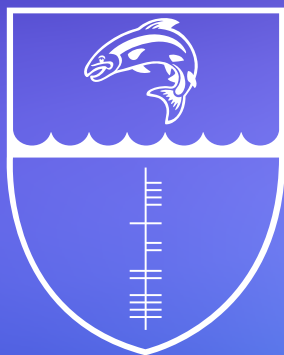


HIBERNIA COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE 2024



EST.MM

Welcome



David Moffitt
Chairperson, Board of Directors



Dr Mary Kelly
Academic Dean

It is our privilege to welcome you to Hibernia College and to share our 2024 Institutional Profile. Members of the Hibernia College community have worked to gather and share this snapshot of Hibernia College, and we believe you will agree that our profile is testament to the hard work of all our community, staff and students alike. We invite you to share in our current mission and future priorities as we continue our journey towards the ongoing provision of sustainable, diverse and authentic education.

Since its inception in 2000, academic excellence, the learner, and collaboration have always been at the heart of Hibernia College. As we prepare to engage with Institutional Review, we continue to centre these tenets and we believe that Hibernia College is ready to expand our programme portfolio and learner communities.

We hope to learn from and with the wider community as we engage with this process and to share our enthusiasm for the inclusive values Hibernia College maintains through our approach to education.

Staff
63% Female
37% Male



Programmes
29% Level 8
71% Level 9



4,608 Graduates
2019-2023



83% Mature
Students

23+

74% of 2023
Graduates in
Employment



1st Independent
College
NMBI Accredited
Nursing
Programme



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List of Abbreviations

EQA	External Quality Assessment
HAQEF	HECA Academic Quality Enhancement Forum
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IASC	Institutional Archive of Scholarly Content
ISER	Institutional Self-Evaluation Report
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NMBI	Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
NStEP	National Student Engagement Programme
PME	Professional Master of Education
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland

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The Institutional Review Steering Committee



**Mary Kelly,
Academic Dean**

Dr Mary Kelly is Academic Dean of Hibernia College and a member of the College's Executive Management Team. Dr Kelly has been a driving force in the strategic direction of research initiatives and innovation in academic development since she joined Hibernia College in 2012.

Most recently serving as Head of the School of Education, Dr Kelly provided academic leadership for the School of Education's suite of programmes. Dr Kelly holds a Doctor of Education (EdD) in Education and Leadership from Dublin City University and a Master of Education from University College Dublin. Her research interests include practitioner research, early childhood education and teacher education, and she is highly skilled in curriculum development and educational technology.



**Elva Casey,
College Registrar**

Elva Casey is College Registrar at Hibernia College. Elva is engaged in doctoral studies at Trinity College on School Placement partnerships at primary level. She is co-chair of HAQEF, the HECA Academic Quality Enhancement Forum and serves on a number of internal and external committees and boards on academic integrity, ethical education and academic practices. Prior to her current role, she was the Director of Professional Master of Education (Primary). She has also worked for over 12 years as a qualified primary school teacher at a variety of class levels and positions. Her research interests are academic integrity, partnership in education and innovative assessment practices.



**Robin Flynn,
Quality, Enhancement and Registrations Manager**

Dr Robin Flynn is the Quality, Enhancement and Registrations Manager for Hibernia College and a recent member of HAQEF. Robin has a PhD in Immunology and has worked in the Irish and UK Higher Education sector since 2008 as a researcher, senior lecturer, programme director and project manager.



**Michael O'Leary,
Assessment and Awards Manager**

Michael O'Leary has been the Assessments and Awards Manager at Hibernia College since 2020. Michael has a background in management and data analytics. He has worked in the Irish and UK higher education sector since 2010 in the areas of student records, examinations, registrations and certifications.



**Irene O'Dowd,
Researcher, Digital Learning**

Irene O'Dowd is a Researcher in Digital Learning at Hibernia College. She is responsible for coordinating research activity in the College's Digital Learning Department, where she formerly held the role of Learning Designer. Irene has over 20 years' experience in digital learning in commercial and academic sectors, and has masters degrees in education and international relations.

1

Overview

This document provides a profile of Hibernia College. It encompasses the history and early development of the College, the mission and strategic goals and vision for the future. The profile has been produced as part of Hibernia College's Institutional Review process with QQI, Quality and Qualifications Ireland. The development of the profile, as a companion piece to the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER), was led by the Institutional Review Steering Committee and supported by the entire College community, with input from all departments and from a variety of stakeholders.





Flexible Learning



Student-Centred



Innovation



Inclusive

Vision

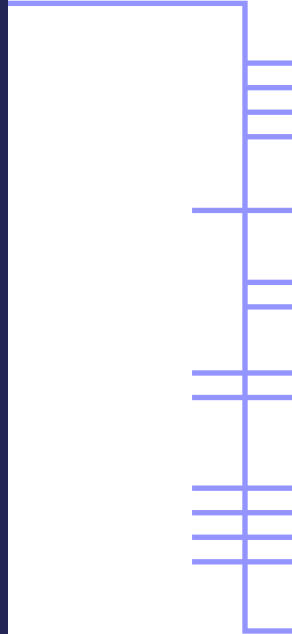
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Introduction to Hibernia College



Hibernia College is a leading private institution of higher education, established in 2000 to meet the increasing demand for flexible lifelong learning unbound by geographical or traditional educational constraints. Embracing a student-centric philosophy, Hibernia College employs cutting-edge technology to deliver engaging and flexible technology-enhanced programmes. These programmes, structured around an e-learning model, prepare learners for the multifaceted demands of today's professional landscape. To date, the College's offerings have had a strong focus on professional education and practice-based learning for regulated professions. Hibernia College now offers a growing suite of QQI-validated programmes at Level 8 and Level 9 on Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The demand for access to flexible learning arises from Ireland's urgent need to support and develop a graduate-led workforce, across all education platforms, to compete effectively on the global economic landscape as part of an open society. As noted in Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025, the growth of reputation based on innovation and skills is critical to securing the recovery and sustainability of Ireland. Today, this need has never been greater, and Hibernia College is uniquely positioned to continue to respond to social and employment needs by offering learners accessible opportunities to study across Ireland.



In 2021, Hibernia College became part of the Folens Group, which has a long history of activity within the education sector. This integration positions the College to navigate the future while fostering collaborative relationships with other Folens Group entities, furthering the pursuit of strategic objectives. Guided by the Folens Group vision, Hibernia College seeks to be a valued, respected and trusted institution that, through outstanding learner experiences, enables people to reach their learning goals.



3

Hibernia College Mission Statement



At Hibernia College, our mission is to empower learners by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, competencies and confidence to become active, agentic and motivated members of society. Through the use of transformative educational approaches in developing and delivering programmes of higher education, the College mission is to make high quality education widely available to a diverse learner population.

This mission statement encompasses the purpose, culture, goals and values of Hibernia College. This enables students, staff and other stakeholders to have a clear vision of the College's priorities. Using transformative educational approaches in developing and delivering programmes of higher education, the College's mission is to make high quality education widely available to a diverse learner population. Hibernia College seeks to redefine the boundaries of learning by providing innovative, engaging and flexible programmes that inspire and facilitate a lifelong love of learning, a desire for continuous professional development and transformative educational outcomes.



