

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Template Version 2.0 - 31.05.2017

Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training

Part 1

Provider name	Carlow College
Date of site visit	14/3/2018
Date of report	13/4/18

Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	M.A. (Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care)
	Award	Master of Arts
	Credit	90
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions¹ OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Embedded programme	Title	N/A
	Award	
	Credit	
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	

¹ Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude "Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions" where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

Further, in exceptional cases the 'special conditions' may be used to identify parts of the application that are considered satisfactory on a stand-alone basis. For example, an application might propose a programme to be provided at two locations but the independent evaluation report may find the application satisfactory on condition that it be provided only at one specified location and not at the other. These conditions will not however be used to recommend that QQI can be satisfied with a programme conditional on a different QQI award (e.g. at a lower NFQ level or having a different CAS award title) being sought than the one identified in the application.

Evaluators

Evaluators		
Name	Role	Affiliation
Prof Margaret Kelleher	Panel Chair	Chair of Anglo-Irish Literature and Drama, UCD
Dr Michael Tobin	Panel Secretary	Head of Lifelong Learning, Athlone IT
Prof Fred Powell	Academic Expert	School of Applied Social Studies, UCC
Dr Anne Cleary	Academic Expert	Lecturer, Geary Institute, UCD
Dr Kevin Lalor	Academic Expert	Assistant Head of School of Languages, Law & Social Sciences, DIT
Mr William O'Rourke	Industry Expert	Regional Manager Children's Residential Services Dublin North East Tusla - Child and Family Agency
Ailbhe Rogers	Learner Representative	PhD Student (History), Maynooth University

Principal Programme

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
Carlow College, College St, Carlow	16	9

Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)	Date of first intake	September 2018
	Date of last intake	September 2022
Maximum number of annual intakes	1 intake every second year	
Maximum total number of learners per intake	16	
Programme duration (months from start to completion)	24	
Target learner groups	<p>Minimum Entry Requirements: Admission to this course is based on a competitive selection procedure. Applicants must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold a primary degree (Honours Bachelor, Level 8) in Applied Social Studies or equivalent; 2. Be registered or eligible to register as a professional Social Care Worker; <p style="text-align: center;">Or</p> <p>Be professionally qualified in a discipline other than social care and have at least two years' professional practice experience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Be in employment in a human services agency as a manager, team leader or front-line practitioner; 4. Satisfactorily pass an interview process. <p>(Applicants who do not satisfy the above academic criteria may, in exceptional circumstances, be accepted onto the course if the Course Selection Board is satisfied that they have the ability to complete the course and are well placed to make good use of it).</p> <p>Learners should be experienced and qualified Social Care Workers currently engaged in Social Care practice.</p> <p>Applicants must be eligible to register as Social Care Workers in line with CORU guidelines.</p>	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland	
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Part-time	
The teaching and learning modalities	<p>Combination of face to face workshops/lectures and online supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Seminars • Experiential Group • Visiting Lectures • Clinical Workshops • Residential Weekend • Visit of Observation • Individual Tutoring • Research Supervision 	

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	<p>This unique multi-disciplinary course is for experienced child and Social Care practitioners currently working with emotionally troubled children, adults and their families in a wide variety of settings. It is taught over two years, one day a week, and has a maximum intake of 16 students. Originally set up with the intention of promoting a quality of child-centred and therapeutic professional residential child care in Ireland, the course has attracted professionals working in a wide variety of settings.</p> <p>The course has a strong focus on the therapeutic community model of practice, and its application in different agencies and settings. The course is based on the 'Matching Principle' meaning that the training situation should be as close a match as possible to the practice situation; so it is conducted as much as possible to reflect 'best practice' in a therapeutic community work setting. The emphasis is on co-operative rather than on competitive learning. There is a continuous overlap between personal, professional and academic learning and opportunities are provided for personal and professional development.</p>
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	Level 9 and/or upwards in cognate area
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	16:1 8:1 Professional Workshops 1:1 Tutorials and Research Supervision

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG20136	Master of Arts in Therapeutic Child Care	2017

Embedded programme – N/A

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners

Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)	Date of first intake	
	Date of last intake	
Maximum number of annual intakes		
Maximum total number of learners per intake		
Programme duration (months from start to completion)		
Target learner groups		
Approved countries for provision		
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time		

The teaching and learning modalities	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date

Module² - N/A

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners

Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)	Date of first intake	
	Date of last intake	
Maximum number of annual intakes		
Maximum total number of learners per intake		
Programme duration (months from start to completion)		
Target learner groups		
Approved countries for provision		
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time		
The teaching and learning modalities		
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)		
Summary of specifications for teaching staff		
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff		

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date

² This only needs to be completed where modules may be offered independently. Add more subsections if there are more than one modules proposed to lead to QQI awards.

