The Evaluation of the Provision of Lifelong Learning

January 2009
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1.0 Introduction

The Institute subscribes to the European Commission’s definition of Lifelong Learning, as

“all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective”

and works with this definition in a context of individual development, active citizenship, social inclusion and the economic well-being of society as a whole.

The development of the provision of Lifelong Learning at ITT Dublin was a key strategic objective of the Institute’s Strategic Plan 2005-2008.

**Strategic Goal 5: Lifelong Learning: The Institute will develop a range of educational initiatives to provide a means for individuals to achieve their lifelong learning goals**

ITT Dublin over the period of the plan, aimed to realise the concept of lifelong learning by delivering academic programmes in a wide range of modes. These flexible programmes are designed to meet the needs of a wide variety of learners, and provide opportunities for the personal and professional development of individuals, and for the development of business, industrial and community organisations. The Institute set out the following approaches and specific actions to supporting Lifelong Learning within the Institute:

**Approaches to supporting lifelong learning**

- **The Institute will ensure appropriate operational structures are in place to support lifelong learning.**

- **We aim to be the Institute of first choice in our region for the provision of high quality, accredited, higher education opportunities.**

- **We will implement flexible and cost effective modes of course delivery both on and off campus, using new technology and partnerships where appropriate. Course design and delivery will maximise the potential for participation of lifelong learners by, for example, providing learning materials and support for off-campus students.**

- **We will actively promote lifelong learning opportunities within the region through marketing activities aimed at specific target groups.**
Specific Actions

- Implement appropriate operational structures and quality systems to support lifelong learning.
- Develop improved marketing of part-time programme
- Implement flexible and cost effective modes of course delivery both on and off campus
- Develop flexible mechanisms for student mobility between full-time and ACCS modes
- Develop policies for greater flexibility in program entry and participation such as (Accredited Prior Learning) APL and on the job learning
- Develop with local and national enterprises a range of in-company education and training programs

ITT Dublin Strategic Plan 2005-2008 p. 18-19

A review of the strategic plan took place in 2007. This process examined the status to date of each of the objectives identified in the strategic plan 2005-2008, the key actions taken towards their implementation and identified those actions to be completed over the following two years to ensure the delivery of the objectives. The review highlighted that significant progress had been made in terms of meeting the overall strategic objectives of the Institute and in particular those relating to the provision of Lifelong Learning. The review reported the following status for each of the objectives identified for lifelong learning and identified specific actions to be taken during 2007/8 to ensure the overall strategic objectives would be achieved within the timeframe of the current strategic plan.

Status of Objectives

1. The Institute established an office for lifelong learning with additional staff, including a Head of Lifelong Learning to ensure appropriate operational structures and supports are in place to provide quality based lifelong learning programmes.

2. The Institute aims to be the first choice in our region for the provision of high quality, accredited, lifelong education opportunities. A range of marketing activities for our courses were being implemented including:
   - Conducting market research,
• Providing internal and external seminar programmes to promote the Institute

• Undertaking a renewal of communication and marketing documentation and activities

As a result of these initiatives participation in the institute’s part-time programmes grew by 15%.

3. The institute has piloted flexible and cost effective modes of course delivery both on and off campus, using new technology and partnerships where appropriate. Part of the outcome from this process is course design and delivery systems which will maximise the potential for participation of lifelong learners by, for example, providing learning materials and support for off-campus students.

4. The institute continues to review mechanisms for increasing participation in lifelong learning, such as Acquired Prior Learning (APL) and transfer between different courses of study for full, part-time and flexible learning students, in line with guidelines published by the Higher Education Authority and the Central Applications Office e.g. a revised exemptions process has been developed and implemented.

5. The Institute is one of the leaders in the country in the provision of bespoke industrial programmes for business. Over the last few years we have provided in-house programmes to Intel, Wyeth Biopharma, Wyeth Medica, Takeda, Genzyme, Helsinn and others.

Specific Actions planned for the years 2007 to 2008

• The Institute will develop a suite of minor awards directed at reaching those in the workforce who traditionally do not take part-time degree programmes

  Current Status –

  ▪ A range of minor awards have been developed (please refer to part-time prospectus 2008/9)

• New programmes such as the Higher Diploma in Marketing and the Qualified Person MSc. in Pharmaceutical Technology will be introduced.

  Current Status –

  ▪ Higher Diploma in Marketing – course approved and currently being delivered.
  ▪ MSc. in Pharmaceutical Science (Qualified Person) course approved and will run from September 2009
• The policy on APL for part-time programmes will be reviewed and implemented more widely.

Current Status –
- revised exemption process in place
- New policy on APL developed
- Ongoing development of the recognition of prior learning (RPL) as part of the Roadmap for Education and Academic Partnership (REAP) project funded under Strategic Innovation Fund 2 (SIF2)

• We will continue to work with local and national enterprises to provide a range of in-company education and training programmes. To support this activity we will develop on campus a centre for Industrial Teaching and Education.

Current Status –
- A range on in-company courses being delivered
- Icon Court Workforce Development Facility completed

• We will continue to develop the partnership with Steven’s University in New York for the provision of corporate training to the pharmaceutical industry in the United States.

Current Status –
- Ongoing development of teaching and learning resources as part of the Sectoral Flexible Learning project funded under SIF 2

• We will develop a range of flexible delivery methods including blended learning delivery methodologies in selected areas

Current Status –
- Flexible learning models currently being delivered across the institute: e.g.
  - Department of Electronic Engineering – Higher Certificate programme (FLASHE)
  - Department of Computing – BSc in Information Technology Management (FLITE)
  - Department of Science – a range of modules available in distance learning mode; in-company training
  - Department of Mechanical Engineering – Part-time/day release options available in a range of programmes; In-company training
  - School of Business and Humanities – In company training, programme delivery using video conferencing has been piloted
  - Ongoing staff development as part of the Collaborative Network for Innovation in Education and Inclusive Education (CONTINUE) project funded under SIF 1
  - Ongoing development of teaching and learning resources as part of the Sectoral Flexible Learning project funded under SIF 2
The report provides a current, detailed review of the provision of lifelong learning across the Institute. The report has been drawn up as part of the Institutional review (2009) at ITT Dublin. The report discusses how the institute has worked towards meeting its strategic objective in relation to Lifelong Learning over the last 5 years.

The report profiles the part-time student cohort at ITT Dublin and discusses total part-time student numbers within departments and across the Institute as a whole over the period 2003-2007. An outline of the academic performance of part-time graduates within each Department is also included.

The report describes how the provision of lifelong learning in managed and delivered within the Institute and identifies area for development into the future.

This report was informed by:

- Departmental staff meetings
- Comments received from the total management team on the draft version of this report
- Feedback collated from student surveys
- Feedback from an external audit of ITT Dublin and five other partner institutions as part of the SIF CYCLE 1 Strategic Alliances Lifelong Learning Subgroup.
- Academic Course Leaders/staff
- Central and Student Support Services
- Reports – e.g. Programme board; Sectoral

The report seeks to highlight positive developments, review key learnings and make recommendations for the future direction of the provision of lifelong learning in the Institute that can be considered as part of the development of the next strategic plan.

1.1 Defining Lifelong Learning at ITT Dublin

ITT Dublin subscribes to the European Commission’s definition of Lifelong Learning as follows:
‘All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic social and/or employment related perspective.’

This definition is applied to all aspects of our lifelong learning programmes, from individual development and active citizenship, to social inclusion and the economic well being of society as a whole.

The Institute is committed to lifelong learning and aims to provide flexible and accessible lifelong learning opportunities to those who wish to acquire new knowledge and skills. This is achieved primarily through the Part-time Programme which offers a variety of courses leading to nationally and internationally recognised qualifications at undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate levels. While the majority of programmes are accredited by ITT Dublin (delegated Authority from HETAC), the Institute also offers a variety of programmes leading to the awards of Professional Institutes such as the Irish Management Institute (IMI), the Institute of Accounting Technicians in Ireland (IATI) and Institute of Professional Auctioneers and Valuers (IPAV).

The Irish Lifelong Learning Index 2007\(^1\) highlights that lifelong learning remains a significant factor in the personal and professional lives of the Irish public. Of the 2,278 respondents to an online survey:

- 75% indicated that they had taken an adult education course
- 85% intended to embark on a programme in the coming 12 months
- The availability of accreditation was important for 84% of the respondents
- Learning new skills was cited as the most popular reason for enrolling in a course.

1.2 The Department of Lifelong Learning

In 2006, the Institute established an office for lifelong learning with additional staff, including a Head of Lifelong Learning to ensure appropriate operational structures and supports are in place to provide quality based lifelong learning programmes.

\(^1\) Lifelong Learning Index, 2007. Learning Ireland’s Lifelong learning Index: Survey Report. Learning Ireland
The Head of Lifelong Learning oversees the management of:

- All part-time and continuing education programmes delivered by the Institute (in partnership with Academic Schools, Registrar’s Office and other central and student services)

It is important to stress the interdependency of the Department of Lifelong Learning, the Academic Schools, the Registrar’s Office and central and student service departments in ensuring the successful ongoing development and delivery of the provision of lifelong learning across the Institute.

- Provision of academic and financial supports for part-time students
- Promotion and expansion of workforce development initiatives
- Promotion of the delivery of flexible blended learning, including e-learning through work with the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR) and the national sectoral Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI) Flexible Learning project (SIF2).

1.4 Lifelong Learning Staff Profile

The Department of Lifelong Learning is situated within the Department of Development and External services. The department organisational structure is outlined in Figure 1.0.

Figure 1.0  Department of Lifelong Learning Organisational Structure

NOTE: Administration staff work to cover hours 9am-9pm during semester and 9am-5pm out of semester.
The Head of Lifelong Learning reports to the Head of Development and External Services at senior management level. The grade 6 administrator is responsible for the day to day management of the part-time information desk and has line management responsibility for the grade 3 and grade 4 administrative staff.

1.5 The Management and Co-ordination of Part-time provision

The management and co-ordination of the Part-time provision crosses a number of functional units within the Institute: the Registrar’s Office, the Academic Schools and Central and Student Service departments (including the Department of Lifelong Learning).

