigilator's permission.

It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that s/he has an adequate supply of pens, pencils, etc. required for an examination. The borrowing of such materials from another candidate is not permitted during an examination.

A candidate must not, on any pretext whatsoever speak to, or have any communication with, any other candidate; such communications are regarded as a breach of the examinations regulations. If a candidate needs to ask a question or obtain an extra answer booklet, s/he should raise his/her hand to get the attention of the invigilator.

Candidates must have a current student identity card visible on their desks at all examinations.

Each candidate must sit at the desk indicated by the invigilator but must not turn over the examination paper on the desk until requested to do so by the invigilator.

At the end of the examination, each candidate is required to remain in his/her place until the invigilator has collected his/her answer book. It is the responsibility of each candidate to ensure that his/her answer booklet(s) is handed to the invigilator.

#### **1.4 Breaches of Examination Regulations**

An invigilator who considers, or suspects that a candidate is engaging in an unfair examination practice is authorised by the college to confiscate and retain all evidence relating to the alleged unfair practice.

A candidate who is found to have unauthorised materials in his/her possession in the examination room is deemed to be in breach of the examination regulations. Any written or printed materials (not written on official answer books) or electronic devices containing text is considered to be unauthorised material.

The unauthorised material is removed and retained by the invigilator who reports the matter to the academic committee. The candidate is allowed to complete the examination.

The same procedure is followed where a candidate is considered by the invigilator to have copied or to have attempted to copy material from another candidate.

The Academic Committee considers the allegation at its next meeting following the reporting of the incident. Each case is considered separately on the basis of evidence available to the committee.

In such cases, the candidate is notified of the following

- (a) the precise allegation
- (b) the entitlement to present a response either orally or in writing to the committee

The Academic Committee determines the penalty to be applied having regard to the seriousness of the incident and the evidence gathered.

The Academic Committee may, at its discretion

- (a) deem the candidate to be innocent of the allegation. In such a case the examination board is instructed to consider the assessment or examination results in the normal manner

(b) find that the candidate has breached examination regulations. In such a case the committee may request that the candidate have that examination declared void and determines when (or if) the candidate is entitled to be reassessed.

The committee also decide if any further action should be taken, for example if other forms of assessment undertaken in that academic year may also be declared void if this is considered appropriate or necessary.

A report from the academic committee is placed before the examination board at the awarding body examination board meeting. The report includes the recommendation of the academic committee which is decided on and implemented by the board.

The candidate is notified in writing of the outcome of the enquiry, and the penalty to be applied.

### **1.5 Reassessment Regulations (HETAC Undergraduate Programmes)**

For HETAC Level 6-8 programmes, a student is not admitted to a second or subsequent examination year (except in exceptional circumstances) without first having passed all examinable modules for the previous year.

If a student is unsuccessful in the assessment of some or all of the modules the student is normally permitted a further attempt at the unsuccessful assessment(s) at the next available opportunity.

A candidate who does not avail of a first or subsequent attempt at an examination is deemed to have exhausted one such attempt for each missed session (except in extenuating circumstances, in which case an application for a deferral should be made by the candidate). Reference *Section 3: IBAT College Dublin Policy on Deferral* below.

A candidate who is unsuccessful in a reassessment may be required to repeat attendance of the year of the course prior to reassessment, subject to the approval of Academic Council.

#### **1.5.1 Reassessment Regulations at Award Stage (HETAC Undergraduate Programmes)**

Where reassessment is undertaken for an award, successful candidates are eligible for an award with pass classification only.

The award for the Higher Certificate in Business and the ordinary Bachelor of Business degree may be a Pass, Merit 1, Merit 2 or Distinction.

The award for the Bachelor of Business (Honours) degree may be made at Pass, Second Class Honours (Grade 1) Second Class Honours (Grade 2) or First Class Honours.

Where students do not pass all final examinations in one sitting and at first attempt, or where reassessment is undertaken for any element of continuous assessment or coursework, (except in the case of extenuating circumstances where a deferral has been granted) successful candidates is eligible for a Higher Certificate in Business or Bachelor of Business award with a **pass classification only**.

### **1.5.2 Reassessment Regulations for Continuous Assessment (HETAC Undergraduate Programmes)**

Students who fail to submit work in respect of a continuous assessment element of a module (and have not sought or been granted a deferral) are not be given an opportunity to be reassessed if the overall grade achieved in that module is greater than 40%.