Programmes being replaced

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG20136	Master of Arts in Therapeutic Child Care	2017

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION REPORT

Evaluators completing this report are expected to understand **Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training 2016**.

Note that in making its determination QQI

- Will consider the findings of the validation process including the **independent evaluation report** along with the applicant's response to this report;
- May consider any other information received in respect of the process;
- May consider an account of the conduct of the process and its context noting any concerns or complaints expressed by the applicant.

The independent evaluation report must address whether the programme meets the validation criteria in general and in detail.

The independent evaluation report must, for each programme, embedded programme and module that leads to a QQI award:

- (1) Outline the salient characteristics of the proposed programmes (Part 1);
- (2) Outline whether and how the QQI validation criteria and sub-criteria are addressed by the application for validation citing evidence from the application documentation and other findings (e.g. from the site visit);
- (3) Address whether the principal programme, and any embedded programme, and any module proposed to lead to a minor award, meets the validation criteria in general and in detail. (Part 2 and Part 3)
- (4) Include one of the following overall conclusions in light of the applicable validation policies and criteria:
 - Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3 of **Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training**);
 - Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
 - Not satisfactory.
- (5) Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. **If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence.** A "Not Satisfactory" recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

All independent evaluation reports are required to provide a rationale for any proposed special conditions and recommendations to the provider as well as the overall conclusion.

The report may also propose recommendations for consideration by the provider.

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).

Part 1A, does not normally require completion, and only needs to be addressed when the proposed new programme extends of the scope of provision.

After a provider has had a programme validated it may seek to extend the approved scope of provision by applying for validation of a programme that extends the scope. A more elaborate evaluation process may be required when scope is to be extended. This may require the provider to first modify its quality assurance procedures to extend their scope and have these approved by QQI.

Validation alone may extend the scope to a limited extent (e.g. within the provider's existing approved QA procedures).

Comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme.

Part 2 Evaluation against the validation criteria

QQI's validation criteria and sub-criteria are copied here in grey panels.

Criterion 1

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.	
b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.	
c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. ³	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme.

Principal programme

Carlow College meets the prerequisites of Section 44(7) of the 2012 Act. The panel met with the President who confirmed orally and in writing the veracity of all the information provided and confirmed that all the applicable criteria have been met.

Embedded programme⁴

N/A

Module leading to a QQI award⁵

N/A

³ This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

⁴ Add more subsections if there are more than one embedded programmes.

⁵ Add more subsections if there are more than one modules proposed to lead to QQI awards.

Criterion 2

The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
 - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
 - (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
 - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
 - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.⁶
 - (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
- h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
- i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.⁷

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

Detailed discussion took place between the panel and the programme team with respect to this criterion and the panel is satisfied that criterion 2 is fully addressed for this programme.

The programme aims and objectives are clear and consistent and are expressed plainly.

The programme title is consistent with the QQI award sought and is otherwise legitimate. The panel is satisfied that the rationale for the change in the title is appropriate and supported by the structure and content of the programme. In discussing the programme title, the programme team explained that following extensive consultation with graduates, learners and employers, this title would accurately reflect the leadership competencies that are at the core of the programme content and the fact that leading therapeutic care extends beyond the child care sector across the professional Social Care field. **The panel recommends that the new title of MA (Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care) be put forward for validation.**

Members of the provider's course team explained the rationale behind the programme with particular reference to 'the matching principle'. The course leader provided explanation and evidence to support the teaching and

⁶ Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

⁷ Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

learning approach. Evidence of consultation with key stakeholders was considered by the panel as providing strong evidence for this programme to be viewed as an advanced practice programme.