Figure 1.1 Management of part-time programmes

The Department of Lifelong Learning working in partnership with Academic Schools, the Registrar’s Office and Central and Student Services is responsible for the overall planning and co-ordination of the programmes, including promotion, time-tabling, student liaison
and support, advising on course costing (viability and comparison with similar competitor programmes), and interaction with lecturers in terms of services and facilities (academic schools liaise with lecturers on all academic matters).

The department works closely with the part-time section of the registrars’ office (PTRO) which has responsibility for the management of all aspects of registration, collection of fees and examinations relating to the part-time programmes. The staff of the department of lifelong learning and the staff of PTRO meets regularly to plan and coordinate activities in relation to part-time students.

The provision and academic management of lecturing staff is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Department and Head of School, as is the management of assessments and examination of students. All modules delivered on part-time programmes are examined in common and at the same time as the full-time programmes and are subject to the same quality assurance processes (see Section 3.0)

The induction of part-time associate staff is the combined responsibility of the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Lifelong Learning and the relevant Head of Department.

2.0 Department of Lifelong Learning - Student Profile

2.1 Part-time Student Numbers
The number of part-time students at the institute has increased since 2004. In 2007/8, 1431 part-time students were registered with the Institute at the end of the academic year (Figure 2.0). This represents an approximate increase of 27% in part-time student numbers over the period. (Note: Total numbers for the academic year 2008/9 are not available because of the dual intake (February 2009) of part-time students). When compared to other Institutes of Technology, ITT Dublin has the highest percentage of part
time students (43% versus a national average of 23%) when total fulltime and part-time numbers are compared\(^2\).

**Figure 2.0  The trend in part-time student numbers from 2003-2007**

![Graph showing the trend in part-time student numbers from 2003 to 2007.](image)

The breakdown of student numbers registered at each level of HETAC courses and professional institutes programmes, returned to the Higher Education Authority on the first of November each year from 2004 – 2008 is outlined in Table 2.0.

The overall student numbers in each academic school has increased over the period 2004-2008. Although the academic school of Business and Humanities have the highest annual part-time student numbers, the rate of growth in student numbers has increased to a greater extent in other academic schools over the period. Currently approximately 46% of the annual part-time student cohort is first year students. There has been an overall increase in the number of students that registered in the first semester of 2008. The number of students completing professional institute programmes also increased. However, a decrease in IPAV student numbers when compared to 2007 was observed which reflects the downturn in the housing sector and the concurrent decrease in demand for the IPAV course.

Table 2.0  A Breakdown of Part-time Student Numbers by Department and Level from 2004 – 2008 inclusive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Total 2004</th>
<th>% of Total Part-time Student Cohort</th>
<th>Total 2005</th>
<th>% of Total Part-time Student Cohort</th>
<th>Total 2006</th>
<th>% of Total Part-time Student Cohort</th>
<th>Total 2007</th>
<th>% of Total Part-time Student Cohort</th>
<th>Total 2008</th>
<th>% of Total Part-time Student Cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # part time students</td>
<td>859</td>
<td></td>
<td>1168</td>
<td></td>
<td>1201</td>
<td></td>
<td>1335</td>
<td></td>
<td>1481</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # part time first years</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # part time Business incl. Failte</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # part time Engineering</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # part time Science</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td># part time level 6 students</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># part time level 7 students</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td># part time level 8 students</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td># part time level 9 students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># part time Failte Ireland students</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Professional Institute students</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Continuing Education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note Numbers as of the first of November each year returned to the Department of Education (2003-5) and to the Higher Education Authority (HEA)(2006-8)
2.2 Graduates

Part-time students are committed to their lifelong learning journey and are well motivated to succeed in their chosen programme, consequently part-time students often out perform their fulltime counterparts in the results they achieve. The numbers of part-time graduates from each Academic School from 2002/3 – 2007/8 are outlined in Table 2.1- 2.4 below.

Table 2.1 Science and Computing Graduates 2002/3-2007/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates at each award Level</th>
<th>Total number of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>7  6  6  2  21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>13 10 10 4  1  38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>12  6  10  4  1  33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>22 10 4 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>54 17 5 18 1  95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>DT  M1  PS  M2  21</td>
<td>15 17 8 19 1  60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key
- DT Distinction
- M1 Merit 1
- M2 Merit 2
- PS Pass
- 21 2nd Class Honours Grade 1
- 22 2nd Class Honours Grade 2
- H1 1st Class Honours
- H2 2nd Class Honours
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates per award</th>
<th>Total number of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>DT 32 M1 52 M2 31 PS 127 21 12 11 14 2</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>DT 26 M1 32 M2 29 PS 85 21 22 16 11</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>DT 47 M1 29 M2 30 PS 70 21 22 28 15</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>DT 39 M1 32 M2 52 PS 55 21 22 31 13 1</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>DT 41 M1 34 M2 48 PS 40 21 22 26 6</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>DT 20 M1 16 M2 29 PS 54 21 22 16 25 9</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**
- DT Distinction
- M1 Merit 1
- M2 Merit 2
- PS Pass
- 21 2nd Class Honours Grade 1
- 22 2nd Class Honours Grade 2
- H1 1st Class Honours
- H2 2nd Class Honours
Table 2.3  Engineering Graduates 2002/3-2007/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates per Award</th>
<th>Total number of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>DT 21 M1 10 M2 8 PS 21 22 H1 17 2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>DT 12 M1 7 M2 3 PS 21 22 H1 17 2 2 7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>DT 20 M1 5 M2 1 PS 21 22 H1 17 2 1 3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>DT 11 M1 3 M2 4 PS 21 22 H1 17 2 4 6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>DT 4 M1 1 M2 2 PS 21 22 H1 17 2 1 2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>DT 13 M1 4 M2 5 PS 21 22 H1 17 2 1 3 1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key
- DT  Distinction
- M1  Merit 1
- M2  Merit 2
- PS  Pass
- 21  2nd Class Honours Grade 1
- 22  2nd Class Honours Grade 2
- H1  1st Class Honours
- H2  2nd Class Honours
Table 2.4  Science and Computing Postgraduates 2002/3-2007/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Graduates per award</th>
<th>Total number of Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>21 H1 22 PS M2 H2</td>
<td>6 3 7 2 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>21 H1 22 PS M2 H2</td>
<td>3 1 3 1 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>21 H1 22 PS M2 H2</td>
<td>7 5 23 1 1 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>21 H1 22 PS M2 H2</td>
<td>4 6 11 1 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>21 H1 22 PS M2 H2</td>
<td>3 5 19 7 34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**
- DT Distinction
- M1 Merit 1
- M2 Merit 2
- PS Pass
- 21 2nd Class Honours Grade 1
- 22 2nd Class Honours Grade 2
- H1 1st Class Honours
- H2 2nd Class Honours
2.3 Age profile of Part-time Students (Student Survey May 2008; N=278)

The age profile of part-time students in 2007/8 is outline in Figure 2.1. Part-time students ranged in age from 19 to 59 years. 84% of students are over 23 years of age. The majority of students were between 23 and 34 years of age. A low percentage (8%) of students are over 45 years. This profile is similar to that recorded in 2005/6. However an increase in the number of students aged between 18-22 years (7% 2005/6; 16% 2007/8) and a decrease in number of students aged between 35-45 years (22% 2005/6; 14% 2007/8) was observed. In 2008/9 slightly more females (53%) than males (47%) were recorded in the part-time student cohort.

Figure 2.1 The Age profile of Part-time Students (May 2008; N= 278)

2.4 Part-time Students Demographics (Student Database 2007/2008; N=1634)

The data on student demographics indicates that ITT Dublin is servicing the local community. The location of ITT Dublin near the M50, other major roads, bus and Luas routes means that the institute is also accessible to students from a wider catchment area. Of the part-time students registered in the Institute in 2007/8, 23% (374) were from the Dublin 24 area. 16% (266) of students came from Kildare (Naas, Newbridge, Sallins Celbridge and Rathangan). 12% (193) came from Co. Dublin area (Lucan and Saggart).
7% (117) students came from the Dublin 22 region. 6% (106) came from Co. Wicklow. A smaller number ~3% came from each of the following regions: Dublin 8, Dublin 12, Dublin 15, Dublin 16 and Co. Meath. Approximately 19% of part-time students came from other regions around Dublin with less than 2% of students from any one area.

Figure 2.2 The Demographics of Part-time Students (Student Database 2007/2008; N=1634)

2.5 Nationality of Part-time Students (Student Survey May 2008: N=278)

The part-time student cohort in 2007/8 reflects the multicultural nature of Irish society (Figure 2.3). The 2007/8 student survey recorded 31 different nationalities (increased from 17 recorded in 2005/6). Students of Irish nationality accounted for 59% of the 2007/8 part-time student cohort, this was down from 87% recorded in 2005/6. Since 2005/6 there has been a sharp increase in the number of students of Polish nationality (up from <1% in 2005/6 to 11% in 2007/8). Increases were also recorded in the numbers of students from Lithuania (<1% 2005/6; 5% 2007/8). The number of students of Latvian (1% 2005/6; 2% 2007/8), Russian (0% 2005/6; 3% 2007/8), Romanian (<1% 2005/6; 2% 2007/8) and Nigerian (4% 2005/6; 6% 2007/8) nationalities also showed some increase.
Providing access to lifelong learning opportunities to the increasing number of non-Irish part-time students will be facilitated by the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) (http://www.nqai.ie/interdev_eqf.html). Once in place EQF will improve the capacity of the Institute to interpret and compare prior accredited learning of part-time students thereby facilitating access and participation in lifelong learning at the Institute. The National Plan for Equity of access to Higher Education 2008-2013 has outlined a number of policy objectives to support the provision of lifelong learning in Higher Education. These objectives relate to access routes, student support and flexibility in course delivery. The next section of the report will provide evidence of how the Department of Lifelong Learning has begun to address each of these policy objectives.
2.6 Lifelong Learning Initiatives

In keeping with the stated policy objectives outlined in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013, the department of Lifelong learning has developed, in partnership:

- a broader range of entry routes
- a significant expansion of part-time/flexible courses
- a number of measures to address the student support implications of lifelong learning at the institute.

