National
College *of*
Ireland

"To change lives
through education"

National College of Ireland
Annual Report
2011/2012

National College of Ireland, Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

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Foreword by Chairman of the Governing Body
of National College of Ireland

Mr Denis O'Brien

Mr Denis O'Brien
Governing Body Chairman

> "A fundamental part of our ethos and our mission is to address educational disadvantage, in particular within our local community."

Following on from last year's Hunt Report, the HEA's 'landscape' document set out how the broad objectives contained in Hunt would be achieved. We have responded to the document, confident in the distinctiveness of NCI, our ability to adapt to the emerging landscape, and deliver programmes that are aimed at providing the graduate education and skills that are required by industry. We believe that NCI is well-placed to play a significant role in the new higher education arena, an arena where we see new and enhanced opportunities for collaboration with other Higher Educational Institutes, nationally and abroad.

A fundamental part of our ethos and our mission is to address educational disadvantage, in particular within our local community. Our Early Learning Initiative (ELI) has continued its groundbreaking work, helping parents to support their children's early years' development and preparing them to enter primary education on a par with children from more privileged backgrounds. We rely almost exclusively on the generosity of our donors to keep this work going. On behalf of the college, I'd like to formally acknowledge their contribution and draw your attention to Dr Josephine Bleach's report (page 27) and her recognition of our new and existing donors.

Despite what was another challenging year with respect to funding for education, the cost reduction programme we implemented in 2010-2011 and tight control of discretionary expenditure ensured that the college returned to surplus a year ahead of our 5 year strategic plan. This plan requires that we continue to grow fee income from the introduction of new programmes, increasing student enrolments on existing programmes from both the domestic and international markets. We have made significant investments in both China and India in establishing local offices in Shanghai and Hyderabad and these offices are driving through new collaborative agreements for joint undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the Schools of Business and Computing.

Throughout the year, the Governing Body has encouraged the college's Executive Board to pursue new initiatives that will further the college's reputation and offer significant opportunities for revenue growth. In June of 2011 we were delighted to endorse the creation of a Cloud Competency Centre that would establish an international reputation for the provision of education, industry collaboration and applied research in the computing sector. On a personal note, I was delighted to commit to funding the start-up costs for the new centre. It is through such reputation-enhancing and revenue generating initiatives that the college will realise its full potential and secure its position in the emerging landscape of higher education. We expect to see the college announce similar new initiatives throughout the course of the current strategic plan.

Finally, I'd also like to acknowledge the contribution of all of the staff at NCI; this year came on the back of a very challenging year last year, but we are making progress so thank you for your continued commitment. A big thank you also to my colleagues on our Governing Body who have given of their time so freely and with the same passion and commitment to maintaining NCI's unique place in Irish education.

Introduction by President
of National College of Ireland

Dr Phillip Matthews

Dr Phillip Matthews
President

In February of 2012, the HEA published its strategy document 'Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape' and asked that all funded institutions make a submission, setting out their strategic intentions as to where they propose to position themselves within the Irish higher education system. We made our submission, setting out what is distinctive about NCI, where we see ourselves within the emerging landscape and the status of our discussions with other Irish Higher Educational Institutes around formal collaborative arrangements that will ensure that NCI is part of a coherent regional strategy.

In June of 2011, Dr Pramod Pathak, Dean of the School of Computing, delivered a business plan to NCI's Governing Body for the development of a Cloud Competency Centre that would provide a range of postgraduate education programmes, strong collaborative links with industry and an active research capability. The initiative received the full support of the Governing Body and the Chairman, Denis O'Brien, generously committed to funding the start-up costs for the Centre. The objective was to have a fully staffed and operational centre ready for the September 2012 intake for the new MSc in Cloud Computing. Dr Horacio González-Vélez was hired from Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen to head up the Centre and all project timelines were on schedule for the September 2012 launch.

We continued with our ambitious new programme development strategy with a number of successful programme validations, including: new BA degrees in Psychology, Marketing, Economics & Finance and Management Practice (online); new MSc programmes in Finance and Cloud Computing and new Certificate/Diploma programmes in Digital Marketing, Pensions Management (online) and Web Development (online). These programmes will be offered from September 2012 and 2013 onwards.

This year, we strengthened our academic management structures across the college; Professor Jimmy Hill took up the vacant VP Academic Affairs & Research role and we created Vice Dean roles in both the School of Business and the School of Computing. In tandem with the enhancement of academic structures we announced three new President's Awards for Innovation in Assessment, Distinguished Teaching and Outstanding Contribution to Learning. The awards drew a strong entry from faculty and support staff.