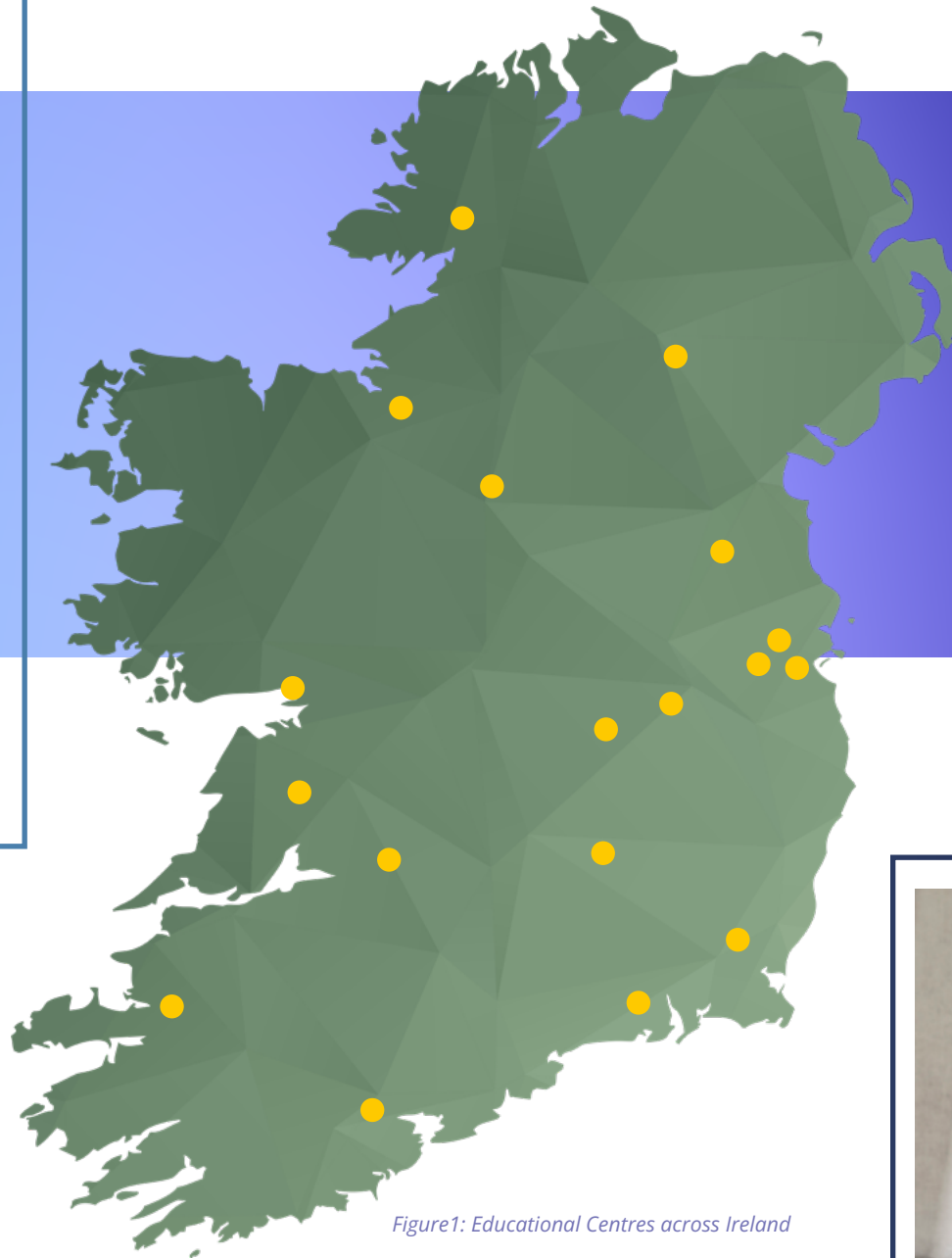


Figure1: Educational Centres across Ireland

3.1 Accessible Learning

The impact of College programmes can already be measured nationally, as the College has learners drawn from each county engaged in its professional degrees. Hibernia College makes use of partner schools and hospitals across the country, while the map illustrates educational centres from which we deliver teaching.

Hibernia College's vision is to be recognised as a global brand for excellence in online and blended higher education by delivering high-impact programmes nationally and internationally.



3.2 Academic Culture

Driven by a culture of academic excellence, Hibernia College strives to create a dynamic learning environment that promotes critical thinking and collaborative learning and engenders a passion for lifelong learning. Hibernia College programmes are attractive to a wide diversity of learners, ultimately producing graduates who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and competencies to forge successful careers in their chosen disciplines.

Hibernia College embraces a learner-centric approach, leveraging technology and a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) perspective to engage with learners through interactive educational experiences. Academic faculty, comprised of professionals and experienced educators, support learners throughout their educational journey, ensuring that they become subject matter experts while also developing the professional skills and adaptability required in today's rapidly evolving workplace.

Inclusivity, access, equality and collaboration are at the core of Hibernia College values. The College strives to create an inclusive learning community that celebrates differences and encourages the exchange of ideas. By removing physical barriers and embracing a technology-led approach, the College supports learners from all pathways to access higher education and pursue their academic aspirations. Hibernia College seeks to transform the lives and futures of its learners through accessible, high-quality education, preparing graduates to lead in a complex and interconnected world. Graduate testimonials speak to the success the College continues to experience in reaching these high standards.





Graduate Testimonial

“It is fair to say that without the flexibility that the PME with Hibernia College affords, it would not have been possible for me to qualify as a primary school teacher. While undoubtedly hard work, it allowed me to create a study schedule that suited me and my family and gave me the opportunity to make my dream come true.”

Graduate Testimonial

“The tutors and lecturers do not just do their job of lecturing or tutoring, but they also become your friend, your support and your guide.”



4

Governance
and
Structure

4.1 Quality Framework

Hibernia College fully adopts and rigorously implements the governance and management requirements as identified in the QQI Guidelines pertaining to Core Statutory Quality Assurance and to Sector Specific Independent/Private Statutory Quality Assurance. These form the basis of Hibernia College's approach to governance and management and are manifested throughout the College's governance bodies and the Hibernia College Quality Framework (HCQF), which is central to the promotion of a culture of quality and enhancement within the College.



4.2 Governance

Hibernia College has adopted two discrete structures of governance — the Academic Board and the Board of Directors. An Executive Management Team (EMT), chaired by the CEO, is appointed to assist and advise in decision-making on College matters not reserved to the Board of Directors or Academic Board. This includes implementation of the strategic plan and resource planning.

The Board of Directors acts as the governing authority of the College and has responsibility for the College’s legal and fiduciary duties under the Companies Act 2014. The Chair of the Board of Directors of Hibernia College, Mr David Moffitt, is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of Folens Group. The Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing and guiding strategic direction and major plans of action, overseeing risk management policies and procedures, annual budgets and business plans for the College.

The Academic Board assumes College responsibility for overseeing and ensuring the academic quality and integrity of the College. Its responsibilities typically include the accreditation, validation and management of all academic programmes; reviewing and approving academic policies and procedures; oversight of the assessment processes; and the development of key strategic policies, such as the College Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Research Strategy in line with the College’s mission and goals. The Academic Board is chaired and led by the Academic Dean, Dr Mary Kelly, and supported by the Department of the Registrar. The Academic Board discharges its duties directly or through one or more of its constituent subcommittees, namely, Programme Board, Board of Examiners, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee, Research Committee and Ethics Committee.

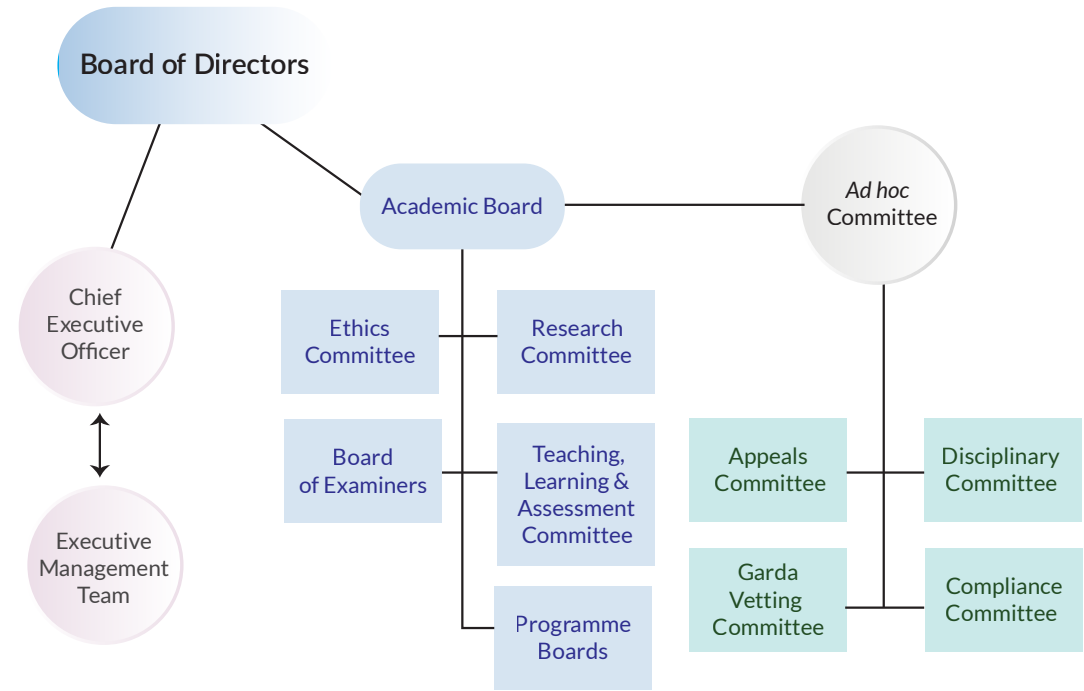


Figure 2: Governance Structure



The College actively seeks to engage learners in the governance process at all levels beginning with the election of class representatives for each programme, who then join one or more of the Academic Board subcommittees or Academic Board itself. The College has constituted a Student Engagement Committee, chaired by a learner representative nominated by peers and co-chaired by the Head of Student Affairs and the Quality, Enhancement and Registration Manager. In setting their workplan, the Student Engagement Committee seeks to co-develop projects with up to a two-year timeframe that span the lifetime of the Engagement Committee.