Any student who fails an element of coursework and subsequently fails the module are normally permitted a further attempt at the unsuccessful assessment(s) at the next available opportunity.

Any student who satisfies the requirement for the award by availing of a reassessment opportunity for any part of the continuous assessment of a module are eligible for the award at a **pass classification only**.

### **1.6 Assessment Procedures (UoW Postgraduate Programme)**

The Assessment and Reassessment Regulations in relation to the University of Wales MBA programme are provided in the University of Wales Assessment and Reassessment Guidelines Documentation. This is made available to UoW students prior to commencement on a Programme of Study.

### **1.7 Appeals**

Examination results are provisionally approved by the academic committee and are subject to formal approval by the awarding body. Students have an opportunity to appeal the results of examinations prior to the awarding body examination board meeting. The dates for appeals are clearly set out on the annual academic calendar.

### **1.8 Communication of Examination Results**

The date for the issuance of results (both provisional and final) is indicated on the annual academic calendar. All examination results are subject to final confirmation by the awarding body.

Results are formally communicated to students after the relevant meetings of the awarding body. Students are advised of their results online and an individual transcript of results is also issued to the postal address provided by the student.

The College does not issue results in the case of any student whose result is in dispute, indeterminate or the subject of an enquiry.

### 11.1.1 IBAT College Dublin Policy on Submission of Course Work

Students are required to submit all course work on or before the due date. It is each student's responsibility to organise himself/herself to submit assignments by the due date in the prescribed manner. Students should retain a copy of all assignments.

Assignments submitted after the due date attract a marking penalty unless an extension has been granted (reference information on 'Extensions' below).

#### 2.1 Extensions

An extension may be granted in circumstances where a written request for an extension is received before the original due submission date and an acceptable reason e.g. illness is given by the student.

Extensions are considered only where written application is submitted to the lecturer in advance of the deadline with supporting evidence as to why the extension is warranted (e.g. medical certificate).

Technical problems, such as computer failure or viruses, are not deemed legitimate reasons for late submission or non-submission of work.

If an extension is neither sought nor granted, or work is submitted after the extended due date, late submission of assignments is penalised as per **section 2.2 Late Submissions** below.

#### 2.2 Late Submissions

If work is submitted after the due date (and an extension is neither sought nor granted or an extended deadline is missed), late submission of assignments is penalised as follows

- 10% penalty for assignments submitted within three days of the submission deadline
- 20% penalty for assignments submitted within one week (seven days) of the submission deadline
- late submissions after one week will attract a further penalty of 5% for each additional day the work is late.

#### 2.3. Policy of Academic Integrity within IBAT College

IBAT College Dublin has defined a policy statement outlining the standards of academic integrity to be upheld within the College, the penalties for violation of these standards and the process by which appeals against penalties are handled.

IBAT College Dublin has established standards and procedures governing violations of academic integrity. Violation of the standards of academic integrity hinders student learning and development, and may compromise the fairness of grades and the academic reputation of the College and students. It also affects the overall student body and the trust between lecturers and students.

The following categories of academic integrity are considered

- Plagiarism
- Duplicate submission

- Cheating on examinations
- False citation

### **2.3.1 Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or work as one's own creation. A student who copies or paraphrases published or on-line material, or another person's research, without properly identifying the source(s) is committing plagiarism. A Student who copies another Student's work is also guilty of plagiarism.

Students are considered to plagiarise when they do not credit the sources of their writing - the words, information, ideas, or opinions of others. This may include the following

- An entire essay written by someone else e.g. purchased or published from a website or unpublished essays written by others
- The exact words of someone else without quotation marks around those words.
- A paraphrase of someone else's words without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes reordering or replacing someone else's words while keeping the main idea or the central information.
- A summary of someone else's words or ideas without documentation. This form of plagiarism includes using some, few, or even none of the original words to reproduce a shorter version of some or all of someone else's ideas or text.
- Undocumented use of information from someone else. In this kind of plagiarism, a student takes information that s/he found in a particular source and presents it as his/her own knowledge or as common knowledge. A student must document information that appears in one or only a few specialised sources, is the work or idea of a particular person, or represents a controversial stance on a topic. A student need not document information that is common knowledge.
- Undocumented use of information that someone else has collected. A student must document research aids such as web-based 'research' services and annotated bibliographies.
- The sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, pattern of thought, or visual representation of information (images, tables, charts, or graphs) from someone else. This form of plagiarism includes any of these textual features even if students present the ideas or information in their own words.