2.6.1 Broader Range of Access and Transfer Routes

Evidence of working towards this objective is demonstrated by:

- The development of new awards
- Access English Provision

2.6.1.1 Development of New Awards

ITT Dublin recognised that some people would like to return to education and work towards an accredited award, but their work, home and family commitments mean they are unable to commit to a course that might take two years or more. However they could start their lifelong learning journey if they could commit for a shorter time. The new ‘minor’, ‘supplemental’ and ‘special purpose’ awards that have been introduced as part of the National Framework of Qualifications provided the perfect opportunity for ITT Dublin to develop access and progression routes for these individuals.

An example of an access and progression route developed at the institute is outlined in Figure 2.4. Students who complete the certificate in the Fundamentals of Software Development can:

- Complete the Certificate in Web Design and Development having gained the necessary software knowledge skill and competence necessary to complete this course

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3 HEA 2008 National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013, HEA Dublin
• progress to the BSc in It Management (10 credits completed)

Similarly students who complete the certificate in Web Design and Development can progress to the BSc. in Information Technology Management (20 credits completed).

**Figure 2.4  Example of an Access and Progression route developed for Part-time Students**

2.6.1.2  Access English Provision

Classes for delivering academic programmes at ITT Dublin are generally taught in English. A number of individuals who do not have English or Irish as their first language have been living in Ireland for a number of years and have developed significant competency in the language but are unable to provide evidence of competency in English to meet the entry requirement of the Institute. In order to facilitate access to the institute for this cohort, ITT Dublin has developed an Access English Test process.

Individuals who do not have sufficient evidence of their competency in English to meet the requirement for entry to the Institute can sit an Access English Test. This test measures
the individual’s aural and written competency in English. An individual must score 150 or above (proficient - advanced user) to meet the entry requirements for the Institute. The Access English test is a self funding process and is offered on a number of occasions before the start of the academic year.

If an individual does not reach the required standard they are offered a place on our English as a Foreign Language (EFL) accredited programme at one of three levels consistent with their current English proficiency level. This course helps individuals to improve their competency in English and progress to other courses at a later stage. Individuals pay a test fee which is later deducted from the course fees if an individual is successful in the Access English Test. In 2000, 23 individuals took the access English test, this number increased to 126 in the 2008.

2.7 Expansion of part-time/flexible courses

Evidence of working towards this objective is demonstrated by:

- Flexibility of Attendance and Progression
- Blended Learning
- Customised In company programmes
- Recognition of prior learning

All courses delivered through the Department of Lifelong Learning are placed on the National Qualifications framework. Part-time course provision at ITT Dublin mirrors full-time provision to a large extent. Provision differs in relation to Media Studies, Social Care Practice and provision of professional body programmes and minor awards. Currently there is no AV media course available in part-time mode. In addition a new part-time honours degree programme in Social Care Practice was introduced in 2008 and currently has 68 participants. This course will be offered to fulltime students from September 2009. A wide range of Professional Institute programmes and minor awards are also offered to part-time students. (Please refer to Department of Lifelong Prospectus 2008/9)
2.7.1 Flexibility in Attendance and Progression

The FLASHE (Higher Certificate in Electronic Engineering) and FLITE (BSc in Information Technology Management) programmes are funded by the HEA (see Section 2.6.3.1). The courses have been designed to provide flexibility in attendance times and rate of study. The principle is that the students may construct a convenient timetable around other aspects of their working and personal lives thus allowing maximum engagement. The FLASHE (Flexible Access to Higher Education) Higher Certificate in Electronic Engineering is an innovation from ITT Dublin which gives mature students control of when, where and how they study. Requiring only eight hours a week attendance at the Institute during each semester, this programme allows mature students to reap the benefits of a recognised and internationally accredited qualification in engineering in just over two years. Students enrol with the college in the normal manner for part-time students. The timetable offered is spread across the whole week with repeated classes during the day and evening and at both ends of the week. The student can choose which classes to attend providing him/her flexibility to juggle other life and work commitments. The FLITE (Flexible IT Education) B.Sc. in IT Management programme is a HEA funded access programme for part-time students in Computing. Additional CA and tutorial supports are offered as part of the programme. Catch-up classes are made available at weekends. Work placements and projects are facilitated according to the student’s schedule.

2.7.2 Blended Learning

A number of departments in the Institute now offer blended learning opportunities for students. The science department, for example, are currently offering students the opportunity to complete a range of modules through distance learning. The department is currently completing a SIF funded development project that will convert all modules of the Higher Certificate in GMP and BSc (Ord.) course to the following format:

- Printed study material in the form of study guides for each module for the semester. These comprehensive study guides will allow the student to master their study material, give direction to their studies and stimulate their learning process. Their study guides will be used in conjunction with prescribed and recommended books or e-books.
These blended education programs will also be supported by Tutor voiced over power point presentations used by way of introduction to each weeks study material. These will be available through Moodle.  

- Students will also be given the opportunity to log on for an on-line tutorial. These will be approx 2 hour in duration where a tutor will work through a previously distributed problem sheet with the students. This will cover the learning outcomes of the material that has been prescribed for study in the previous two weeks. 
- Assessments will be available for download from Moodle and will be required to be submitted also through Moodle incorporating the use of the anti plagiarism software “Turnitin”
- All course correspondence (e.g., notices from the course coordinators, course updates from tutors) will take place using the Moodle communication tools.

In addition the Regulatory and Technology Transfer course content of the MSc Pharmaceutical Production syllabus is currently being converted for delivery at a distance. The format and delivery mode is as follows:

- A weekly pre-recorded lecture using Adobe Presenter Software is uploaded onto Moodle in zip format. Students can download and unzip the file to play lecture.
- Supporting course material is provided by Technical Pharmaceutical Guides and regulatory publications (e.g. ICH, Eudralex)
- Tutorials, case studies delivered using Adobe Presenter Virtual Classroom on a weekly basis. Moodle the student Learning Management System is also used.

2.7.3 Customised In-Company Programmes  
A number of Departments have also developed and delivered customised in company programmes; These courses have been developed in tandem with the industry/business partners and meet a particular skills need in each workplace. The programme can be delivered on site in the company or in the Institute as a homogenous class entity. Examples include: Computing (e.g. Google), Management (e.g. INTEL) and Engineering (e.g. Wyeth) and Science (e.g. Wyeth), Humanities (BIM).
2.7.4 Recognition of Prior Learning

ITT Dublin participates in a HETAC Scheme to accredit prior learning (APL). This scheme allows students to claim an exemption from modules on their programme when they can demonstrate institute-level learning from their work, life or leisure experience. A new process for claiming an exemption was introduced in September 2007 following consultation with academic departments. The process provides opportunities for students to claim an academic credit for an identified module by demonstrating prior accredited and experiential learning against identified learning outcomes. Module summary forms, outlining the key learning outcomes of each module have been drawn up for all modules of all courses delivered in part-time mode at the Institute. These module summary forms are reviewed and updated annually. In 2007/8, 42 exemptions were granted to part-time students in School of Business and Humanities; 16 exemptions were granted by the School of Science and Computing and 16 modular exemptions were granted by the School of Engineering.

This process currently in place at ITT Dublin put the onus on students to complete and submit the paperwork without clearly identified support. The Head of Department has been visiting other institutes to learn from their experience in managing RPL. This research has highlighted a strong similarity in the process of RPL within Institutes. However ITT Dublin, unlike other institutes currently does not have any trained RPL advisors in place to provide support for students. However the Institute’s involvement in the SIF II REAP (Roadmap for Academic and Education Partnership) (See Section 4.1.2) will go someway to addressing this issue.

2.8 Measures to address the student support implications of lifelong learning at the institute

Evidence of working towards this objective is demonstrated by a range of academic and financial supports available to students:
• E-learning – Moodle as an LMS.
• Academic Supports
  — Access English Support
  — Maths Support
  — Study skills
  — Revision and Exam Techniques
  — Career Planning
  — Statistics Support
  — Head Start Programme
• Financial Supports
  — HEA Subsidy Funding
  — Modular Accreditation Programme
  — One Step UP (FAS)
  — Social Welfare Subsidy

2.8.1 E-Learning - Moodle as an LMS.

The Institute has made a significant investment in developing a VLE for students and staff using Moodle. Moodle is a web-based LMS that allows lecturers to create a course website and provide access control to enrolled students. It offers a variety of tools to make courses more effective, for example, it offers an easy way to upload syllabi, lecture notes and assignments. It also enables lecturers to give and receive assessments online, and to record grades online. By allowing students engage with course material outside of class time, the Moodle LMS facilitates independent learning and makes additional time available for discussions, questions and problem solving, in a face-to-face setting. From a departmental and academic perspective, Moodle also provides:

• logs for monitoring student activity
• notice boards with e-mail capacity for communicating with students
• a means of identifying which resources are being accessed by students most frequently
• a facility for providing access to course material for repeat students
• a powerful tool for communicating with part-time students.
There has been a considerable investment in staff development in relation to integrating Moodle into the teaching and learning process as part of the SIF Cycle 1 project Collaborative Network for Innovation in Teaching and Inclusive Education which is led by ITT Dublin.

2.8.2 Academic Supports
The Department of Lifelong Learning, in conjunction with the Centre for Learning and Teaching, put in place a range of supports since 2007/8 that seek to boost academic performance and help the students gain the most out of their time at the Institute. Support is provided in the form of drop-in centres manned by academics and workshops. Support is available to part-time and full-time students. The Department of Lifelong Learning coordinates support for part-time students in the following areas:

- Maths
- Academic English
- Study Skills
- Revision and Exam Techniques
- Career Planning
- Statistics.

2.8.2.1 Maths Support
The Institute provides support to students who need additional help in all areas of mathematics. There are two types of support available:

1. Maths drop-in Centre
This is a drop-in centre staffed by mathematics lecturers who will help students with any problems they may have. The staff have a great deal of experience in boosting the confidence of adult learners returning to higher education.

2. CALMAT
A computer based learning environment used by ITT Dublin to provide maths support for the past 10 years, CALMAT has been particularly successful with adults returning to study.
During its first semester 2008/9 of operation 86 students availed of Maths support. Visits to the drop-in centre were highest immediately prior to examinations.