Graduate Testimonial

“They are helpful and they always want you to do your best.”

5

Guiding Philosophy



The Hibernia College values (Figure 3) act as the guiding principles that help to shape decision-making processes, actions and behaviours within the College. It is only by having clearly identified values that the College can ensure long-term sustainability by undertaking growth that is both responsible and directed.

Hibernia College recognises the transformative nature of education in society and values the continuous professional development of reflective, research-informed modern professionals.

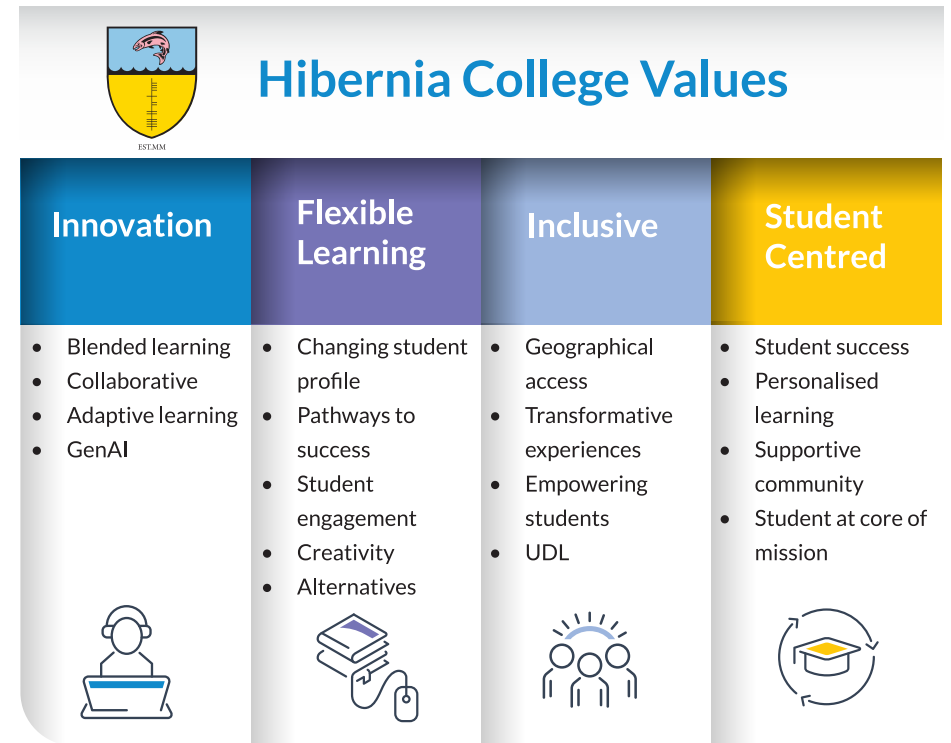


Figure 3: Hibernia College Values

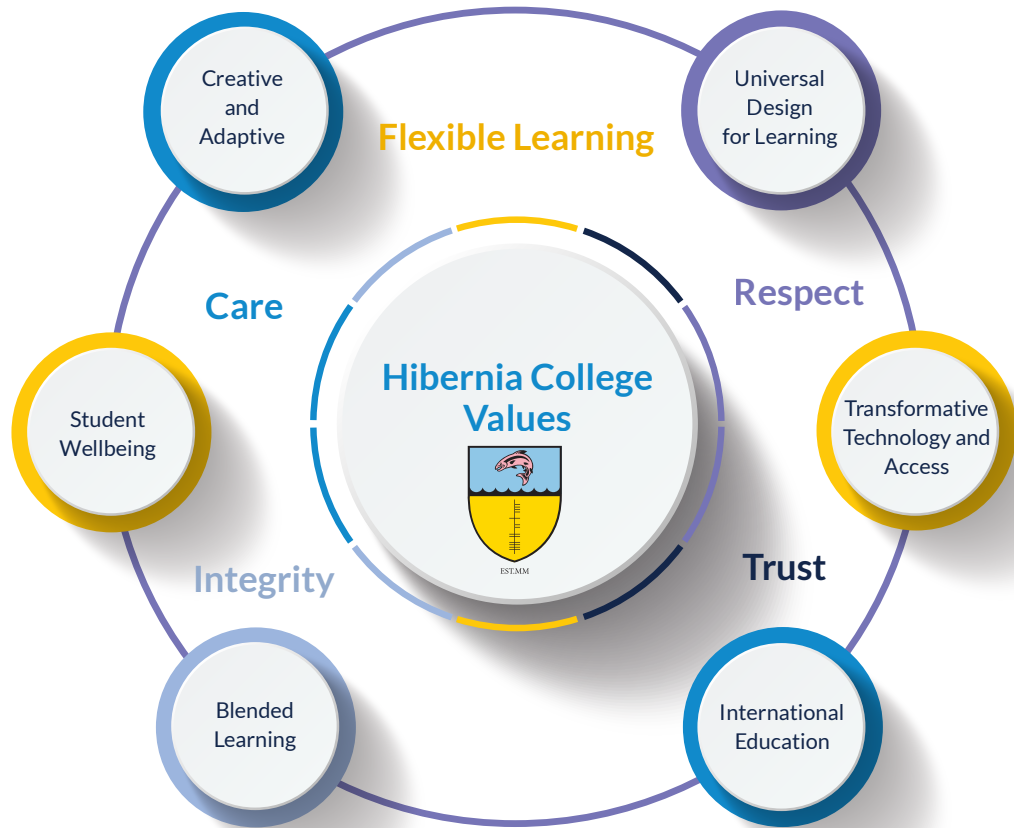
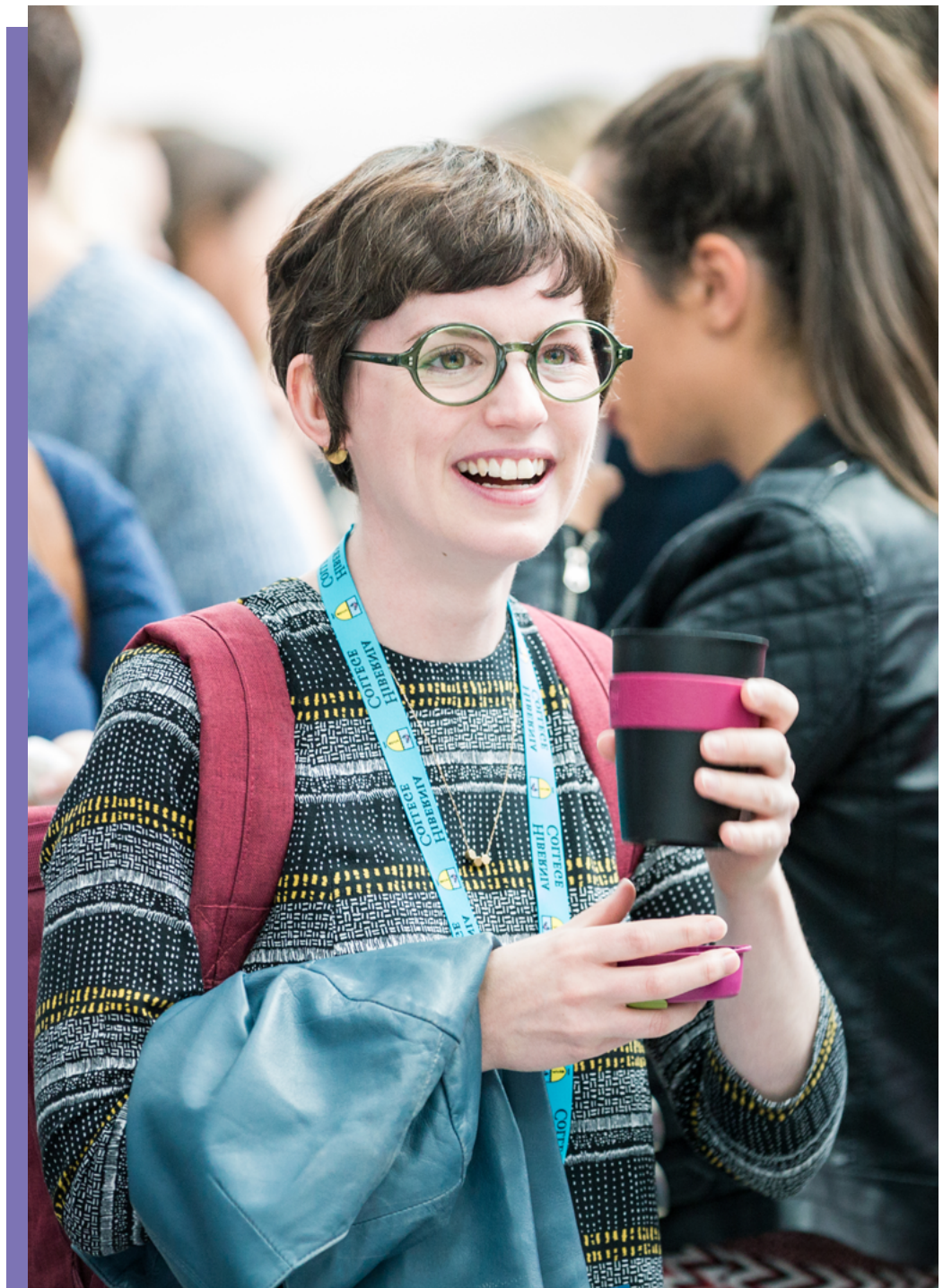