The panel, noting the mapping exercise where each of the MIPLOS was placed against the appropriate Social Care Award Standard, is satisfied that Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes have been clearly and explicitly expressed and are consistent with the QQI Award Standards. Furthermore, Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes are explicitly specified in all module descriptors throughout Section 6 of the modified programme documentation.

Criterion 3

The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

- a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.⁸
- b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
 - (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
 - (ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
 - (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
 - (iv) There is evidence⁹ of learner demand for the programme.
 - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant¹⁰.
 - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.¹¹
- c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
- e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The programme concept, implementation strategy and interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The review of the existing programme undertook a comprehensive analysis of the views of learners, graduates, employers, external stakeholders, programme lecturing staff and other relevant staff members. The review also included reference to CORU as the statutory regulatory body with responsibility for the profession of Social Care.

Although the programme is in many respects unique in Ireland and the UK, it shares features with a range of other postgraduate programmes. Comparisons with other programmes provided the panel with an insight into how the programmes attributes are comparable to those of programmes at a similar level.

⁸ Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.

⁹ This might be predictive or indirect.

¹⁰ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

¹¹ There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

The programme is distinctive in its focus on therapeutic care. Its Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes and Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes correspond to QQI Award Standards beyond level 8 to level 9.

The need for advanced level practitioners and leadership capacity has already been identified by HIQA, TUSLA, IASCE, and Social Care Ireland. There is evidence that third level colleges are responding to this need by providing specialist, leadership and advanced practice options at post-graduate level.

The review mechanisms include evaluation processes with learners, programme staff and external stakeholders. The programme will be updated annually in the light of Programme Board meetings, Monitoring Reports and the reports of the External Examiners and the views of the Academic Council. Programme review mechanisms are outlined in the College's QA policy. There will be a mid-cycle review every two and a half years.

Some discussion regarding the demand for the programme took place, and, whilst acknowledging the financial constraints within the professional field, the panel are satisfied with the evidence provided.

Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

- a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied¹².
- b) Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.
- c) If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR¹³) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
- d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
- e) The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the **recognition of prior learning** for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.
- f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
 - (i) Reflects the core *intended programme learning outcomes*, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es).
 - (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
 - (iii) Has long-lasting significance.
- g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The panel considers that the Information about the programme, including programme-specific criteria, is set out in various documentation and modes including the relevant pages on the College website, the College prospectus and the Programme Handbook.

The learner access, transfer and progression policies and procedures of the College apply to the Programme. The panel views the policies and procedures as being consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training.

¹² Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings

- Progression and transfer routes
- Entry arrangements
- Information provision

¹³ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

Criterion 5

The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose	
<p>a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.</p> <p>b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.</p> <p>c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes.</p> <p>d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.</p> <p>e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles¹⁴.</p> <p>f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.</p> <p>g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.</p> <p>i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.</p> <p>j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.¹⁵</p>	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The reviewed spread of learner workload is aligned with QQI and NQI guidelines regarding credit allocation.

This programme develops the student's knowledge and skill in the use of a variety of therapeutic approaches to the treatment of children and adults who have suffered emotional and psychological hurts, especially those that are based on a psychodynamic understanding of human development and of the therapeutic alliance. The psychodynamic approach to therapeutic work involves acknowledging the inner cognitive, emotional and fantasy world of the client, reflecting on their developmental experiences, maintaining a focus on their effect and their expression of emotion, and concentrating on current interpersonal relationships, including therapy relationships. The course presents and promotes the use of planned or intentional environment therapy and the therapeutic community approach.

The panel were provided with an Experiential Learning and Course Handbook which outlined clear progressive structuring and support for learners. There is consistency and a systematic approach taken to credit allocation and learner effort across the programme reviewed.

¹⁴ This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.

In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.

¹⁵ If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

The programme is holistic in nature and learners are guided in integrating their learning with their practice through an evolving process of personal/professional development. Credits are indicative of bundles of learner effort; the shape of the programme, based around the 'working day' of the therapeutic community is preserved across the programme. The emphasis shifts to research and dissertation related activity in Year 2 and this is reflected in the allocation of credits across the modules. **The panel recommends that research modules be revised and updated to include a greater variety of methodologies and focus on both qualitative and quantitative methods. The panel recommends that the variation in word count for the Dissertation (10,000 – 15,000) be tightened to ensure more consistency in student output.**

The 'Visit of Observation' and the Residential Workshops are integral to the overall programme and the 'student effort' impacts across all modules as both provide an opportunity for integrated learning and reflective practice.