2.8.2.2 Academic English Support
Many students returning to study require some support with structuring reports and assignments. ITT Dublin has an Academic English Support Centre to give them any help they may require, especially in the early stages of their programme. The drop-in centre provides support for students in the following areas:

- Use of technical language  
- Presenting your argument  
- How to structure essays/reports  
- Interpreting exam questions  
- How to link ideas  
- Interpreting CA guidelines  
- Expression in English  
- Presentation of written work  
- How to evaluate/critique effectively  
- Spelling and punctuation  
- How to summarise well  
- Oral communication

Where English is not a student’s first language, the Academic English Support Centre will give them any help they need with written English. 50 students have availed of Academic English support during the first semester of 2008/9.

An Academic English companion booklet (first published September 2008) is available for all students to provide additional support when they are completing essays/reports/exams.

2.8.2.3 Study Skills Workshop
These interactive workshops (two per academic year) are designed to help students find out what type of learner they are and how to get the most out of their college experience. Areas the workshops cover include Motivation & Time Management, The Study Environment, Taking Notes in Class, Research & Writing, Effective Memory Techniques and Presentation skills. To date 49 students have attended the study skills workshop.

An Adult Learner Study Guide booklet (first published September 2008) which was developed jointly with partner Institute of Technology is available for all students to provide additional support with their study.
2.8.2.4 Revision & Exam Techniques Workshop
This workshop is for students who need pointers on how best to revise and prepare for exams. When studying part-time, we recognise that there can be many demands on student’s time and it is therefore important to take control and implement an effective revision and exam strategy. During these sessions students are given practical advice on revision techniques and preparing for exams. To date 51 students have attended the Revision & Exam Techniques Workshop.

2.8.2.5 Career Planning Workshop
These workshops (two per academic year) provide students with an excellent opportunity to look at self assessment, including making informed career decisions and determining what they really want to do. To date 31 students have attended the workshops. During the sessions students also look at active job searching skills including networking and how to make recruitment agencies work for them. This workshop provides students with an excellent opportunity for students to look at:

1. Self Assessment
   - Making informed career decisions
   - Determining what you really want to do.
2. Active Job Search Skills
   - Networking – how to do it well
   - The employers labour market – how it works
   - Recruitment agencies – making them work for you
   - Getting a competitive edge
   - Learning from job application rejections
   - Sources of vacancies, industry and academic.
3. Career Statements
   - Why use them?
   - What can they do for you? What is my key message to employers?

The Department of Lifelong Learning gives a Student Guide & Planner to all students registered on part-time programmes, which includes details of dates/times for all support services on offer. In addition the Full-time and Lifelong Learning Part-time Programmes Prospectus’ respectively provide details of the academic services provided.
All the above workshops are evaluated by the participants. Students find the support both valuable and worthwhile.

2.8.2.6 Statistics Support
The Statistics Clinic is an opportunity for students to get some statistical support with any research project they might be undertaking, whether big or small. Help and advice can be given on all areas of statistics including the collecting and organising of data as well as analysis.

2.8.2.7 Head Start Programmes
In 2008 the Department of Lifelong Learning ran its first, ‘Head Start’ programmes in early September 2008 for students who wanted to refresh their skills in Academic English prior to starting their programme at the institute.

2.8.3 Financial Supports
The Institute facilitates a number of financial incentives for students to facilitate their access to lifelong learning at the Institute.

- HEA Subsidy Funding (FLASHE and FLITE)
- Modular Accreditation Programme (MAP)
- One Step Up (FÁS)
- Social Welfare Subsidy

2.8.3.1 HEA Subsidy Funding (FLASHE and FLITE)

The Higher Education Authority subsides both the FLITE and FLASHE programme on a pilot basis to provide the course flexibility outlined in Section 2.5.1. This subsidy reduces student fees by 50% (FLASHE, Higher Certificate, Level 6) and by 70% (FLITE, BSc. Degree, Programme Level 7).
2.8.3.2 Modular Accreditation Programme (MAP)

The national Modular Accreditation Programme (MAP) has been developed through the Higher Education Authority (HEA). This innovative initiative provides support for individuals who want to access part-time, flexible, affordable career development opportunities. ITT Dublin is the only college nationally offering this pilot programme for those involved in the Pharmaceutical industry.

Through MAP, those currently involved in the pharmaceutical industry who do not have a recognised higher level qualification and those who want to access the industry, can register for modules from the pool on offer. The programme is not open to individuals whose training would normally be supported through their company. Credits towards an award can be completed at each individual’s own pace. A number of the modules are available through Distance Learning. Completion of all the programme modules on offer in the pilot programme leads to a Higher Certificate in Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Technology. MAP students receive an 80% reduction in fees on this pilot programme.

2.8.3.3 One Step Up (FÁS)

One Step Up is FÁS’ response to the report of the Enterprise Strategy Group “Ahead of the Curve, Ireland’s place in the global economy”. All FÁS programmes and initiatives are aligned to the One Step Up concept that training and development programmes assist individuals to build on their competency levels and obtain a recognised qualification within the National Framework of Qualifications.

The Department of Lifelong Learning after an extensive tendering process contract with FÁS for co-funding for a range of programmes (e.g. Certificate in the Fundamentals of Software Development, Certificate in Web Design and Development, CISCO). FAS will then provide the following financial support towards the cost of eligible training:

- up to 70% of the agreed cost for certified programmes where the individual is working for a Small to Medium Sized Company (SME) i.e. 250 employees or less.
- up to 35% of the agreed cost for certified programmes where the individual is working for a large company.

To be eligible for FÁS support the student must be in fulltime employment in the private sector.
sector, or in a commercial state body in the public sector. Employees in the Engineering Departments of Local Authorities are also eligible.

2.8.3.4 Social Welfare Subsidy

In order to promote access to Higher Education for socially disadvantaged groups, ITT Dublin currently offers a 50% reduction in tuition fees for part-time students (on a course quota basis) who can provide evidence at the beginning of the academic year that their sole income is derived from Social Welfare payments, or if they are the dependant of a person whose sole income is derived Social Welfare payments. During the current academic year (2008/9) 69 students received the social welfare fee subsidy from the Institute.

3.0 Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance

The quality of the provision of lifelong learning in the Institute is guided by the Institute’s quality assurance policies and processes.

Quality assurance can be broadly defined as the “process of establishing stakeholder confidence that provision fulfils expectations and measures up to threshold minimum requirements” (Harvey, 2004-2007). It encompasses multiple dimensions of inputs, processes and outcomes as well as the way these change over time. Therefore, quality assurance principles are underpinned by accountability and continuous improvement. The Institute’s system for the management of quality and how it links to the strategic planning is shown in the Figure 3.0 below.

The Institute’s core activities (teaching and learning, and research and innovation) are supported by central and student support services which incorporate the Department of Lifelong Learning.

The Institute’s management and governance structures provide leadership in the development and implementation of quality assurance throughout the Institute. However, all internal and external stakeholders provide input into the quality assurance process and are instrumental in achieving the Institute’s goals.

Part-time programmes come under the same institute quality assurance procedures as fulltime provision. The Institute’s approach to the assurance of quality and academic standards is based on adherence to the published Marks and Standards document; Schools ownership of programmes; highly qualified staff; ongoing training; learner initiatives; pedagogy updates; devolving responsibility for quality to staff; auditing of procedures and SOPs; internal and external reviews and last by no means least the Quality Manual.
Quality Manual sets out the Institute policy for management operations and the associated roles and responsibilities.

The Institute’s Quality Assurance Manual was produced by the management team to conform to the HETAC Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education and Training (2002). It describes the key structures, processes, policies, procedures, performance measures and quality assurance mechanisms that facilitate a systematic approach to embedding a quality improvement approach within the Institute.

The Quality Assurance Manual covers the following procedures.

- Quality Assurance Policies
- Roles and responsibilities
- Procedure for Design and Approval of New Programmes and Modules
- Procedures for the Assessment of Learners
- Procedures for Ongoing Monitoring of Programmes
- Procedures for Evaluation of Each Programme at Regular Intervals
- Procedures for the Selection, Appointment, Appraisal and Development of Staff
- Procedures for Evaluating Premises, Equipment and Facilities
- Procedures for Evaluating Services Related to Programmes of Higher Education and Training
- Procedures of measuring the effectiveness of our QA procedures

The detailed steps involved in the implementation of these procedures are described in individual and specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which can be drawn up by staff, primarily management and must be approved by TMT, before sign off by the appropriate SMT member or the President. It is the policy of the Institute that all Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) have the same format, as far as possible. A full list of SOPs for the Institute is available from the Freedom of Information Office. SOPs are continually being developed and revised to improve the operations of the Institute. A list of all SOPs relating to operation procedures within the Department of Lifelong Learning are attached (Appendix 1). These SOPs have been developed/revised as part of this internal review process.

Academic staff are key players in the development and implementation of quality assurance in academic areas. Central services and student support services have their own quality assurance processes and play a vital role in enabling and supporting the Institute’s core...
activities. Collective responsibility is achieved through involvement in Academic Council meetings, departmental meetings, programme boards and various other sub-committees and working groups within the different functional areas of the Institute and at School/Department level.

Through a cycle of planning, implementing and review, a process of continuous improvement is established across all Institute academic activities. This process is an interactive and collective process that recognises the interdependence that exists among all stakeholders and recognises outcomes as the result of systemic interaction among all players. Quality improvement initiatives are based on the analysis of information, data and reports gained through a structured process of evaluation, monitoring and feedback from internal and external stakeholders, through the mechanisms of Institutional and Programmatic Reviews and other periodic evaluations conducted by the Institute and by Professional Bodies seeking to validate the Institute’s programmes for accreditation. The structures put in place for managing quality, are designed to improve the communication processes, co-operation and interaction among management teams, Academic Council and individuals.

In the context of the provision of lifelong learning a range of formal and informal feedback processes exist

- Student feedback on services is obtained by completing student surveys coordinated by the department of lifelong learning. (2005/6 and 2007/8) (Copy of survey 2008/9 attached Appendix 2)
- Feedback through the evaluation process incorporated into student workshops e.g. Study Skills, Career Planning and Development.
- Total Management Team meetings provide a forum for feedback and discussion from staff.
- Academic School Programme Board reports
- Informal feedback from academic and administrative staff and students throughout the academic year
- External audit through the Strategic Alliances with Institutes of Technology Project (SIF Cycle 1) the Lifelong Learning subgroup.