Figure 4: Guiding Philosophy

The values of respect, trust, and care are intertwined with pedagogical competency, learner disposition and scholarship as the College seeks to foster a love of learning in students while incorporating justice, respect, and integrity into a modern learning environment.

The Guiding Philosophy of the College (Figure 4), as developed for the Strategic Plan, represents a progression from the Conceptual Framework designed for the Professional Master of Education programmes. It builds on these concepts within the wider structure of the College’s holistic approach to education across all programmes of study.



The pillars of the Guiding Philosophy are:

Blended Learning



Learner Wellbeing



Universal and Inclusive Design





Figure 5: Conceptual Framework (Programme Level)

Figure 5 illustrates the Conceptual Framework, which was developed through a collaborative process amongst the academic faculty, exemplifying the approach to decisions involving students. It provides a theoretical foundation and a set of guiding principles that can be broadened to help define the institution's mission, goals and values.

5.1 Blended Learning

Given the contexts for teaching, learning and assessment at Hibernia College include both virtual and physical spaces for learners and tutors, particular attention has been paid to research that combines teaching and learning in blended learning environments. The philosophical frameworks that guide the design of content, pedagogy and assessment on programmes are informed by research within the Community of Inquiry Framework.

Hibernia College's enriched virtual blended learning approach permeates all aspects of programme design, development and learner engagement. The College approach is the thoughtful integration and combination of in-person, online and technology-mediated learning experiences. The Guiding Philosophy encapsulates the College's blended learning principles, where digital wellbeing and meaningful contact between staff and learners are encouraged, feedback is timely, and authentic learning and assessment are employed.

5.2 Learner Wellbeing

Learner wellbeing is the equilibrium point between an individual's resources, mental and physical, and completion of their academic programme. It is not a destination or limit but a state that learners strive to achieve throughout their education and in their professional lives. Healthy professionals continue to be successful and caring; therefore, promoting and centring wellbeing at all levels across the College is a mutually beneficial practice for all of our partners and a shared responsibility.



5.3 Universal and Inclusive Design

The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework is fundamental to the design and delivery of programmes and all educational undertakings. The variability of learning preferences and diversity of the learner community is addressed through a UDL lens. The Hibernia College pedagogical model is flexible in the mode of information delivery and in the opportunities provided to learners to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competencies. Teaching materials and assessments are UDL-informed and provide students with multiple means of expression and engagement.

The Hibernia College virtual learning environment (VLE) is central to achieving accessibility by providing a platform that removes physical boundaries. A learner-centric approach is possible only through an excellent VLE, allowing for personalised learning experiences and support services tailored to individual learners. The pursuit of academic excellence in this space is closely linked to a culture of quality assurance and continuous enhancement and the integration of innovative teaching methodologies captured through a UDL perspective.



College Strategy

6



Hibernia College recognises learning is a transformative experience, shaping academic abilities and futures, professional competencies and personal growth. The College's strategy is guided by the broader societal context in which it operates, rapid advances in technology, the changing needs of the workforce and continually evolving learner profiles. Student engagement underpins the strategic priorities.

The strategic objectives are guided by four overarching themes:

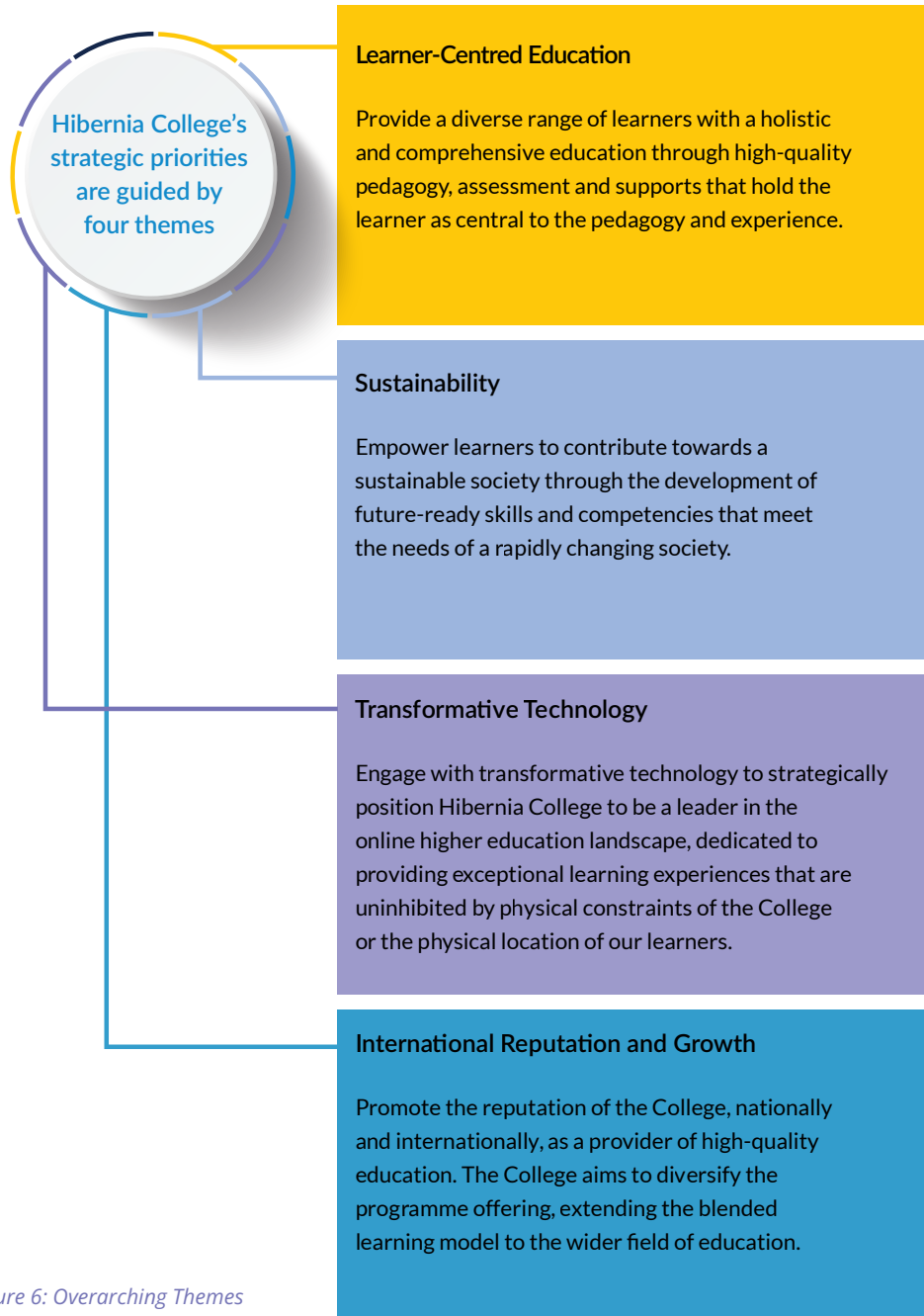


Figure 6: Overarching Themes

6.1 Strategic Priorities

The College has identified the following strategic areas as priorities for this period:

- Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Integration of Technology into Education
- Quality Assurance, Enhancement and Accreditation
- People, Diversity and Sustainability
- International Profile
- Expansion of Programme Portfolio