The programme duration was finalised on the basis of required learner effort with regard to achieving the programme learning outcomes. The contact time at each stage is expressed in module descriptors and the Programme Stage Schedules. Contact hours are reflective of the European Credit Transfer System as agreed at Bologna in 1999 corresponding to learner effort and the award standard level.

Criterion 6

There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

- a) The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).
- b) The programme has an identified complement of staff¹⁶ (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
- c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.
- d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development¹⁷ opportunities¹⁸.
- e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
- f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

Satisfactory	Comment
Yes	There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

A systematic approach was taken to the allocation of staff for the programme. The panel engaged with the specialised staff that form the core team for this programme.

The qualifications and experience required, as specified within the programme documentation, was evidenced in the CVs of existing staff – almost all at doctoral level or completing doctorates. The panel sought clarification on the average contact hours for full-time staff and career progression pathways for staff. **The panel recommends that the College introduce research leave for staff, including those post doctorate, to enable academic publication and larger-scale research activity.**

Carlow College referred to the recent introduction of the workload allocation policy and its attempt to balance workloads in terms of teaching, research and service. **The panel recommends that the provider should also consider as a matter of priority, a career progression pathway for staff.**

¹⁶ Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme's provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

¹⁷ Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

¹⁸ Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff's professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

The college *Performance Management Review Policy* and *Carlow College Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy* provided the panel with details of management and support of staff performance.

Criterion 7

There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

- a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).
- b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
 - (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
 - (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
 - (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
 - (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
 - (v) technical support
 - (vi) administrative support
 - (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable
- c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).
- d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
 - (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
 - (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
- e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	There are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

Criterion 7 is fully addressed for this programme and that there are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned.

The panel saw at first hand the physical resources of the college. The panel toured lecture halls, libraries, archives, Students' Union and student recreation facilities, Academic Administration, Academic Resources, dining hall, learner accommodation. The College maintains a continuous programme of maintenance and renewal of the College buildings, the College Campus, and the College facilities.

The panel meeting featured discussion on library facilities and the availability and expansion of online resources for learners. **The panel recommends that staff act as more active mediators in making up-to-date resources available and known to students.** There was further discussion on the evolution of IT facilities with Carlow College noting the introduction of Moodle and Office 365 to allow learners more access and cloud storage, a college email for all learners and an updated infrastructure in the IT hardware network and firewalls have recently been implemented and allows for more scaling in the future. The panel queried the provision of staff training on information literacies and there was also discussion on digital strategies and the need to keep up-to-date with current trends in the area of mobile devices. **The panel recommends the identification of a clear minimum requirement for staff in their use of Moodle and Turnitin.**

An outline five-year plan has been provided for the programme. The panel met with the President and Director of Operations to address the five year plan and the panel are satisfied that Carlow College has the resources to cover any deficit that may arise. Plans to address a likely deficit are in place and the College has the financial resources to cover any deficit that may accrue.

Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners	
a) The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.	
b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.	
c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The panel is satisfied that criterion 8 is fully addressed for this programme and that the learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The panel was provided with the supporting documentation (Course Handbook and Experiential Group Assessment and Dissertation Handbook) that expand on the overall teaching and learning environment Discussion and explanation took place with the college team. The 'Matching Principle', meaning that the training situation should be as close a match as possible to the practice situation; so it is conducted as much as possible to reflect 'best practice' in a therapeutic community work setting is a strong reference point throughout the document and its modules. The panel were particularly impressed with the Dissertation Handbook and suggested that it be used as an exemplar for all programmes.

Learner interaction is a core element of the programme ethos. Specifically, Section 8:5.9 outlines the role of the Course Consultant (retained by but external to the college), who provides a support base for the holding staff team so that learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme. The panel acknowledged the strong connections between the core teaching team and the wider professional field.