Note: feedback in relation to the quality of teaching and Learning of the part-time student cohort is collated through the Quality Assurance Process of the Academic Schools.
3.1 Feedback

3.1.1 Student Feedback

The key findings from the student survey 2008 (Carried out May 2008, No. of respondents 278) are outlined below.

- The most popular reasons students gave for choosing ITT Dublin as part of their lifelong journey was:
  - The courses offered (81%)
  - Course scheduling (67%)
  - And Location (55%)

- 82% of part-time student found the prospectus helpful

- The main factors that prompted individuals to commit to their lifelong learning were:
  - Career choice (48%)
  - Career development (34%)
  - Career change (24%)
  - General interest and personal development (34%)

- Almost half the students surveyed (48%) were interested in continuing their studies after they finished their current programme of study. In particular these students were interested in:
  - Postgraduate courses (39%) (especially in Business)
  - General Interest subjects (24%)
  - Single subject courses (20%)

- Employers support 69% of students by giving them time off for study and examinations. In addition almost half the students (48%) get an employer contribution (30%-90%) towards their fees.

- Almost half (48%) the students would be interested in attending class outside the current schedule. Of these students the majority favoured Saturday morning.
Current Services & Facilities – quality service rating (all figures reflect the percentage of students who rated the service good or excellent and the percentage of students who were less than satisfied with the service).

The results of the survey in 2007/8 showed a general increase in satisfaction with the services offered in the Institute when compared to the 2005/6 data. Further work needs to be undertaken to address the lack of satisfaction around the service provided by the canteen and car parking. The satisfaction with the induction process was ranked as good or excellent by almost 60% of first years. The survey has highlighted the need to further develop this process especially in relation to issuing of student cards and introduction to moodle. The induction process was revised significantly for the 2008/9, student feedback on the effectiveness of this induction procedure will not be available until the 2009 student survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>2005/6 (Good/Excellent)</th>
<th>2005/6 (Less than Satisfactory)</th>
<th>2007/8 (Good/Excellent)</th>
<th>2007/8 (Less than Satisfactory)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Bookshop</td>
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<td>24%</td>
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<td>IT Lab Facilities</td>
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<td>14%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<td>Part-time Information</td>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Process/fee payment</td>
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<td>24%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>26%</td>
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<td>Photocopying</td>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>Induction Process</td>
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<td>59%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>External Access to College Network</td>
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<td>61%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>44%</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>Drop In Maths Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drop In Academic English Centre</td>
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<td>62%</td>
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</table>
Students highlighted the following areas for development:

- More information should be made available of the Institute EFL provision
  - Action – Additional information to be included in 2009/10 prospectus and on the Institute Website
- Include specific information on exemptions available to accounting students in the literature on the exemption process.
  - Action – Information to be incorporated into exemption process documentation 2009/10
- Include the month June and July in the student planner and diary to facilitate students studying during the summer months.
  - Action – Information to be incorporated into student diary 2009/10
- More moodle support is required and difficulties in accessing moodle from outside the college need to be addressed.
  - Action – New procedure in relation to renewing passwords introduced; Introduction to Moodle to be incorporated into induction process for part-time students for 2009/10
- Alter the times of the drop in maths centre to avoid clashes with classes.
  - Action – Time of maths support session changed from 5.30-7.30pm to 5.00 – 7.00pm; Additional support session introduced prior to examinations
- Students need to be informed of exam dates and timetables well in advance to allow them to plan their leave in good time.
  - Action – Academic calendar included in part-time student diary; Quick link to exam timetables on website;
- Include the part-time student body more actively in the life of the college.
  - Action – Include more information on clubs etc as part of induction process 2009/10

3.1.2 Programme Board Reports
Over the period 2005-7 programme board reports from academic schools highlighted a number of areas for development in relation to the provision of lifelong learning at the institute. These included:
Quality Improvement

- New exemption procedure
  Status: exemption process and new procedure now in place

- Earlier cut off date for part-time programmes
  Status: Cut off dates introduced for some courses, clearer information for prospective students encouraging early application for courses. Ongoing development.

- Mature students returning to education sometimes have difficulty in getting into material/time management of study and work
  Status: Study skills workshops available to all part-time students

- Improved communication required with Part-time office with respect to fees
  Status: Clearer information on fees included in part-time prospectus; Standardisation of module and programme costing introduced; Ongoing development.

- Concern with litter in lecture theatres
  Status: Week long anti-litter campaign currently being organised for second semester.

Training and Resources

- Parking ITT Dublin campus for part-time students sometimes problematic
  Status: Student groups timetabled to balance student numbers across the 4 nights; Student survey to ascertain if individuals would attend classes if delivered on Friday evening or Saturday morning; Ongoing development.
  (Note: There are a limited number of car-parking spaces available in the grounds of the Institute. However, there are a number of parking facilities adjacent to the Institute).

3.2 External Audit

Under the Strategic Alliances with Institutes of Technology Project (SIF Cycle 1) the Lifelong Learning subgroup undertook a profile of student support services provided by the six institutions within the alliance (Athlone I.T., Carlow I.T., ITT Dublin., Dundalk I.T., NUI Maynooth, Waterford I.T.)
The report (in press) mapped the provision of services to fulltime and part-time students (including off campus students) enrolled on accredited courses (see Appendix 3). The research study had three specific objectives:

1. Conduct a general audit of student support services in the six institutes;
2. Capture students’ perceptions and experiences of the student support services available in the six institutes, and;
3. Provide examples of good practice, where evident, in the six institutes.

Information for the profile was obtained via structured questionnaire and face to face interviews with members of the subgroup, Heads of Lifelong Learning Departments, library staff, access officers, and student services staff (including auxiliary services). The Strategic Plans of individual institutions were also consulted.

The study highlighted best practice, identified deficiencies and gaps in service and provide a greater inter-institutional understanding of what supports are available, particularly supports available to non-traditional and part-time students. The shared understanding gained from the audit has the potential to lead to improved systems and provide a foundation for more extensive collaboration within the alliance.

Provision for part-times students at ITT Dublin compares well to that offered by other institutes and in a number of areas ITT Dublin is actually superior, e.g. supports available for part-time students.

Good Practice at ITT Dublin identified included:

- Full time programme mirrored for part-time students.
- Full range of student support services and officers available until 9.00 pm each evening for all fulltime and part-time students.
- Dedicated part-time student information desk open until 9.00 pm Monday-Thursday.
- Website has clearly defined immediate access for part time students.
- Dedicated student handbook for part-time students, including a ‘How To’ section providing ease of access to service information.
• Lifelong Learning information screens at key locations throughout the building for up-to-date information such as class cancellations, change of venue, etc.
• Access English: A competency test for students wishing to return to learning, this test costs €50 which is deductible from fees.
• Drop-in centre to provide support for Academic English and Maths, open until 7.30 pm.
• IT Self Service kiosks which allow students to reset passwords, access exam PIN and check registration status.
• Interactive Online Applications.
• Good Student communication mechanisms including SMS text alerts.

Issues that were identified that ITT Dublin needs to address include:

• Availability of parking and the time it takes students to leave the campus after evening class (up to a half an hour on some occasions)
• Level of reliability of external access to Moodle and out of hours support for students.

These issues are currently being addressed see Section 3.1.1

4.0 Workforce Development

The institute continues as it has done since its inception, to play a significant role in workforce development regionally and nationally. The manifestation of this was clearly outlined in the previous institutional review (Chapter 7), which highlighted a wide range of ‘fit for purpose’ programmes delivered to companies across all Academic Schools either on site or at the Institute. Much of the demand for this activity can be linked to economic development both at a local and national level and to the Institute’s capability to react quickly to industry need in a flexible way. The primary manifestation, in the late 1990s and early in this decade, was the Institute’s interaction with multinational companies (e.g. Intel, Analogue Devices, Celestica, Hewlett Packard) in the ICT sector. The activity in the ICT sector has subsided somewhat in line with the economic conditions over the past number of years and the maturing of the workforce. In general, current demand from those sectors of industry is satisfied through the provision of programmes currently
available through the Department of Lifelong Learning.

More recently the Pharma and Biotechnology sector has seen a similar response from the institute which has delivered a range of programmes e.g. to Wyeth, Takeda, Schering Plough, and the establishment of the Pharma Education Centre (Section 4.1.1)

The approach to workforce development at ITT Dublin is to work closely with employers to design and deliver training that suits their needs. ITT Dublin provides work-based education and training programmes that build on the knowledge, skills and competencies of those currently in the workplace. The training approach adopted focuses on ‘fitness for purpose’ courses and modules delivered in a flexible way to:

- Enable access by supporting and accrediting the building of individual learning portfolios
- Identify individual training needs
  - Facilitate the identification of individual goals for upskilling
  - Facilitate the development of individual personal training plans to achieve goals identified
- Provide choice and flexibility in terms of content and teaching and learning opportunities to meet identified needs. Allows a blend of modules across subject areas, for example, technical/business
- Award recognised accreditation. The National Framework of Qualifications gives ITT Dublin flexibility to build accredited qualifications in small steps by using individual module accreditation, and developing Minor, Supplemental or Special Purpose awards that accredit different-sized blocks of learning.

Flexible delivery options
ITT Dublin uses a flexible, blended learning approach to teaching and learning. Education and training can be delivered as in-company programmes, day or block release, and flexible, repeated delivery to allow for shift working and distance learning.

Benefits from an employee's perspective:
- Relevant training designed to meet personal needs
- Opportunities to up skill and get recognised accreditation
- Flexibility and choice to suit individual needs and work at his/her own pace
- Roadmap for personal lifelong learning journey

**Benefits from an employer's perspective:**
- Training tailored to meet an employer’s particular needs
- Cost-effective training (in many cases funding is available from government initiatives)
- Employees who are better able to meet the demands of their daily work
- Employees who have the confidence to further develop their own lifelong learning
- A competitive and progressive workplace

4.1 Exemplars of Successful workforce development initiatives –

4.1.1 Pharma Education Centre (PharmaBio Education and Training Services)

The Pharma Education Centre was established by the Science Department. The PharmaBio Education and Training Services group specialises in providing tailored training services for companies in the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industries. Its training consultants are all highly experienced industry practitioners with a proven track record in the pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical and medical device sectors. The group was established after in-depth market research identified untapped demand for third-party specialist training services. In recent years, the Irish market has seen a rapid growth in the number of pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical companies as well as spin-out biotech firms, which has created significant demand for specialist training services. Target companies of PharmaBio Education and Training Services include multinational and indigenous pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies; spin-out biotech firms, especially those preparing for clinical trials and organisations specialising in process development/small-scale manufacture of clinical material.