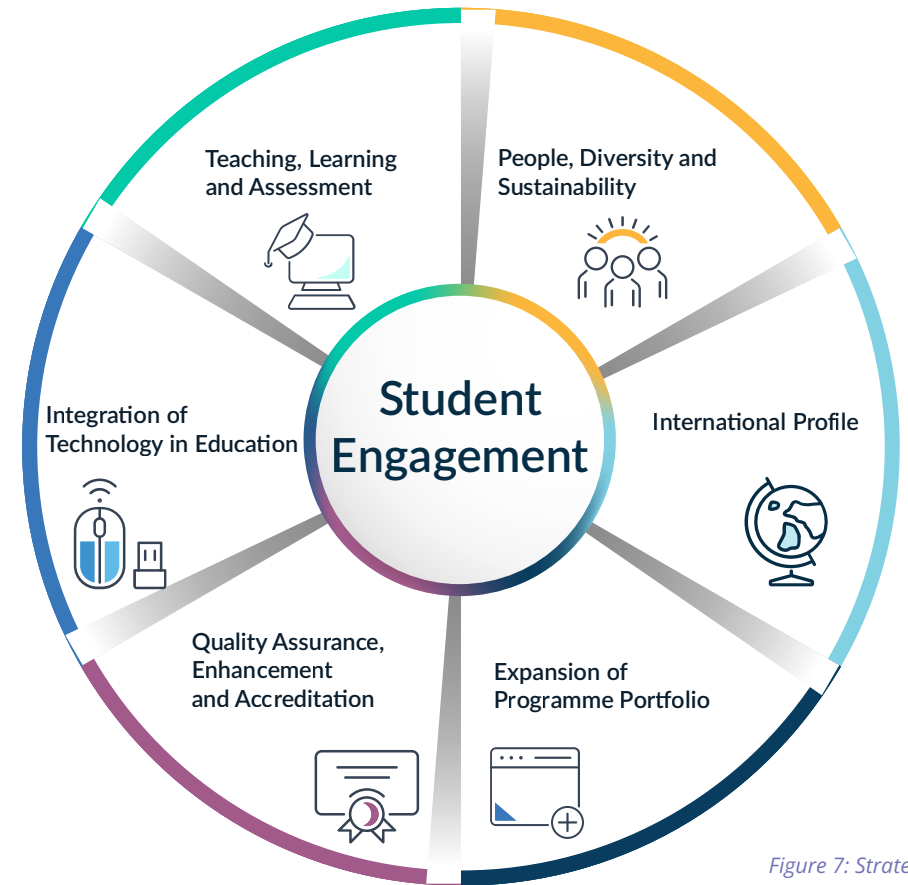


Figure 7: Strategic Focus

6.1.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Hibernia College's commitment to enhancing academic excellence will continue to be evident in the curricula of the programmes. They are designed to align with both learner requirements and societal expectations. Furthermore, ongoing collaboration with industry partners and the creation of innovative collaborative programmes underscore the College's commitment to excellence. Central to future development is prioritising the learner experience in all aspects of Teaching, Learning and Assessment, with a heightened focus on enhancing learner engagement to ensure continued success.

Goals:

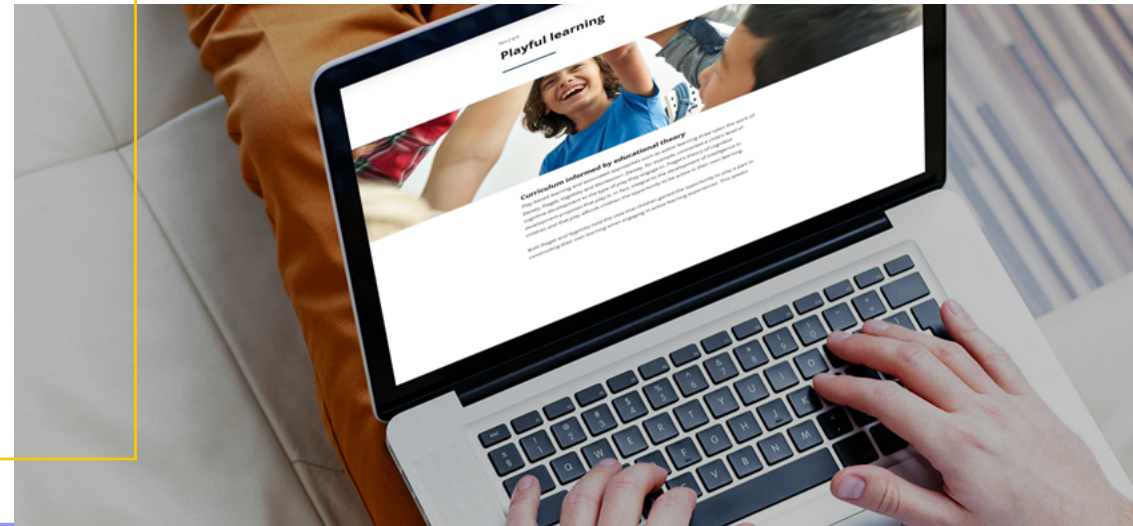
- Enhance and sustain high-quality teaching and learning pedagogies to ensure an outstanding student experience.
- Develop processes to ensure appropriate and consistent standards of quality across all programmes in the area of assessment.
- Significantly develop the digital architecture to support the student learning experience.
- Build capacity amongst faculty and adjunct faculty that is underpinned by current research in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that evidence-based research informs programme design.

6.1.2 Integration of Technology into Education

The College will continue to invest in advancing technologies to enhance the experience of learners and increase productivity. This will include the ongoing development of learning platforms, including the virtual learning environment, as well as the development of simulation environments tailored to both new and existing programmes.

Goals:

- Achieve College-wide adoption of Microsoft Dynamics 365 to empower an enhanced student experience.
- Develop a simulation ecosystem compatible with professional programmes.
- Significantly develop the digital architecture to support the student learning experience.



6.1.3 Quality Assurance, Enhancement and Accreditation

Upholding academic standards remains paramount, and ensuring the integrity of programmes, research and learner achievements will ensure that the College maintains public confidence. Engagement with external quality assurance reviews to complete Institutional Review, expand the current scope of provision and begin the journey to delegated authority will be key milestones. To ensure that these are achievable, the College is dedicated to strengthening and nurturing connections with statutory and regulatory bodies and agencies. Hibernia College will continue to foster a culture of continuous improvement across all facets of the institution. Additionally, Hibernia College is proactively preparing learners and programmes to address the challenges presented by generative AI and its potential successors.

Goals:

- Continue to enhance faculty engagement with the College QA culture and processes.
- Increase student engagement, including the development of an empowered student community that fully realises their place within Academic Governance.
- Successfully engage with and complete a cycle of QQI CINNTE Institutional Review.
- Achieve an expansion of scope of provision to enable fully online and transnational provision.
- Prepare the College community for and begin the process of obtaining delegated authority.



6.1.4 People, Diversity and Sustainability

As the College forges a future path, it is cognisant of the role of community, diversity and maintaining the sustainability of activities. The College will nurture a dynamic and inclusive community celebrating successes, collaborations and personal growth. The College will enrich the virtual college experience ensuring learners are involved in cultural and extracurricular activities, not just academic ventures. This virtual college experience, when extended to the virtual working environment, will be inclusive and celebrate diversity of cultures, genders, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds. By shaping the community to be outward and future facing, the College will lay the foundations of a sustainable enterprise allowing continual growth and improvement.

Goals:

- Increase the learner diversity on programmes.
- Increase the proportion of faculty and staff engaged in blended or online development programmes.
- Reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions through increased virtual engagement activities.
- Lay the foundations for continued improvement through sustainable growth.

6.1.5 International Profile and Expansion of Programme Profile

Hibernia College's vision is to be recognised as a global brand for excellence in online and blended higher education by delivering high-impact programmes nationally and internationally. It is the College's mission to achieve this by leveraging academic and technology expertise, promoting academic excellence in innovation and technology-enabled programmes, collaborating with relevant and appropriate partners, and ensuring all programme development and delivery are informed by best practices and uphold academic integrity.

Goals:

- Continue to focus on maintaining academic standards and standards of student support in transnational provision.
- Promote the recognition of the College brand for excellence in online and blended learning through transnational and collaborative programmes.
- Seek to develop sustainable educational partnerships that will assist the College in achieving its mission and vision.



7

Hibernia College within the Irish Educational Landscape

7.1 Learners, Graduates, and Partners

Hibernia College's programmes are approved and validated by QQI and accredited by regulatory and statutory bodies such as the Teaching Council and Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI), where appropriate. The College's offerings have had a strong focus on professional education and practice-based learning for regulated professions — in particular, teaching and, more recently, the health sciences. College awards have predominantly been at the postgraduate level, Level 9; however, recently, the College has expanded its portfolio to include undergraduate Level 8 programmes.