The college's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy provides a contemporary academic environment that enables the programme to meet objective higher education quality standards. The college's ongoing commitment to improving its physical, technological, academic and administrative resources, outlined in the implementation section of the Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022 ensures a stable but dynamic learning environment for this programme.

Criterion 9

<p>There are sound teaching and learning strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes. b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes. c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload). d) Learning is monitored/supervised. e) Individualised guidance, support¹⁹ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme. 	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	There are sound teaching and learning strategies

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

The ethos throughout the programme is that of participative and reflective learning. There is an emphasis on the connections between personal, professional and academic learning, and also on themes of empowerment and anti-oppressive practice. The course is underpinned with a psychodynamic framework. All of the assessed work draws on students' practice experience and requires the integration of theory into practice.

Given the innovative nature of the programme content as it pertains to current Child Care practice in Ireland, it is recognised that student participation in the course and the completion of assessment material bring with them tasks that may challenge and confront existing approaches that are in use in their workplace. Assessment of work therefore takes account of each individual student's work context through rewarding reflective learning, awareness of processes and integration of theory and practice. The panel noted the particular challenges in the development of assessment criteria of a programme of this kind, and were happy that clear supports and guidance regarding assessments were in place.

Carlow College has a Teaching and Learning strategy that is learner centred and allows learners to take ownership of their own learning. The panel meeting featured discussion on the Institute-wide *Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy (2018-2023)*. This strategy identifies objectives in the areas of curriculum design and providing supports for good practice in teaching, learning, assessment and feedback. The panel queried whether there was an implementation plan in place for the strategy. The panel were informed that a draft Implementation plan has been drawn up by the Teaching and Learning Committee which identifies both immediate and longer-term actions and assigns responsibility for the implementation of these actions. The implementation plan is awaiting discussion and agreement at the next Academic Council meeting. Improving the use of technology/technology assisted teaching is part of that process. The Teaching and Learning Committee is aware of current best practice in this area and offers CPD opportunities for staff. **The panel recommends that the Implementation Plan be finalised and have clear milestones and measures for regular review of the implementation of individual components.**

The panel meeting featured discussion on the mechanisms available for student feedback e.g. student effectiveness questionnaires, end of year programme evaluations and turnaround time for student feedback on assignments. **The panel recommends that each programme take greater control of student feedback measures.**

¹⁹ Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies	
a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i> ²⁰ b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme. ²¹ d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning. e) There is a satisfactory written programme assessment strategy for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules. ²² f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable. g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results. h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award. ²³	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	There are sound assessment strategies.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

A programme assessment strategy is in place and is informed by the Carlow College Regulations in Relation to Assessment and Standards, and Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. The teaching approach adopted on the programme is seminar and small group based. In this milieu the community of students and staff together can work at both a cognitive level, exploring theories and methods that inform excellent therapeutic practice, and at an experiential level, examining and learning from what happens between them in the here and now.

The overall ethos of the programme was explained as being formative. There is an ethos of participative and reflective learning throughout the programme with an emphasis on the connections between personal, professional and academic learning, and also on themes of empowerment and anti-oppressive practice. The course is underpinned with a psychodynamic framework. All of the assessed work draws on learners' practice experience and requires the integration of theory and practice.

²⁰ See the section on transitional arrangements.

²¹ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

²² The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

²³ If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

- a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.
- b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
- c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
- d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
- e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
- f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.
- g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
- h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities²⁴.
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*²⁵ and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.
- j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

Learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it. The individual tutor system provides an opportunity to identify supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs through referral to the Academic Resource Office, with reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities or other difficulties that may impact on their work or progression. The panel meeting featured discussion on the role of the Essay Doctor and writing workshops that are offered to learners. **The panel recommends that this could be built upon further to educate students in diverse modes and registers of writing, reflecting changing requirements of current workplaces.**

The Programme Handbook sets out arrangements regarding the personal, professional and educational development of the programme. There is a recognition that as learners and staff go about making this learning experience work, they inevitably encounter many of the organisational, group and personal difficulties and conflicts that are similar to those encountered in any care setting. Particular attention is paid through the

²⁴ For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²⁵ See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

structure of the working day to recognise and to use these difficulties as opportunities for learning, and to explore in an experiential and meaningful way the concept of opportunity-led work that is so important to a therapeutic milieu. A Course Consultant (retained by but external to the college), in turn, provides a support base for the holding staff team so that learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme.