Students are accomplices to plagiarism if they allow a fellow student to submit their work as the student's own or if they write an essay for another student and allow that student to submit it as his/her own, e.g. a student is an accomplice to plagiarism if s/he does any of the following

- s/he allows a fellow student to submit their work as the student's own, or writes an essay for another student and allows that student to submit it as his/her own
- s/he does not report a fellow student who plagiarises
- s/he contributes an essay to a collection of essays (among friends or at a website) that s/he knows provides opportunity for other students to plagiarise.

Plagiarism violates the ethical and academic standards of the College and is not tolerated at IBAT College. Students are held responsible for such violations, even when unintentional. To avoid unintended plagiarism, students should consult with their lecturers about when and how to document their sources.

### **2.3.2 Duplicate Submission**

Submitting one piece of work in identical or similar form to fulfil more than one requirement, without prior approval of the relevant faculty members, is a breach of academic integrity. This includes using a paper for more than one course or submitting material previously used to meet another requirement.

### **2.3.3 Cheating in Examinations**

Cheating in examinations by copying material from another person or source or by gaining any advance knowledge of the content or topic of an examination without the permission of the instructor is another breach of academic integrity. Cheating is the use or attempted use of fraud, deception or misrepresentation in any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating may include

- use of unauthorised notes or material during an exam
- exchanging information with another student during an exam
- having another student take an exam for you ('personation')
- tampering with an exam after it has been returned, then claiming that the instructor made a grading error
- submitting as your own work a paper written by someone else
- undisclosed submission of the same paper for different courses

### **2.3.4 False Citation**

Listing an author, title, or page reference as the source for obtained material, when the material actually came from another source or from another location within that source, is a breach of academic integrity. This includes attributing fabricated material to a real or fictitious source.

## **2.4 Penalties for Violation of Academic Standards**

IBAT College Dublin makes the policy on academic standards available to all students at the beginning of the academic year. In addition, students are advised on strategies to avoid the risk of violating these standards in their work.

Plagiarism at IBAT College Dublin may carry severe penalties. The severity of the penalty is dependent on whether the Examiner feels the plagiarism is intentional or unintentional. Any direct copying of one student's work from another's or from an online source results in the examiner reporting all the students involved to the Academic Committee. The Academic Committee decides on what disciplinary action should be taken – this could result in the student(s) involved receiving a reduced grade, no grade, or even suspension from the College.

In a case where the examiner feels the plagiarism is unintentional the penalties is commensurate with the severity of the infraction. The examiner may, for example, require the work to be redone, reduce the course grade, fail the student in the course, or refer the case to the academic committee.

In the event of a violation of any of the College's academic standards, IBAT College Dublin has set out the following policy;

1. Where a lecturer suspects that a student has violated academic standards s/he will first consult with the Registrar, in a manner that minimises disruption and embarrassment to the student at all times.
2. Where evidence warrants an allegation of an offence, the student is invited to meet with the College's Academic Committee. The student may invite his/her mentor to attend this meeting to support him/her. The Student is advised of the basis for the suspicions and is asked to respond to these suspicions with reasoning and with evidence. This evidence may come from a Student's research (sources and/or notes on sources) or drafts of work submitted. It is the Student's responsibility to retain all materials used in the preparation of his/her work. The Student may request, and will be granted, up to one week to prepare his or her response.
3. In cases where the Student admits to violation of the College's academic standards (including plagiarism), or where proof is established during the hearing, the proof is discussed with the student, drawing his/her attention to the moral and academic implications of violating academic standards. A decision of guilt or innocence is based on consideration of the evidence in the case. Prior accusations or other mitigating circumstances may also be taken into account. Academic sanctions may be imposed, subject to approval of the Academic Council.
4. The minimum penalty for violating academic standards (including engaging in plagiarism) in IBAT College Dublin is a fail grade for the relevant subject. Additional sanctions available to the Academic Committee may include;
  - Official warning in writing that continuation or repetition of violation or inappropriate behaviour may result in a more severe sanction
  - The Student may receive a formal written warning that his/her conduct is in violation of College policies and his/her standing as a Student is in jeopardy
  - Student status may be terminated at the College for no less than the remainder of the semester
  - Student status may be terminated at the College permanently or for an indefinite period of time.
4. A decision to suspend or expel the Student is taken in consultation with, and only on approval of, the Academic Council. Academic sanctions are determined within 10 working days of the initial accusation being made, unless the student consents in writing to an extension of this time. The determination or recommendation shall be communicated in writing to the student with appropriate members of the College informed.