Since its establishment, the College has grown to a position where its Professional Master of Education (PME) programmes now provide a significant proportion of Ireland’s teacher education, and the College produces the largest number of primary school teachers annually compared with peer institutes. Since its inception, the College approach to blended learning has been at the leading edge of the field and has been recognised through various awards within the sector, including the Education Awards 2022 for Best Use of Educational Technology/ICT Initiative of the Year. Hibernia College has developed a tightly integrated blended environment composed of the VLE platform, face-to-face days and professional placements. The College commitment to teaching and learning has also been commended through recognition of Teaching Heroes in 2014 and 2016 from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

The College places a high value on its partners. The concept of partnership and the recent launch in 2022 of an Inclusive and Special Education programme with the Institute of Child Education and Psychology Europe (ICEPE), currently 210 learners, has demonstrated

that select partnerships will contribute to the College strategic goals. The nature of the programme is in line with the College’s aim to support an inclusive and diverse society.

To date, there have been approximately 12,000 graduates of the College and, currently, there are circa 2055 students enrolled across the College programmes. Within the last 5 years, 2019-2023, the College graduated 4,308 learners alone, of which 77% were female while 23% were male (Figure 9). Most graduates are aged between 20 and 34, with the largest proportion of graduates consistently falling in the 25-29 age range (Figure 8).

The access to education and alternative learning structures provided by Hibernia College, supports an educational agenda to improve and facilitate lifelong learning.

Age Profile of Learners at Graduation

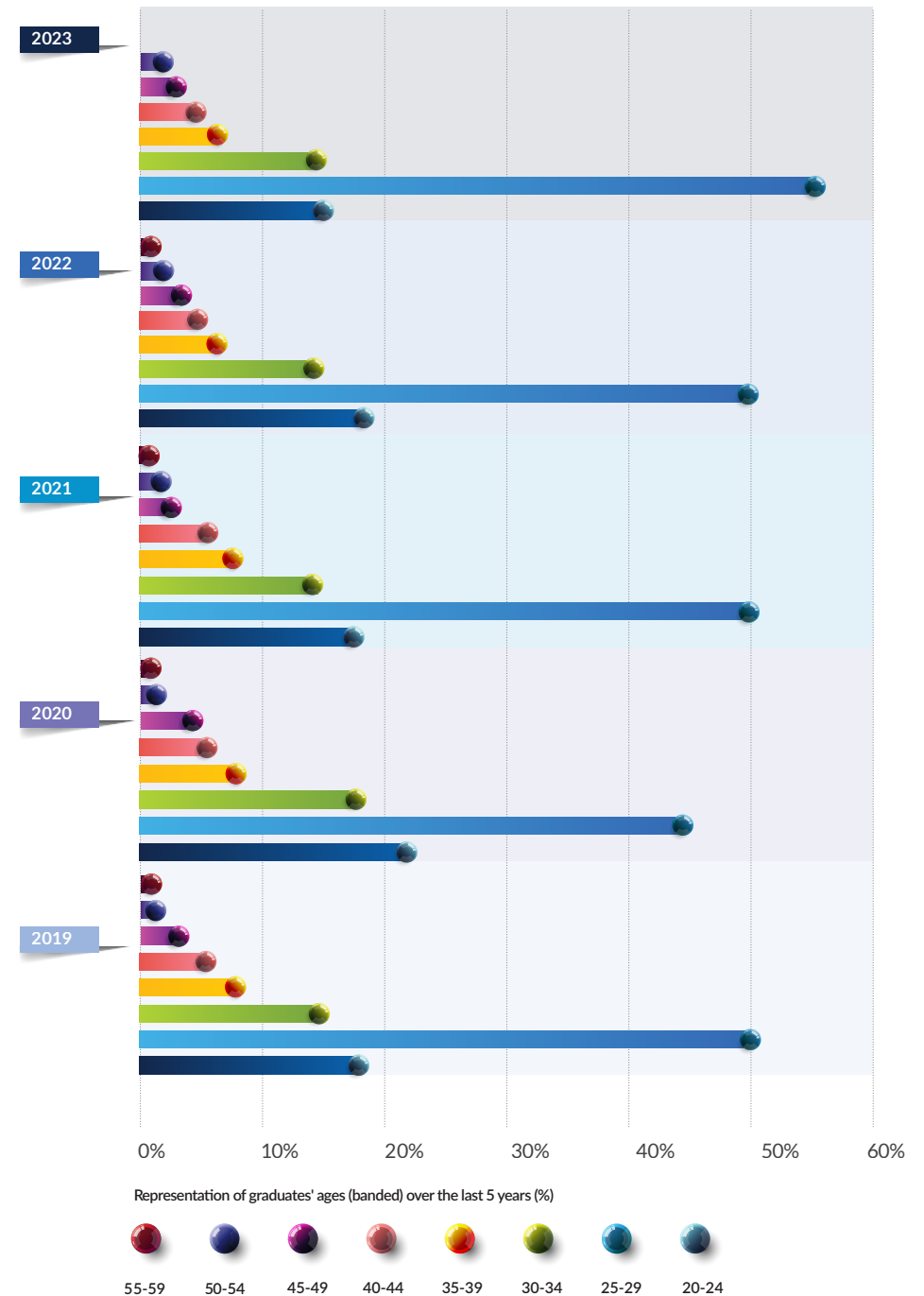


Figure 8: Age Profile of Graduates



Gender Profile of Graduates

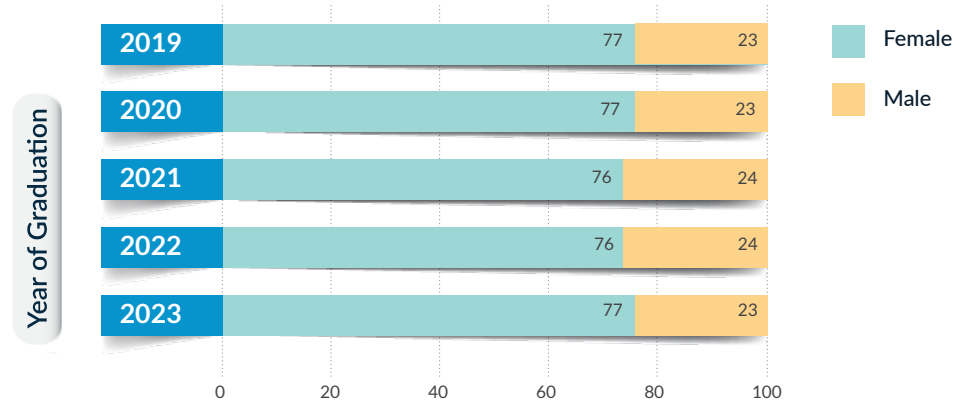


Figure 9: Gender Profile of Graduates

A recent survey of PME graduates revealed that 77% of PME primary graduates and 88% of PME post-primary graduates were in employment. A further 15% and 6% respectively were still seeking employment while 8% and 13% respectively were not currently seeking employment. 100% of those in employment were located within Ireland (Figure 10).

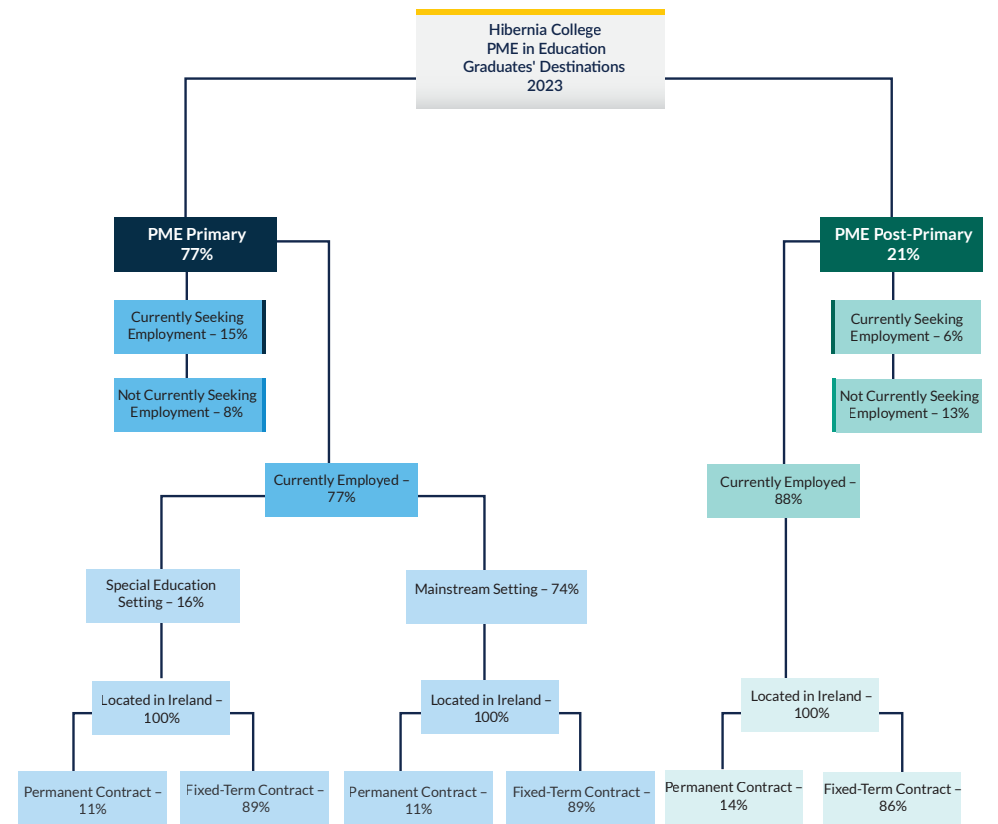


Figure 10: Graduates' Destinations

7.2 Hibernia College Programmes

Hibernia College currently offers programmes across Initial Teacher Education (ITE), Inclusive and Special Education, General Nursing and Business Data Analytics, the full details of which are outlined below.