Criterion 12

The programme is well managed

- a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
- b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
- c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
- d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.
- e) Quality assurance²⁶ is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
- f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
- g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
- h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	The programme is well managed.

Principal programme

The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.

Carlow College has, throughout its documentation, articulated the role of programme staff, the Programme Board Chair, the Office of the Registrar, the Academic Council and External Examiners. The programme is fully staffed. It has the physical resources to meet its needs and its Management procedures are coherently minuted. The programmes QA procedures are fully in line with QQI's updated statutory QA guidelines. All the College's Quality Assurance procedures are published on the college website.

Furthermore part 10 (evaluation against the validation criteria) in Section 8 offers a helpful overview of all 12 criteria. The panel is content that Criterion 12 is fully addressed for this programme and that the programme is well managed.

The panel wish to acknowledge that the documentation received from the College greatly assisted the panel in its task.

²⁶ See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Overall recommendation to QQI

1.1 Principal programme

Select one	
Satisfactory	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination); ²⁷
	Not satisfactory.

1.1.1 Reasons²⁸ for the overall recommendation

The programme documentation (including supporting documentation) has been thoroughly reviewed by the panel. Programme material was made available to all panel members three weeks before the site visit and preliminary comments were submitted by panel members to the Chair and Secretary in the week before the site visit.

The site visit commenced with a panel pre-meeting on the evening of 13th March 2018. A full day's meeting with the programme team and stakeholders was held on the 14th March 2018. The panel concluded that the proposed programme is satisfactory. Recommendations were issued to the College to which the programme team responded. The College forwarded a formal response to the recommendations and amended programme documentation to the Independent Panel for consideration.

The Independent Panel have evaluated the programme against the validation criteria (and sub-criteria) and considers the proposed programme, MA (Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care), to be satisfactory and recommends the programme to QQI for revalidation.

1.2 Embedded programme – N/A

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination); ²⁹

²⁷ Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude "Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions" where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

²⁸ Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A "Not Satisfactory" recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

²⁹ Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the

	Not satisfactory.
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1.2.1 Reasons³⁰ for the overall recommendation

1.3 Module – N/A

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination), ³¹
	Not satisfactory.

1.3.1 Reasons³² for the overall recommendation

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

Not applicable

Summary of recommendations to the provider

Below are the recommendations issued by the panel to the provider, with the provider’s response noted underneath each one. The response in depth to these recommendations can be found in Carlow College’s document entitled to ‘Response to Recommendations of QQI Independent Panel, 27 April 2018’.

1. The proposed revised title is recommended for validation.

<i>The College welcomes this recommendation.</i>
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2. The provider should update and restructure module reading lists to reflect recent advances in scholarship (both book publications and journal articles); it is recommended that staff act as more active mediators in making up-to-date resources available (in the library and online) and known to students.

independent evaluation could conclude “Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions” where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

³⁰ Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A “Not Satisfactory” recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

³¹ Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude “Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions” where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

³² Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A “Not Satisfactory” recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

The College accepts this recommendation. This is an ongoing process and mechanisms in place will be improved to ensure that the Reading Lists reflect advances in scholarship and that there is clear communication with the Library regarding Reading Lists in advance of the commencement of a module. Staff will be required to review their Reading Lists prior to the start of the academic year, to place the updated List on Moodle and to liaise with the Library to ensure updated resources are available for students.

3. The provider should improve subscriptions to Library Databases and other electronic resources. It is recommended that the Institute explore means of strategic collaboration (e.g. IReL) to maximise availability of digital learning resources.

The College accepts this recommendation. We will re-evaluate and upgrade subscriptions to Library resources and other electronic resources. We recognise the opportunity offered through strategic collaborations to maximise access to digital learning resources and will actively explore these in the coming academic year. This work will be undertaken in the first instance by the Learner Resource Committee.

4. The provider should require all lecturers to be consistent in their use of Moodle and Turnitin; to achieve this, it is recommended that the College identify a clear minimum requirement and disseminate this to all staff (PT and FT).