## **2.5 Appeals**

In all cases, both the accused student and the lecturer making the allegation may appeal the outcome of the process investigating the violation of academic standards. This appeal must be submitted in writing. Where an appeal is made, the merits of each case are weighed by the Academic Council, which determines the penalty accordingly. Where either party requests that a specific member of staff not hear the case, this request is honoured.

Documentation of previous violations of academic integrity form part of the record in subsequent cases and appeals. During the hearing of the appeal, the lecturer who made the original allegation provides information and answers questions. The student may be accompanied and advised by another person, who may provide information and answer questions. Decisions are based on a preponderance of the evidence and reasons are provided in writing to all parties. The Academic Council has the right to reverse the decision of the earlier Academic Committee hearing or to uphold the original decision if no new evidence has been presented, if no evidence has been shown to have been overlooked, and/or if no procedural errors have been shown to have occurred.

The resulting decisions of the Academic Council may be appealed only if new evidence has been found or if the original hearing overlooked specific evidence or committed procedural errors. All documents relating to the case are placed on file in the office of the Registrar, where they are retained in a secure manner until the student's academic record file is destroyed one year after the student graduates.

### **11.1.2 IBAT College Dublin Policy on Deferral**

It is recognised that in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a student to defer from a programme of study or defer some of his/her assessments during the academic year.

This document outlines

- 1) General principles relating to deferral of an examination or programme of study
- 2) Procedures for applying for a deferral

### **3.1 General Principles Relating to Deferral**

Deferral means that a student applies to defer or postpone his/her programme of study or an element of it. Deferrals may be applied for as follows

#### **3.1.1 Deferral of a place during a Programme of Study**

If a student at some point during the academic year finds that s/he is unable to continue his/her studies due to unforeseen circumstances an application for deferral can be made.

A student who defers a place on a programme is not entitled to a refund and will be liable for any increase in fees for the following year or semester.

In certain instances a fee review may be undertaken (e.g. compassionate and compelling circumstances that are beyond the control of the student and have an impact on the student's academic progress and or wellbeing).

#### **3.1.2 Deferral of an Examination or Assessment**

If a student is unable to sit an examination, complete an assignment or submit a project on time due to mitigating circumstance an application requesting a deferral must be made. Examples of mitigating circumstances are

- Ongoing illness
- Family bereavement
- Other personal circumstances

A student will only be able to claim mitigating circumstances if s/he submits the relevant documentary evidence (e.g. medical certificate) with the application form prior to the commencement of the examination session or submission deadline. Claims submitted after the examination session or submission deadline or after the results have been published will not be considered.

Note:

Deferral of a place does not automatically guarantee that the deferred examination or programme will run in the next academic semester or academic year. All courses are run subject to student numbers and programmatic review and IBAT College Dublin reserve the right to change or withdraw a programme following programmatic review.

Non-EU students who are permitted entry into Ireland on the basis of full-time study at an College need to ensure that this status remains unchanged. The GNIB has the right to deny this residency to any student who is not taking part in a full-time programme of study. The College cannot influence this decision – students should therefore be aware of the consequences of deferring an examination or a programme of study.

### **3.2 Procedures for Applying for a Deferral during an Academic Year**

A student must apply in writing by completing the deferral application form available from reception stating the reasons for the request. All supporting documentation (originals only – no photocopies) must accompany the application form.

The Academic Committee meets once weekly and all deferral requests are considered at that meeting. The granting of a deferral is an academic issue and is subject to academic regulations.

A fee review under compassionate and compelling circumstances may be considered as part of the application. The student is notified of the any relevant decision in writing and the student record amended accordingly.