Initial Teacher Training programmes continue to produce the greatest number of graduates, as illustrated; of the seven currently validated programmes, three are yet to graduate learners.



The following Hibernia College programmes are currently validated by QQI:

- Professional Master of Education in Primary Education
- Professional Master of Education in Post-Primary Education
- Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Data Analytics
- Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Inclusive and Special Education
- Master of Arts in Inclusive and Special Education

The majority, 5 of 7 Hibernia College programmes, comprise a distinct research component; this reflects the postgraduate and professional nature of the College programmes.

Research Elements of Programmes

Number of programmes with a research element

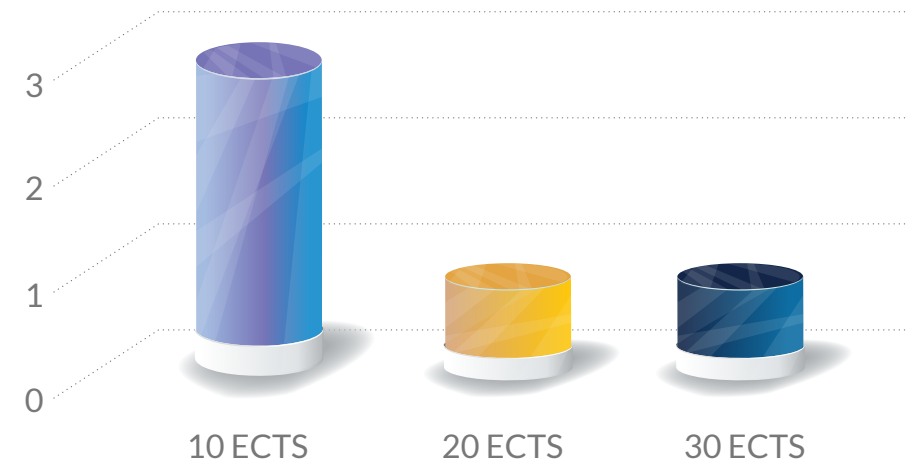


Figure 11: Research Elements of Programmes

Previously, Hibernia College offered and graduated learners from programmes in the areas of Pharmaceutical Medicine, Clinical Trial Management and Medical Affairs. The final learners graduated from these programmes in 2019.



Professional Master of Education in Primary Education

Professional Master of Education in Post-Primary Education

Bachelor of Education (Honours) in Early Childhood Education

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nursing in General Nursing

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Data Analytics

Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Inclusive and Special Education

Master of Arts in Inclusive and Special Education

8

Staffing
Profile

The Hibernia College community encompasses academic faculty, adjunct faculty and professional staff working in partnership to deliver the College mission. The academic faculty of the College work within dedicated educational programmes while professional staff are found across non-teaching areas of the College, comprising Registry, Finance, IT and Digital Learning. As of the 19 of February, 2024, Hibernia College employs 111 individuals. The College has seen a 28% growth in staffing within 2023.

The College workforce has a diverse composition. The workforce is predominantly female, and across all roles and levels there is a gender representation of 33% male and 67% female. At a senior level, across all roles, the gender representation is 42% male and 58% female. The College community is composed of over 12 different nationalities.

Staff within Hibernia College are encouraged to undertake further training and education where possible to develop their skills, including the completion of doctoral studies.

Adjunct faculty are active members of the Hibernia College academic community, and play an important role in supplementing the teaching of our faculty, bringing their professional skills and experience to bear across all our programmes. There can be up to 310 adjunct faculty active in the Hibernia College community at any one time (based on figures from 2023).

Adjunct faculty are drawn from experienced professionals who are still active in their academic and professional practice, or they may be recently retired from professional practice. They are part-time, contracted academics working in various roles across the programmes. These roles range from small regionally-based tutor groups to focused specialised roles associated with regulated professions – for example a Clinical Placement Co-ordinator in the clinical setting on our BSc Nursing programme. This enables adjunct faculty to build rapport with learners, enabling them to share their passion for education in an impactful manner.

Staff Gender Profile

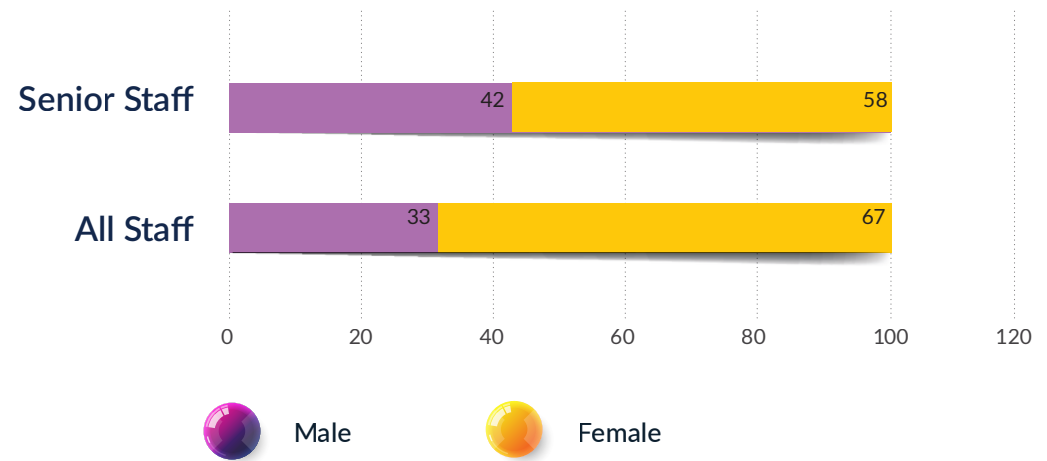


Figure 12: Gender Breakdown of Staff



9

Community
Engagement

Hibernia College recognises its duty to the public and society in using its position and expertise to educate future professionals and graduates and in upholding the standards set by Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Moreover, Hibernia College gives back to the community through its delivery partners and its research outputs and engagement with peers.

9.1 School Engagement

Schools are more than just facilitators of students. They are active partners in the collaborative efforts to support the holistic education of future teachers. The staff in host schools are valued partners in the support framework for student teachers, working alongside School Placement tutors to provide students with guidance, mentoring and the benefit of their professional experience. School principals help to nourish the whole-school support philosophy by welcoming students into their school communities and enabling them to participate in all aspects of school life. Hibernia College actively encourages students on the PME programmes to contribute to the host schools who facilitate them on School Placements. They do this through a variety of means, such as helping with pre and afterschool coaching and extracurricular clubs. This holistic relationship ensures that students benefit from engaging with the whole-school environment while also providing invaluable support to those schools and their provision of extra-curricular activities, which subsequently support pupils' social and emotional development.

Hibernia College has established a network of partner schools across the country who regularly welcome students into their school communities. These partner schools benefit from reciprocal support from the College in terms of training, webinars and guidance on the facilitation of student teachers.

Hibernia College has graduated approximately 10,000 student teachers, many of whom have gone on to become embedded in the network of partnership schools in teaching and leadership roles. This invaluable resource enables and strengthens the delivery of the PME programmes and serves to embed Hibernia College learners and faculty into the school communities they serve.



Many graduates from Hibernia College have pursued teaching careers, either within the partnership schools where they received training or in new schools, thereby expanding the growth potential of the partnership model. The pivotal role played by School Placement Tutors is evident in fostering strong connections between the school community and the College, fostering a mutually advantageous partnership. The comprehensive and structured training provided to the tutors emphasises the cultivation and sustenance of collaborative bonds with schools, with special emphasis on building rapport with school principals.