The College accepts this recommendation. Actions 3.1, 3.3 and 6.3 of the Implementation Plan of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy address this.

5. In line with the prominence given to research within each programme, it is recommended that research modules are revised and updated to include a greater variety of methodologies and focus on both quantitative and qualitative methods. Existing datasets e.g. Growing Up in Ireland can be utilised to enable students gain experience of quantitative analysis.

The College accepts this recommendation. The programme will make links with the sections of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs website (<https://www.dcyd.gov.ie/>) which are accessible from the Homepage menu on the left hand side – Research; Growing up in Ireland; and National Research and Data Strategy. These provide a very rich source of research-related information. Introducing quantitative research methods and analysis in the Research module will ensure that learners have a grounding in the range of research decision-making possibilities. The emphasis will remain on qualitative research methods due to the particular research topics envisaged.

6. It is recommended that social science, community and child related programs draw from the findings of the Growing Up in Ireland Study.

The College accepts this recommendation.

7. It is recommended that the Institute-wide Teaching and Learning Strategy be finalised, with clear milestones and measures for regular review of the implementation of individual components. This should be supported by a clear IT strategy to allow the institution to capitalise on new advances in Teaching and Learning.

The College accepts this recommendation. The Implementation Plan drawn up by the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee was passed by the Academic Council meeting of 25th April 2018.

8. Building on the Institute's heritage and distinctiveness, the provider should develop a transdisciplinary vision and strategy for the place of theology in relevant programmes.

The College accepts this recommendation. An academic working group will be established in the first semester of the coming academic year (2018 – 2019), with a brief to examine this issue and report to the Academic Council and to the Management Board.

9. It is recommended that programmes highlight more visibly the Institute's vision for social justice and civic engagement, through discipline-specific and cross-disciplinary modules.

The College accepts this recommendation. The recent establishment of the Ireland branch of the International Centre for Therapeutic Care at Carlow College offers a forum for information sharing and discussion. This will continue to expand and provide a space in which to articulate the therapeutic social care vision. The programme will build on its track record of organising and hosting cutting-edge national conferences, seminars and CPD events.

10. The provider should consider the feasibility of formative assessment and should co-ordinate modes of assessment and requirements (at and across stage level), employing standards that reflect both student and staff workload.

The College accepts this recommendation. We currently set, and will continue to set, a formative essay early in Term 1 of Year 1 to assess students' writing and academic ability. They receive very detailed and specific feedback on this. The individual tutoring sessions are built into the overall course structure and resource allocation system.

11. It is recommended that the provider review and exploit the rich interdisciplinarity potential across all programmes e.g. Community Psychology and Group Dynamics and Facilitation, to ensure most efficient use of modules and to reduce workload where relevant

The College accepts this recommendation. The MA programme is committed to draw on lecturing expertise from across the college in areas such as professional social care, conflict resolution and ethics.

12. It is recommended that the existing wide variation in contact hours for 5 ECTS credits be reviewed to provide more consistency for students.

The programme has two 5 ECTS credit modules and these have the same overall contact hour allocation.

13. It is recommended that the variation in word count for the MA dissertation (10,000 – 15,000) be tightened to ensure more consistency in student output.

This recommendation is accepted. The word count for the MA dissertation is now set at 15,000 words max. to ensure more consistency in student output.

14. The provider should develop strategies on how to increase and monitor attendance across all programs.

The College accepts this recommendation. The MA is a one-day a week programme and full attendance is required.

15. The provider should develop a stronger profile and status for community-related group creative projects, interlinking their practice and research dimensions.

This recommendation is accepted. As an advanced practice programme, learners are focused on developing their professional skillset. They are facilitated in bringing their practice experience to the classroom and adopting an integrated approach to their overall learning and professional development. The Residential Workshop provides a possibility for learners to share a living space and work creatively in an off-campus environment.

16. Building on the success of the Essay Doctor programme, the provider should develop writing workshops that educate students in diverse modes and registers of writing, reflecting changing requirements of current workplaces.

The College accepts this recommendation. The Essay Doctor service currently delivers a programme of writing development workshops which are available to students across all programmes and stages. Working closely with the cross-programme Academic and Digital Skills module and other professional and employability related modules, these workshops will be extended to educate learners in diverse modes and registers of writing relevant to the requirements of current workplaces.