Training is offered in a wide range of areas including:
- Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Good Clinical Practice (GCP), Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)
- Validation
- Auditing
• Regulatory affairs
• Technology transfer and scale-up
• Analytical development
• Lean manufacturing
• Concept facility design
• Manufacturing and processing technology
• Clean-room design and control
• Induction training for new employees in API, chemical, biopharma, finished dosage form
• Advanced training in key technical areas

Customised Training
As Pharmaceutical companies continue to expand, new technologies and drugs come on-line and new pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical plants are built, the need for skilled manufacturing personnel has grown dramatically. The ability of companies to recruit fully trained and experienced staff becomes more difficult. Changing technologies also require existing personnel to be trained in these new areas as they unfold. How does a company cope with training new recruits and existing personnel in all the required areas of science and technology with an emphasis on the working of a manufacturing facility?

ITT Dublin, through its Science Department, has the capability to partner with pharmaceutical companies to create short customised courses that offer a foundation in certain areas associated with the industry. Through these courses ITT Dublin has been successful in:
• Implementing a hands-on, industry-informed curriculum
• Developing modules which provide the technical and practical components required by the industry.
• Developing modules which suit the company needs and can be built upon at a later date if the students desire to achieve a recognised scientific qualification.

Past clients include:
4.1.2 Roadmap for Employment Academic Partnership (REAP)SIF II Project (Summary extracted from original submission)

In order to support current and future workforce development within the Institute, ITT Dublin is collaborating with 7 other institutions (CIT (Lead), DIT, UCC, WIT, NUIG, AIT, IT Sligo (External Collaborators) in the Roadmap for Employment Academic Partnership (REAP) Project funded under cycle 2 strategic Innovation funding.

This collaborative project, involving 8 partners, is for the research, development and validation of a Higher Education / Employment Partnership Model and Roadmap. It will identify learning needs within workplaces, draw up a comprehensive plan for partnership between employers and Higher Education Institutions, and verify the effectiveness of the strategy through a diverse range of demonstrator collaborative activities. It will provide the gateway to integrate and rationalise complementary initiatives and offer a single simple, relevant, inclusive framework to facilitate interaction with the workplace.

The project addresses several themes that have emerged from a range of national reports:

- Lifelong learning is essential for the development of ‘Human Capital’, which is itself inextricably linked to personal, social and economic development
- Educational provision for workplaces must be context-sensitive, flexible, innovative andadaptive
- Developments must be informed by an understanding of the needs and opportunities, by region and by sector
- The education sector needs to proactively facilitate and simplify the engagement process
- HEI’s and employers should strive for mature, long term partnerships that can meet and exceed current needs and anticipate future needs.

5 Ahead of the Curve – Ireland’s Place in the Global Economy – Enterprise Strategy Group 2004
5 Ireland – Knowledge is our nature IDA Ireland Annual Report 2006
The project incorporates four distinct strands:

Strand 1- Research and Investigation –

- This strand has two parts to it: Learning Needs Analysis and Partnership Model Development.
- This strand will focus on particular sectors of strategic importance to the partner institution ITT Dublin will have a primary focus on the SME, Pharma and Biomedical sectors.
- This strand will inform the Implementation strand for each partner.

Part A: Learning Needs Analysis

- Review the work of Government agencies, employer groupings and others in identifying the learning needs and desirable partnership outcomes from a workplace perspective
- Research the varying needs by region and sector
- Each collaborating institution or group of institutions will address a specific workplace sector over the full size spectrum from large public employers, Multinationals, SMEs to start-up enterprises
- Compile a report collating the various findings by sector/ region including analysis of changing technology trends and skills, learning and research requirements in the representative organisations chosen.

Part B: Partnership Model Development

- Review of the existing models and levels of Employer Academic partnerships within the partner institutions
- Detailed review of the experience of ‘partnership’ from the first set of Partnerships formed under the ‘Education in Employment’ SIF Cycle 1 project
- Explore the context for partnership internationally
- Develop an expandable model with an agreed scope and identifiable stages on the relationship continuum
- Consultation sessions and workshops with HE staff in our partner institutions and also our industry partners.
Strand 2 - Implementation and Validation

A: Collaborative Development of Targeted Specialist Course(s)
   The collaborating institutions will interact with workplaces, employers' representatives and employee-learners to develop agreed programmes for learners in specific disciplines.

B: Undergraduate Co-operative Placement
C: Academics / Researchers into Employment
D: Professional Postgraduate Programmes
E: Industry Into Academia

Strand 3 - Integration

This workpackage will ensure the integration of the REAP project with other complementary programmes and initiatives and will ensure a single, simple, relevant, inclusive roadmap for the client. It will also have the objective of integrating the outcomes with each institution's internal 'mainstream' activities.

Strand 4 – Dissemination

ITT Dublin’s commitment to this project will act as a springboard to further develop its links with business and industry. At the end of the three years, ITT Dublin should have stronger business and industry partnerships in place that meet the needs of both partners.

5.0 E-Learning

The Department of Lifelong Learning is involved in e-Learning through its work with the NDLR and its involvement in the National sectoral project on Flexible Learning funded under SIF 2 Cycle funding.

5.1 NDLR E-Learning pilot projects

The Head of Lifelong Learning has responsibility for the Institutes interface with the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR). As part of this role a number of innovative e-learning projects (described in Appendix 4) were piloted in the Institute. It was hoped that these projects would provide a base for building capacity, expertise and sharing good
practice throughout the Institute. The project was co-funded by the NDLR project and supported the strategic objectives outlined in Strategic Goal 5, Lifelong Learning of the Institute’s strategic plan 2005-8.

_The Institute will develop a range of educational initiatives to provide a means for individuals to achieve their lifelong learning goals._

In all 12 projects were allocated funding, of these 10 took up the funding and completed an e-Learning initiative. The range of projects extended across all phases of the e-Learning continuum. Some project teams were engaging with technology supplemented e-Learning for the first time, others were developing e-learning resources that utilised e.g. new mobile technologies. The pilot projects coincided with the development of the Institute technological infrastructure.

### 5.1.1 Technological Infrastructure

The technological infrastructure that has been put in place by the Institute is outlined in Figure 5.0
During the pilot phase Computing Services deployed a cross collegiate virtual learning solution in the form of an open source solution, Moodle. Up until then the Department of Computing and the Department of Engineering managed and maintained their own local instances of Moodle. These solutions comprised of single servers that were seeded and populated by local “branch” systems.

Computing Services, in conjunction with the Department of Computing and the School of Engineering, designed a Virtual Learning Solution that provided high availability which was fully resilient and had mirrored redundancy which was seeded and populated by the core Institute Banner and AD systems. The core technical skills provided by Computing Services to support Moodle include: Linux, PHP, HTML, Dreamweaver, XML, JavaScript, Photoshop and Flash. A range of staff development opportunities were provided to build capability in using the technology in teaching and learning.

5.1.2 Staff Development

Staff development opportunities were provided to Project teams involved in the pilot phase. Training (funded jointly through the NDLR and ITT Dublin) was provided by experts from UL and Trinity and DIT. An e-learning forum was set up, to enable individual projects to give regular updates on their work and to discuss and share their experiences with members of other project teams. The forum identified particular training needs. As a result, training in instructional design and in Moodle was delivered and made available to all staff at the Institute. Individual projects were also able to access support through e-learning clinics where support was provided for specific project related issues. An e-learning colloquium was held to provide all staff at ITT Dublin with an opportunity to see what the e-learning pilot projects achieved and to encourage participation in future pilot initiatives.

In addition the pilot phase has benefited significantly from the ITT Dublin staff development driven through the SIF 1 cycle project Collaborative Network for Innovation in Teaching and Inclusive Education. The aim of the project activity is to create a lively
and exciting staff development programme to provide opportunities for staff to enhance the learning opportunities for students.

Heads of Department and Section were consulted in January 2007 and a list of training requirements was compiled. Although the majority of requests were for pedagogical skills training, in the areas of writing learning outcomes, assessment, teaching in higher education for new staff, and teaching adults, a significant number of requests were received for training in using the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment, and competence building in how this can be a useful resource and communications tool for facilitating the staff-student relationship, and in the enhancement of MS Office skills such as enhancing PowerPoint presentations through the use of transitions and adding audio, and linking digital media to Moodle. The number of staff development events held in the Institute during 2007 was 39 incorporating a total of 421 attendees (201 different participants). The number of staff development events held in 2008 was 32 incorporating a total of 399 attendees (183 different participants).

5.1.3 Key Insights emerging from the e-Learning Pilot Projects
The recommendations set out below highlight the key insights gained from the pilot projects.

Key Insights:-

1. E-Learning can improve the teaching and learning experience.

2. E-learning can significantly improve staff/staff, staff/student and student/student collaboration.

3. The use of e-learning can improve student performance, motivation and attendance.

4. Technology must be an integral part of the teaching and learning of individual programmes from the outset.

5. The majority of students would welcome an increased integration of technology in the teaching and learning process.
6. Training needs of staff vary. Training must be delivered in time and meeting specific, identified training needs.

7. The development of materials is time consuming but worthwhile.

8. Successful use of Moodle requires dedicated technical, functional and administrative support.

The overriding conclusion which emerged from the pilot projects was that the use of e-learning technology definitely enhanced the teaching and learning process for both staff and students and that it was a worthwhile initiative to pursue.

The key issues emerging from the experience of undertaking the pilot projects revolved around the provision of adequate technical support, appropriate tailored training for staff and the need for proper scheduling of staff time to allow for the production of high quality support material on top of the demands of a regular lecturing timetable. Since completion of the pilot projects the Institute has employed a Learning Technologist to support staff who wish to integrate technology into their teaching and learning.

