

Document Name and Version	9.3 (i) IICP College New Programmes Policy 9.3 (i) Development of New Programmes outside the scope of devolved responsibility for arranging programme validation related Independent Evaluation Reports
Policy Number	9.3 (i)
Policies that Interact with Policy 9.3	Policy 2.2 IICP College's Quality and Governance Framework; (ii) Governance Policy 2.7 Terms of Reference of Academic Council Policy 2.8 Terms of Reference of Senior Management Team Policy 9.3 IICP College New Programmes Policy (ii) Development of New Programmes where the College has devolved responsibility for arranging programme validation related Independent Evaluation Reports
Approval Body	Academic Council
Date of Approval	7 th June 2022
Date Policy Comes into Force	7 th June 2022
Date of Review	2027
Revisions	Revised section 3.1 to state that this applies to programme validation applications that are outside of the scope of devolution of responsibility.

1. Preamble.

- 1.1. All programmes leading to an award from IICP College are subject to a rigorous design and approval process against established criteria. They are delivered in line with the requirements of Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI) and are aligned with an appropriate level on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- 1.2. Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training prescribes the process and criteria to be used for validation as well as the documentation required when submitting an application for the validation of a new programme. The steps below are based on this policy.
- 1.3. Devolved Responsibility applies to the process for arrangement of the independent evaluation report for new programme applications by IICP College as approved by QQI. Where programmes come within the scope of provision for devolution of responsibility, then policy 9.3(ii) should be used. Where programmes come outside the scope of provision for devolution of responsibility, then policy 9.3(i) should be used. It should be noted that while the development processes are comparable in both policies, the validation processes and timelines differ.

2. Purpose.

- 2.1. This policy sets out the process by which new programmes, and substantial modifications to existing programmes, are developed, described, considered by the IICP College community and submitted to QQI for validation. It is intended to support the development and implementation of programme change and new programmes in the IICP College community. It establishes a robust development process based on a design that requires proposals (i) to demonstrate compliance with QQI validation criteria and (ii) to go through several iterative stages, incorporating feedback (both internal and external) at each stage. Once the final programme is approved, the design can be submitted to QQI for validation.

3. Scope.

3.1. This policy applies to all new programmes developed in IICP College which are intended to be submitted to QQI for validation and are outside of the scope of devolution of responsibility. This includes major or substantial developments of existing programmes.

3.2. New programmes developed in IICP College intended to be submitted to QQI for validation that are inside the scope of devolution of responsibility should utilise Policy 9.3 (ii).

3.3. The scope of Devolved Responsibility is set out in Policy 9.3 (ii), section 3.

3.4. Programmes not intended for validation with QQI may use an abbreviated version of this procedure.

4. Policy.

4.1. IICP College's approach to the design and approval of new programmes and modules, as well as the substantial revision of existing programmes, draws on regulation and guidance from QQI, ESG and UQB. It provides for:

- Systematic and thorough internal and external consultations with stakeholders, including evaluation of new programmes by appropriate internal decision-making structures, as well as external consultation and input. This is intended to facilitate and enhance the development of new programmes and major change in existing programmes.
- Collaborative engagement in programme development across faculty and organisation.
- Fair assessment of proposals on the basis of rationale, academic merits and financial implications.
- Consideration of QQI and professional body regulatory requirements.
- Effective use of resources in the programme design process, in particular in relation to documentation.

5. Procedures for Design and Approval of New Programmes and Modules.

5.1. There are six stages to programme approval:

- (i) Outline approval,
- (ii) Programme Development;
- (iii) Document Development.
- (iv) Internal Review;
- (v) External Expert Review;
- (vi) Academic Council approval.

5.1.1. Each stage must be successfully navigated in order to produce an approved programme document that can be considered for validation or re-validation.

5.1.2. The stages in detail are as follows.

5.1.2.1. *Outline Approval:*

5.1.2.1.1. A new programme may be proposed by any staff member(s). The proposer must present an outline for a new academic programme to the Academic Council. The outline must consist of

- a) Rationale for the programme;
- b) Outline of the programme;
- c) Programme aims and objectives.
- d) Fit with IICP mission, ethos and strategic planning;
- e) Proposed design process This should outline how the design process will engage with internal and external stakeholders;
- f) Business plan;
- g) Financial implications for the College.

5.1.2.1.2. On the basis of this information the Academic Council decide whether to provide outline approval. Where approval is granted then the Registrar will appoint a Programme team to prepare a Programme submission.

5.1.2.2. *Programme Development:*

5.1.2.2.1. All new programmes should be designed with reference to internal QA process and procedures as well as external reference points including QQI policy, QQI Awards Standards, and professional body requirements.

5.1.2.2.2. It is expected that all new programmes are designed in consultation with relevant faculty members, and that learners are consulted.

5.1.2.2.3. It is required that the design is internally coherent, can demonstrate alignment to the intended NFQ level and QQI Award standards, and complies with national and international professional standards.

5.1.2.3. Document Development:

5.1.2.3.1. Programme documentation must address the Core Validation Criteria. QQI Programme Validation Manual and (if relevant) Programme Review Manual should be utilised to describe the programme and to demonstrating compliance with QQI Core Validation Criteria.

5.1.2.3.2. Assessment of the Proposed Programme against Core Validation Criteria: Programme development must include self-evaluation against the Core Validation Criteria. This should be carried out on the QQI template.

5.1.2.4. Internal Review: Senior Management Team:

5.1.2.4.1. When the programme development team finalises the submission, it sends the Programme submission to the Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team will check that it is consistent with QQI and Professional Body regulations, appears financially viable, conforms to QQI format and is complete, clear and comprehensible.

5.1.2.5. External Expert Review:

5.1.2.5.1. The Registrar engages with an external academic expert in order to provide an external review of programme and documentation. External experts are nominated by the Academic Council, senior management and/or faculty. In general, it is expected that the external expert will be both a disciplinary expert and familiar with QQI and Professional body requirements. The Programme development team will review the programme documentation in the light of the report of the External expert.

5.1.2.6. Academic Council:

5.1.2.6.1. Following review of programme documentation, the Registrar will send the revised programme, together with the External Expert report and commentary from the Programme Development Team, to the Academic Council. The programme documentation will be reviewed and must be approved by the Academic Council in advance of submitting the document to QQI for validation. The Programme Development Team will be notified of the outcome at the end of the Academic Council evaluation.

6. Submission to QQI.

- 6.1.1. Throughout the validation process liaison with QQI is through the Registrar or his/her nominee.
- 6.1.2. QQI should be notified that the application is expected at least one month before submission.
- 6.1.3. The programme documents are submitted to QQI in accordance with QQI procedures. Unless already submitted, the following comprises the submission sent to QQI via QHub:
 - i. A cover letter stating the College's eligibility to apply as per Criteria 3 of the Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (QQI, 2017).
 - ii. A statement of PEL Arrangements.
 - iii. Fee Cover Note.
 - iv. Terms of Reference.
 - v. Panel members' completed documentation (Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Form and Expert Details Form).
 - vi. Programme Validation Documentation.
 - vii. Self-evaluation against the validation criteria.
 - viii. Additional Quality Assurance arrangements, if relevant.
 - ix. If the application is for revalidation then a programme review report must also be submitted.

6.2. Applications should be submitted at least 6 weeks prior to the proposed PAEC meeting date.

7. **Programme Approval Process** (Short / Part-time Professional and Academic Programmes).

7.1. Short programmes may use an abbreviated version of the above procedure, provided that sufficient information is provided to the Academic Council and the Board to allow a decision to be made regarding the approval of the proposed programme.