17. The provider should encourage each programme to take greater control of student feedback measures.

The College accepts this recommendation

18. The provider should consider, as matter of priority, a career progression pathway for staff to ensure staff retention.

The College accepts this recommendation. We note that this issue has implications for College strategy as well as job descriptions, titles and salary scales. It will be addressed as a matter of priority by Senior Management and HR.

19. The provider should introduce research leave for staff, including those post doctorates, to enable academic publication and larger-scale research activity.

The College accepts this recommendation. As part of a general review of the Academic Workload Allocation Policy, the Office of the Registrar will design a Research Leave Policy for academic staff, in consultation with academic staff, with a view to implementation for the 2019-20 academic year.

20. It is recommended that a balance on various committees be ensured between mature and school-leaver students.

The College accepts this recommendation. We note some of the imbalance arises from ex-officio representation as outlined in Terms of References of various committees. In order to address this imbalance the Office of the Registrar will work with the Students' Union to develop mechanisms whereby a more appropriate representation of mature and school-leaver students can occur with a view to having an impact on committee representation for the academic year 2018-19. We will enter into discussions with the Students' Union around their selection procedures for class representatives.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

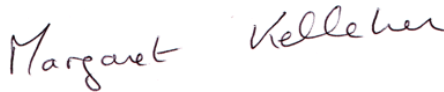
There are no interests to declare

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Prof. Margaret Kelleher

Date: 26th June 2018

Signed:



1.4 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While QQI has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will QQI be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Part 3: Proposed programme schedules

Name of Provider:		Carlow College												
Programme Title		M.A. (Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care)												
Award Title		Masters of Arts												
Stage Exit Award Title³		N/A												
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):		PT												
Teaching and learning modalities		Direct Learning via lectures, workshops and seminars												
Award Class⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):	Stage NFQ Level²	Stage EQF Level²	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code						
Major	9		1			40	September 2018	0923						
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)				Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)				
			Status³³	NFQ Level¹ where specified	Credit Units ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent	Work-based learning effort³⁴	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Advanced Therapeutic Child And Social Care 1: <i>The theories and theorists that inform therapeutic practice.</i>		N/A	M	9	10	250	54		110	86	100			
Philosophy and Ethics of Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care		N/A	M	9	10	250	54	20	110	66	100			
Observing and Understanding Organisational Life		N/A	M	9	10	250	54		110	86	100			
Experiential Group 1: <i>Leading Self</i>		N/A	M	9	10	250	54		110	86	100			
Special Regulations														
(Visit of Observation, Residential Workshop are mandatory elements at this stage)														

³³ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³⁴ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Name of Provider:		Carlow College												
Programme Title		M.A. (Leadership in Therapeutic Child and Social Care)												
Award Title		Masters of Arts												
Stage Exit Award Title³		N/A												
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):		PT												
Teaching and learning modalities		Direct Learning via lectures, workshops and seminars												
Award Class⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):	Stage NFQ Level²	Stage EQF Level²	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code						
Major	9		Award			50	September 2018	0923						
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)				Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)				
			Status³⁵	NFQ Level¹ where specified		Credit Units ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent	Work-based learning effort³⁶	C.A. %	% Supervised Project	Proctored practical demonstration %
Advanced Therapeutic Child and Social Care 2: <i>Applying the theories to practice.</i>		N/A	M	9	5	150	41		55	54	100			
Leadership and Management Issues in Therapeutic Child and Social Care		N/A	M	9	5	150	27		55	68	100			
Experiential Group 2 <i>Leading Self with Others</i>		N/A	M	9	10	250	54		110	86	100			
Research Methods and Dissertation		N/A	M	9	30	750	94		320	336	30	70		
Special Regulations (Residential Workshop 2 is a mandatory element at this stage)														

³⁵ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³⁶ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Part 4: Detailed evaluation of the programme's modules and stages that do not directly lead to QQI awards

The commentary in Part 2 will have regard to the modules and address issues concerning them.

However, should any of the modules require extensive this may be included here. Commentary on the modules in Part 4 is only required on an exceptional basis.