5.2 E-Learning - SIF 2 Flexible Learning Project (Summary extracted from project documentation)

The Head of Lifelong Learning represents the interests of the Institute on the Steering group for the sectoral Flexible Learning project funded under SIF 2.

A core aim of this collaborative project is to establish a branded initiative (Open Institute of Technology) to mainstream flexible learning at the Institutes of Technology, enabling the sector to deliver on learner and workforce development needs. Flexible learning opportunities developed will expand choice on what, when, where and how people learn. Flexible Learning involves anticipating, and responding to the ever-changing needs and expectations of potential learners and supports different styles of learning. Flexible learning incorporates a variety of media including written and audio materials, the Internet, disk-based software and video conferencing. The project which extends over 4 years has four identified phases of development and implementation.
Phase 1: Developmental Action Research and Learning

Sectoral Flexible Learning Entity
- Conduct and coordinate market research on:
  - Industry needs (leveraging other sectoral initiatives as appropriate)
  - Existing flexible learning capability in Ireland
  - Learner and staff needs in flexible learning environments
- Benchmark against international best practice
- Establish existing flexible learning capabilities in the Institutes
- Develop an adaptive and scaleable operating model for the sectoral entity with integrated feedback mechanisms between the sectoral entity and the individual Institutes
- Develop flexible learning pedagogy and instructional design training
- Develop quality assurance standards
- Recruit staffing resources

Institute-level
- Conduct regional market research
- Identify staff to be involved with the initiative
- Develop staff capacity in flexible learning pedagogy and instructional design

Cross-Institutional Collaboration
- Leverage and integrate learnings from projects approved in SIF 1 and other sectoral initiatives including the Accelerated Technician Programme, Development of Cross-sectoral Nursing Programme, Learning Innovation Network, and the National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR)
- Agree sector-wide flexible learning quality assurance standards and continuous improvement processes
Phase 2: Pilot and Initial Capacity Building

**Sectoral Flexible Learning Entity**
- Implement operating model
- Deliver flexible learning pedagogy and instructional design training to local Institute staff
- Work with Institutes to identify appropriate programmes for pilot and to convert them to flexible learning format in line with agreed quality assurance processes
- Deliver and evaluate pilot with all the institutes

**Institute-level**
- Develop staff capacity in flexible learning pedagogy and instructional design
- Agree programmes to be delivered based on industry and learner demand research
- Leverage existing local infrastructure to deliver pilot programmes

**Cross-Institutional Collaboration**
Deliver pilot, leveraging off projects approved in SIF 1 and other appropriate projects

Phase 3  Capacity Building and Delivery

**Sectoral Flexible Learning Entity**
- Conduct review post-pilot
- Apply learning from pilot phase, developing a common network for sharing learning and actions across the sector
- Work with Institutes to increase learner and staff supports
- Work with Institutes to convert courses to flexible learning format
- Develop marketing and learner recruitment strategies
- Develop core services, for example student induction

**Institute-level**
- Continue to develop staff capacity in flexible learning pedagogy and instructional design
• Agree programmes to be delivered based on industry and learner demand research
• Develop agreed flexible learning courses
• Leverage existing local infrastructure to deliver programmes (seeking sectoral entity support as necessary)

Cross-Institutional Collaboration
• Continue to engage with appropriate sectoral projects
• Explore further areas for collaboration, for example centralised applications processing and common technology platform

Phase 4 Consolidation and Sustainable Expansion

Sectoral Flexible Learning Entity
• Conduct review and apply learnings to date
• Implement sector-wide quality assurance standards and continuous improvement processes
• Continue to work with Institutes to increase capacity
• Deliver on marketing and learner recruitment strategies

Institute-level
• Continue to develop and deliver flexible programmes, developing local capability and contributing centrally as appropriate

Cross-Institutional Collaboration
• Agree and implement credit accumulation transfer protocols, accreditation and new awards
• Explore potential opportunities for collaboration with other parties and in other markets
Workforce development is becoming increasingly important both for business and industry. The latter need professional development to create a dynamic flexible workforce. Higher education institutions recognise that the work environment is rapidly changing, increasingly influenced by accelerating developments in information and communities technology and that new models of training and education are needed. ITT Dublin’s commitment to the Flexible Learning project will ensure the Institute builds capacity and capability to respond effectively to workplace needs.

5.3 Other NDLR related Activity within the Department

The department, facilitated by departmental head, played a central role in the NDLR evaluation 2008 by leading the research of Workpackage 3 ‘Communities of Practice’. The research report produced (in press) reported on the outcomes of systematic research carried out on the NDLR Communities of Practice (COPs). The research process provided a co-ordinator perspective of the opportunities and challenges currently faced by the COPs.

6.0 Summary of the Developments in Relation to the Provision of Lifelong Learning

1. Establishment of a dedicated Part-time Information Desk, centrally located with extended opening hours Monday – Thursday (9am-9pm) and from 9-5pm on Friday. Student satisfaction with the administration of the department has increased from 55% (good/excellent 2005/6) to 73% (good/excellent 2007/8).

2. Redesign of the Institute Website to provide easier access for stakeholders to find information about lifelong learning opportunities at ITT Dublin. This development is particularly important in light of the increasing numbers of individuals using the website to access information about lifelong learning at ITT Dublin. (In 2005/6 32% of part-time students used the web to find out about courses at ITT Dublin. This figure had increased to 45% in 2007/8).
3. Availability of module summary forms for all modules on all courses offered by each department. Student can access information on the key learning outcomes of each of the modules they are studying and can make informed decisions in relation to module choice and whether or not they have the prior learning that would enable them apply for an exemption.

4. Development of the provision for online applications. (This was available to professional institute courses in 2007 extended to all courses in 2008).

5. Introduction of an extended induction session for all first year part-time students prior to the start of the academic year. The induction incorporates: Health and Safety, Library, Orientation, Opportunities to meet department and academic staff, complete registration and student card allocation. The session also provided an opportunity for students to meet and get to know fellow students prior to starting their programme of study.

6. Revised induction process for associate staff (in partnership with the Human Resources Department and the production of an Associate staff handbook).

7. Improved communication capacity through the introduction of e.g. room signage, plasma screens, text messaging.

8. Revised process for RPL that enables students to get recognition for both prior accredited and experiential learning.


10. Provision of financial support for students e.g. HEA subsidy (FLASHE and FLITE), MAP (GMP), FAS One Step UP (Computing and Engineering), Social Welfare subsidy (ITT Dublin)

11. Facilitation of student access and progression by the introduction of Access English test provision and the development of minor awards.
12. Improved marketing of courses including:
   - revised approach to part-time prospectus design
   - increased number of advisory evenings
   - sponsorship of Which Course EXPO 2008
   - increased visits to employer premises and updating employer database.

13. Improved links with community groups. The department in partnership with the Access office played a pivotal role in the development of the Tallaght Adult Learners Network (TALENT). The role of TALENT is:
   - To promote and celebrate adult learning
   - To provide opportunities for learners to access information relating to adult education
   - To facilitate networking opportunities for providers of adult education

   Talent has been nominated for a 2008 AONTAS Star award.

14. The Department of Lifelong Learning takes a proactive approach in promoting part-time programmes at ITT Dublin. A yearly prospectus, detailing all the courses available, delivery timetable and costs, is produced and made available from the beginning of March each year. A number of open/advisory evenings are held (January, April, June and September) during the year. These advisory evenings present an excellent opportunity for individuals to discuss programme options in detail with the Programme Leader, Head of Department or with a representative from the relevant Professional Institute. Programmes are also promoted through each Academic School by direct discussion with industry. Other promotional approaches used are:

   - Print Media: primarily local or regional newspapers, educational supplements, and flyer drops
   - Audio/visual media: use of television and radio advertisements e.g. Setanta TV advertisement December 2007
   - Event promotions – ITT Dublin sponsored the education section of the “WhichCourse Expo September 2008”
• Road Signage including roadside banners and AA route guidance
• Website
• Promotional stands are also operated or supported at a number of significant events and locations, including the FAS Opportunities, Public Sector Open Days and at Company Open Days in Intel, Wyeth and Hewlett Packard, Promotional stands are also placed in Tallaght Hospital, Library, Council and Tax revenue offices and on key weekends in The Square Shopping Centre in Tallaght.

15. As part of the Institute’s commitment to leading edge workforce development, the department has invested in state of the art physical infrastructure and technology. This is centred around the Icon Court Workforce development facility. This training suite has the following capability:
• Accommodate up to 25 participants
• State of the art AV facilities
• Full video conferencing capability
• Associated breakout room
• Proximity to catering and other facilities.
Investment in this facility enables ITT Dublin to provide a learning environment and consequent training experience which is professional and business like distinct from a traditional school or college environment.

16. Collation and analysis of data in relation to part-time programme financials to inform the decision making process. In terms of student number and revenue generation there has been significant improvement in the scope and quality of data available in terms of enhancing the decision making process.

17. Timetabling of part-time provision now managed through CMIS

18. New student card printer facilities in place.

19. Clearly defined roles for the Department of Lifelong Learning, the Part-time Registrars Office and the Academic Schools (see Section 1.4)
6.1 Key Developments for the Future

The department of lifelong learning has significantly enhanced provision of the lifelong learning for part-time students at ITT Dublin since its establishment in 2006. However a number of developments were identified that need to address into the future.

These include:

- Further expansion of the range of part-time courses.

- Introduction of increased flexibility in a greater range of part-time programmes in partnership with all Academic Schools

- Further development of student academic supports. Including the provision of a Headstart maths programme and the introduction of Moodle support for part-time students.

- Further development of student financial supports for programmes not currently benefiting from the availability of financial subsidies.

- Further provision of access and progression routes using minor, supplemental awards in partnership with Academic Schools

- Development of the capacity of RPL including provision of trained workplace advisors, mentors and clearly document student guidelines, e.g., introduction of an exemption workshop.

- Provide staff development opportunities to enable staff to:
  — facilitate recognition of prior learning
  — deliver effectively in the workplace environment

- In partnership with Academic Schools and the Registrars Office establish a
quality assured process for accrediting learning at work.