9.2 Nursing Engagement

50% of the delivery of the Hibernia College Nursing programme is undertaken with the support and collaboration of approved clinical partners.

These include:

- RSCI Hospital Group
- Blackrock Healthcare Group
- Bon Secours Health System
- Beacon Hospital
- Highfield Healthcare
- Mater Private Hospital
- St. Vincent's Private Hospital

Clinical partners play a vital role in the Nursing programme. They make substantial contributions to the education, assessment, skill enhancement and professional readiness of nursing students. This prepares students to become registered general nurses. Learning in the contextual setting of clinical practice enables students to gain real-life experience, putting their theoretical knowledge into practice. Through the concerted efforts of Academic Faculty, the Clinical Placement Coordinator, Clinical Facilitators, and Preceptors, learners are integrated into the community, highlighting their invaluable input and fostering a sense of belonging.



9.3 Sectoral Engagement

9.3.1 HECA

The Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) is the representative body of many private and independent higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ireland. Established in 1991, HECA plays a key role in advocating for and supporting its 12 member institutions. These members collectively cater to approximately 10% of the higher education student population in Ireland, offering a diverse range of disciplines through Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) validated programmes. These programmes span from Levels 6 to 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications, emphasising a broad spectrum of fields including Education, Arts, Humanities, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Information and Communication Technologies, Health and Welfare, Business, Services, Engineering, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Law and Media.

Through HECA special interest groups, staff across the College meet and discuss emerging trends, forming sectoral responses and initiatives. HECA special interest groups facilitate a sharing of learning, ensuring the dissemination of best practices across the sector.

9.3.2 HAQEF

The HECA Academic Quality Enhancement Forum (HAQEF) is committed to quality enhancement in the Irish private higher education sector. HAQEF is composed of representatives of the Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) and is currently co-chaired by the Hibernia College Registrar. This forum has facilitated a variety of learning and collaborative events to enhance practice in a collegial fashion, including the HAQEF seminar series, which welcomed input from learners on pertinent topics such as the use of group work for assessment.

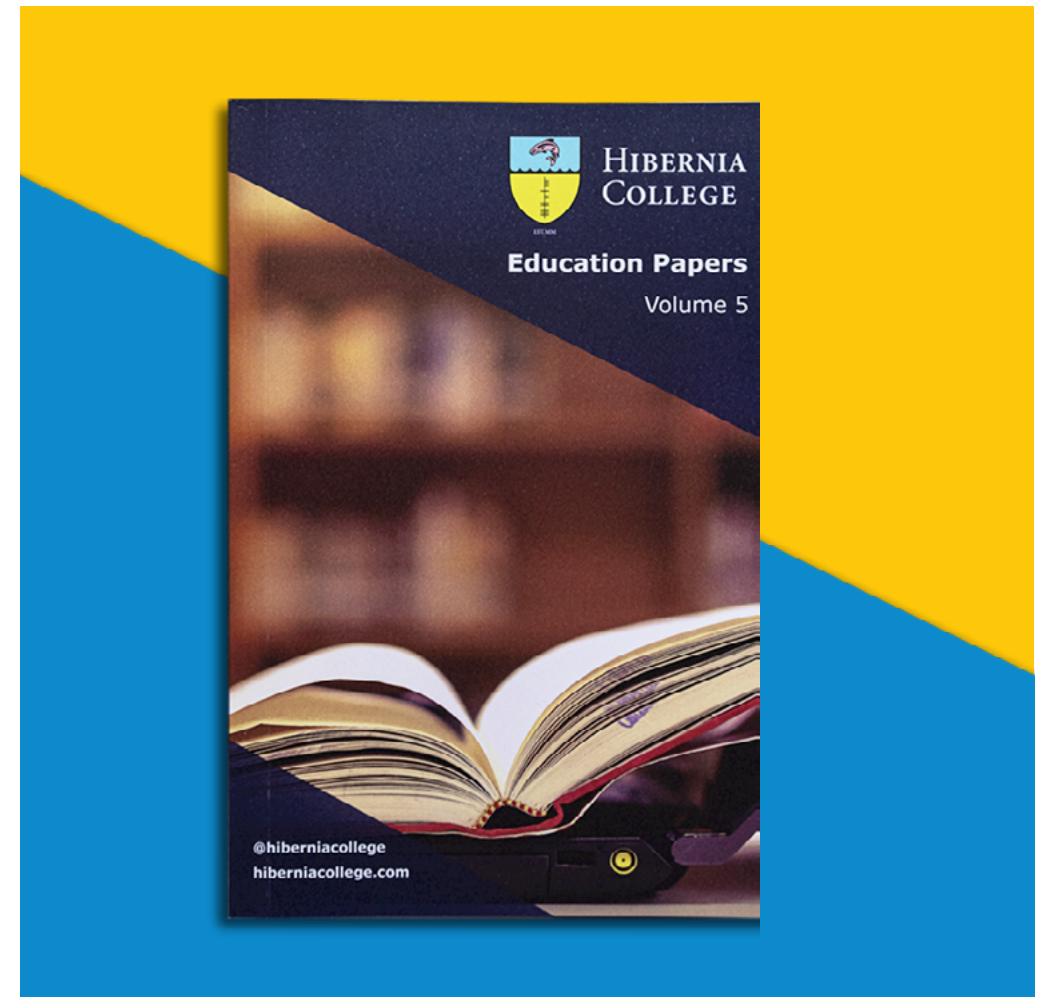


9.4 Research Engagement

Hibernia College is committed to achieving national and international prominence for the quality and relevance of the research it conducts. It is dedicated to developing effective, responsive graduates, scholars and practitioners who use theory and effective research to enhance their work in a global, diverse and technological society. As part of the Hibernia College educational ethos, the College recognises that fundamental to the development of lifelong learners and the education of professionals is instilling an ability to critically appraise information, make evidence-based decisions and generate new knowledge relevant to professional practice. In doing so, the College, through its research activities, generates new knowledge relevant to the community, partners and wider society.

All the College's full-time faculty are active in research and regularly publish in peer-reviewed journals and books and present at national and international conferences. To capture research outputs and to ensure alignment with the Open Research and Open Access movements, Hibernia College has developed an Institutional Archive of Scholarly Content (IASC). In recognition of the diversity of research taking place within the College, there is an equally diverse array of artefacts stored within IASC, including peer-reviewed publication, external quality assessment (EQA) reports and student dissertations. To date there are 115 such artefacts and these are downloaded on average 1000 times per week, based on 2024 figures to date.

To ensure Hibernia College plays a meaningful role in addressing contemporary social, educational and technological challenges, it is crucial to provide faculty and staff with the necessary support to stay abreast of current national and international research and policy advancements. This support is realised through fostering opportunities for faculty and staff to actively participate in scholarly activities and collaborative research initiatives within Hibernia College, as well as in conjunction with fellow researchers from other higher education institutions, research institutes, non-governmental organisations and educational settings.



9.5 Student Engagement

Hibernia College recognises that student engagement is a cornerstone of higher education, playing a pivotal role in fostering a dynamic and effective learning environment. The significance of student engagement extends beyond mere participation in coursework; it encompasses active involvement, collaboration and critical thinking. The most important community efforts Hibernia College make are with the student community through the vehicle of the Student Engagement Committee, first constituted in 2021 and supported with initial training from the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP). The primary objective of this committee is to foster a sense of community and connectedness among students, encouraging them to actively participate in various academic, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. The committee serves to bring learners and staff/faculty together to promote engagement of the student community with all aspects of the College and college life. Drawing on both student representatives from across all programmes and elected student officers, the committee plays a role in centring the student voice and providing feedback on all developments within the College.



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Conclusion



The landscape of the Irish educational system is rapidly evolving to accommodate the needs of a multicultural and diverse population. National priorities such as lifelong learning, educational empowerment and sustainable workforce development are underpinned by a flexible and inclusive education framework. Guided by the vision of achieving global recognition for excellence in learning, Hibernia College plans strategic growth in this direction, while upholding the quality of the learner experience as paramount across all academic programmes.

Hibernia College has facilitated access to academic programmes for students from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds, broadening their opportunities. As the College expands its portfolio, it remains steadfast in ensuring that diversity and inclusivity remain central, fostering an environment where students can achieve high academic standards. The commitment to positively shaping the knowledge, experiences and competencies of a diverse range of learners further underscores the College's dedication to enhancing the education system.

This profile marks the initial stage of a comprehensive Institutional Review facilitated by QQI. It offers a snapshot of a dynamic and expanding institution committed to shaping a brighter educational future.



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