- Build effective partnerships with business and industry in line with the targets of the REAP project.

- Introduce a Customer Management Relationship System within the department.

- Address the issues raised by students in partnership with Academic schools and service departments as appropriate.

- Continue to promote Lifelong Learning throughout the Institute.

This report has highlighted that ITT Dublin has made significant progress with regard to the provision of Lifelong Learning. The objectives set out in the Institute Strategic Plan (2005-2008) have largely been achieved.

Whilst there has been significant development, there is no room for complacency if the Institute is to sustain the positive momentum generated. The National Economy is in a state of unprecedented flux. The educational sector will not escape the consequential shock waves arising from the sharp economic downturn. This situation presents both challenges and opportunities for ITT Dublin.

On the challenge side of the equation, it will be necessary for all departments to fully buy into lifelong learning as a key business driver within the Institute. Responsibility for the provision of lifelong learning in all its aspects must be fully and meaningfully shared across the Institute.

It will also be a significant challenge for ITT Dublin to maintain the current growth in part-time student numbers given the overall sharp contraction in the economy. To counteract this, more work is required on providing access routes and financial supports for students. This will require action both at a local level and nationally through negotiation and representations.
The changing student demographics will also be a source of opportunity. There will undoubtedly be substantial numbers of individuals who will require upskilling and retraining. ITT Dublin should position itself as a prime provider. This will require the Institute to become more adaptable and responsive in terms of being able to react quickly to changing trends and needs in the national and local economy. The creation of strengthened cross departmental models of partnership will form a vital foundation in this regard.

If the correct steps are taken and significant cross departmental buy-in is achieved, then the progress achieved over the last four years will be sustained and will provide a springboard for further developments. In the next developmental period, Lifelong Learning has the potential to make an ever increasing contribution to ITT Dublin and to become a mainstay in the overall sustainability and viability of the Institute.
SOP’s

DR030 - Fee Reduction: Staff Member
DR031 - SOP for organising and advertising of Part-Time Programme
DR032 - SOP for production of application forms for Part-Time Programmes
DR033 - SOP for production of Guide to Part-Time Programmes
DR034 - SOP for distribution of Guide to Part-Time Programmes and accompanying literature
DR035 - SOP for organising Advisory Evenings for Part-Time Programmes
DR036 - Procedures for timetabling and allocation of rooms for the part-time programme
DR037 - Procedures for the Management of the Part-time Office
DR038 - Part Time Programme Induction Nights
DR039 - Application/Admissions/Payment/Registration Part-Time Program
DR040 - Fee Instalments for Part-Time Students
DR041 - Fee Concession: Social Welfare Recipient

** Some of the above SOP’s have been updated

Draft SOP’s (Draft titles currently circulated for comment)

LLL001 - The Provision of Academic Support to Part Time Students
LLL002 – The Access English Process for students who wish to apply for an place on a Part Time Course
LLL003 – The procedure for cancelling a class
LLL004 – Producing hard copies of class lists
LLL005 - Communication with Associate Staff members
LLL006 – Communication with part time students
LLL007 – Database Maintenance and Management for Mailing list
LLL008 – Dealing with Complaints
LLL009 – Dealing with Part Time Student Queries
LLL010 – SOP for FAS Claim Forms for Part Time Students
LLL011 – Communicating Feedback from Student Survey
LLL012 – Garda Vetting Process for Full and Part Time Students
LLL013 – Health & Safety
LLL014 – Electronic File Naming and Management
LLL015 – Provision of Maths and Academic English Support for Part Time Students
LLL016 – Student Card Issuing Procedure
LLL017 – Taking a payment from Part Time Students
LLL018 – Updating Part Time content on the Institute Website
LLL019 – Issuing of PO Numbers & procedure when Invoices are received
LLL020 – Procedure for Part Time Students claiming Exemptions
LLL021 – Declaration of Payment of Fee’s by Companies
LLL022 – Setup of Fee’s on Banner
LLL023 – SOP for HEA Subsidy claims for Part Time Students
LLL024 – SOP for room booking (electronic) From February 2009
LLL025 – SOP for ensuring timely fee payment from part-time students.
Please refer to attached file. PT Student Survey 2008 Appendix 2
### Audit of Student Services at Third Level Institutes

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### Communication Mechanisms
- Student and Adult Education Office  
  - n/a x x  
- Access to Lecturers/Tutors  
  - x x x a x x x x x  
- SMS Text Messaging Service  
  - x o o x x x x x  
- Email Messaging Service  
  - x o o x x x x x

### Equal application of Institute’s Regulations
- Appeal times  
  - x x n/a x x n/a x x x x x x x x -  
- Exams  
  - x x x x x x x x x x x x -  
- Semesterization  
  - x x x - - x x x x x x x x -  
- Timetables  
  - x o o x o o x x x x x x - 

### Parity in Semester Exam Schedules
- Parity in Exemptions  
  - x x n/a x x n/a x x x x x x x x - x x n/a

### A/RPL (Exemptions) System
- x x n/a x t x n/a x x - IP IP S x - n/a

### Student Registration & Fees
- Paper  
  - x x x x x x x x - x x x x x x - x x x  
- Online  
  - o o x o o o x x - o o x x x x - # x x x

### SECTION 5 - Miscellaneous Student Services
- Clubs and Societies  
  - x x n/a x x n/a x x x x x x x x - x x x x o - x x n/a
- Student Union  
  - x x* x* x x* x* x x - x x x x o - x x* x*  
- Operates Class Rep System  
  - x o n/a x o n/a x x - x x n/a x o - x o n/a

**Data Codes**
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<td>Restricted Hours (i.e. 9-6 p.m. approx)</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>Reduced Service (not all facilities available at evenings or weekend)</td>
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<td>Applicable to fulltime Mature students only</td>
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<td>Accessed through funding application</td>
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Elearning Pilot Initiatives at ITT Dublin
2006/2007

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<th>Department</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Team Members</th>
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<td>Computing</td>
<td>Formative eAssessment learning object to support self directed learning</td>
<td>The initial objective was to create an integrated distributed PBL enquiry-based collaborative e-learning application. (IDEA): This project was to integrate mobile phone, Web (Moodle) and class-based PBL enquiry-led collaborative learning. The application was to contain the following reusable learning objects: - a J2ME mobile PBL application that will provide learners with a virtual PBL classroom; - a mobile/online PBL journal and a PBL community forum; - both online and offline synchronous learning content. As many learners face long commutes to college, learning content was to be provided by downloadable Podcasts and online videos for a small number of James Doody, Roisin Faherty, Enda Lee</td>
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6 Project teams were supported throughout the pilot. An e learning forum was set up, to enable individual projects to give regular updates on their work and to discuss and share their experiences with members of other projects teams. The forum identified particular training needs, as a result training, for example, in instructional design and in Moodle was delivered and made available to all staff members. Individual projects were also able to access support through e learning clinics where support was provided for specific project related issues. An e-learning colloquium was organised to provide all staff at ITT Dublin with an opportunity to see what the e-learning pilot projects achieved and to encourage participation in future pilot initiatives.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Team Members</th>
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<td>Computing</td>
<td>Incorporation of virtual classroom environment including virtual white board as a component within moodle</td>
<td>Roisin Faherty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>This project aimed to use Moodle delivered screen-casts (a video showing only a computer screen) to demonstrate computer programming tools for first year students. Students would be offered the screen-casts as part of their introductory module in Software Development. This module is taught using Problem Based Learning and has a challenging practical component requiring use of professional development tools. The screen-casts would show the tools in use. The theme of each screen-cast was hoped to show the solution to that week's problem in the PBL lab.</td>
<td>Stephen Howell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>This project was designed to aid and support Year 2 students of European Studies prior to their Erasmus year abroad in a variety of ways. Firstly, it was designed to encourage autonomous learning in the Target Language and secondly it aimed to consolidate cultural awareness among students in advance of a year abroad. In addition, it was envisaged that this would be a holistic educational experience for all those involved. Another aspiration for this project was that students would be further equipped with transferable skills such as research skills, IT skills, enhanced fluency in the Target Language, critical thinking as a result of this.</td>
<td>Ms. Angela Feeney, Dr. Bronach Gollogly, Ms. Marcela Nievas, Dr. Riana Walsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing &amp; Business Computing</td>
<td>Use of quizzes in Moodle as a formative feedback mechanism for first year Business Students in IS module</td>
<td>This project aimed to use the Quiz component of Moodle to facilitate frequent assessment of the students' knowledge of their course material, for a first year student group studying Information Systems. The module involves 1 hour theory and 2 hours lab work per week. The proposal was to provide regular (either weekly or at the end of each topic) quizzes to the student group on their most recently covered material. These quizzes were to be conducted at the start of each lab session, the aim being to encourage ongoing rather than end-of-term review of course material, and to provide a greater motivation to attend the theory sessions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mech &amp; Elec Eng.</td>
<td>Delivery of key skills tests for Mathematics in Moodle</td>
<td>To develop a large number of categories of multi-choice Mathematics questions in Moodle. Questions to be used to create “Key Skills Tests” for School of Engineering students on previously taught material that students must know. These tests to be taken throughout the semester till a competency threshold is reached. Marks for the test to contribute to continuous assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanical Eng.</td>
<td>Development of a set of reusable learning units for</td>
<td>Development of a set of reusable units for teaching communications to year 1 engineering Students. The reusable elements were to consist of a series of learning units.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications module</td>
<td>interrelated projects based around the learning paradigm of Problem Based Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery of practical specific video lessons in Applied Biology using Moodle</td>
<td>Development and delivery of practical session through video to support teaching and learning in Applied Biology.</td>
<td>Dr. Colin Murphy, Dr. Gerard Colleran</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of Drug Delivery Module on Moodle</td>
<td>Development of Drug Delivery Module on Moodle</td>
<td>Dr. Ed Carey, Dr. Adrienne Fleming</td>
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<td><strong>Lifelong Learning /Humanities/IT/BIM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing a Model of Best Practice for supporting Video Conferencing as a Teaching and Learning Tool</td>
<td>Developing a Model of Best Practice for supporting Video Conferencing as a Teaching and Learning Tool</td>
<td>Finbarr Malone, Susan Steele, Terry Maguire</td>
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