Revenue for the 2011-2012 academic year was 2% behind budget and some 3% behind prior year. The decline in revenue versus prior year is due primarily to reduced income from the HEA's Springboard programme compared to that received last year from the Department of Education Labour Market Activation Programme (LMAF). With respect to the 2% budget deficit this was due to shortfalls in student fee income, particularly from international students, and commercial income from facilities and room hire.

"We continued with our ambitious new programme development strategy with a number of successful programme validations."

4 Introduction by President
of National College of Ireland

Dr Phillip Matthews

Continued...

> "The provision of programmes with specific labour market outcomes has always been a key part of our provision"

This time last year we were working with the Chinese Embassy in Dublin to reinstate NCI on the Chinese Ministry for Education list of Irish 'approved' institutions and I'm delighted to say that in March 2012 we were reinstated. Since then we have been working hard to reinvigorate our existing collaborative agreements and open up new institutional relationships through our office in Shanghai. Prior to our reinstatement, much of our focus was placed on developing our relationships in India through our office in Hyderabad, with new collaborative agreements resulting in our largest intake to date from India in September 2012.

The provision of programmes with specific labour market outcomes has always been a key part of our provision. This year we have been working to extend our relationships with the Irish Institute of Pensions Management (IIPM), Citibank, McDonald's and the provision of programmes for the IFSC through Summit FINUAS. We see significant opportunity in partnering with industry and professional bodies to align their learning outcomes with the NFQ and we hope to announce another major initiative in this space in 2013. We are very conscious that the priority for our students is to find, or enhance, their career following their studies and we know that students value the fact that we have an established reputation for high employability.

This year we are proud to say that NCI was named "Best for Jobs" in the 2012 Sunday Times University Guide. We received an overall response rate of 89% to our First Destinations survey for the class of 2011; 4% were seeking employment 6 months after graduating, the lowest percentage and best performing institution in the sector.

Another key part of our ethos is to address educational disadvantage and reduce the barriers to third level education. A key part of this ethos is our work within the Dublin Docklands community through the Early Learning Initiative (ELI). This year we engaged with over 3,000 children, parents, teachers and childcare workers across our ELI programmes and we are indebted to our new and existing funders, without whom ELI and the impact it is having in our community would not be possible. This year we welcomed a number of new donors; Dublin Port Authority, Irish Continental Group, McCann FitzGerald, Royal Sun Alliance and the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI). On a sad note we also said farewell to one of the college's and ELI's most loyal supporters, Maeve Binchy; Maeve is sadly missed and our thoughts are with Gordon and the family.

Finally I'd like to express my personal thanks to all of our staff and faculty, including our associate faculty members, for their continued dedication and commitment during what has been another challenging year. I'd also like to thank our Chairman, Denis O'Brien and his colleagues on our Governing Body for their unstinting support, their insightful challenge and their freely given time.

"A key part of this ethos is our work within the Dublin Docklands community through the Early Learning Initiative (ELI)."

Highlights of the Year

· A major highlight of the year was the launch
of the Cloud Competency Centre in September.
This major new centre of cloud computing,
generously funded by our chairman, Denis
O'Brien, will support the development of the
cloud computing industry in Ireland and
abroad. In addition to providing educational
programmes and undertaking relevant
industry research, the Centre will support Irish
companies in migrating to the cloud and
provide business incubation opportunities with
routes to commercialisation. We are delighted
that some of the world's leading authorities
on cloud computing, from Cornell, Berkeley
and Stanford Universities, are working with us
on the Strategic Advisory Board of the School
of Computing.

· This year has been a great success in terms
of new programmes with the BA in Psychology,
Certificate in Digital Marketing, Coach's
Programme and MSc in Cloud Computing
standing out as highlights in a busy schedule
of programme development.

· During the year we continued to form key
strategic partnerships internationally with two
new MOU's signed with Hebei and Kunming
in China, adding to our existing partnerships
with Hubei University and Chihlee IT in Taiwan.
In India, new partnerships were formed with
KL University, Vignan University, the Chaitanya
Group and Jawaharlal Nehru Technical
University (JNTU). Two further collaborations
are in development with Dalian University
and with Shanghai University of Finance and
Economics (SHUFE).
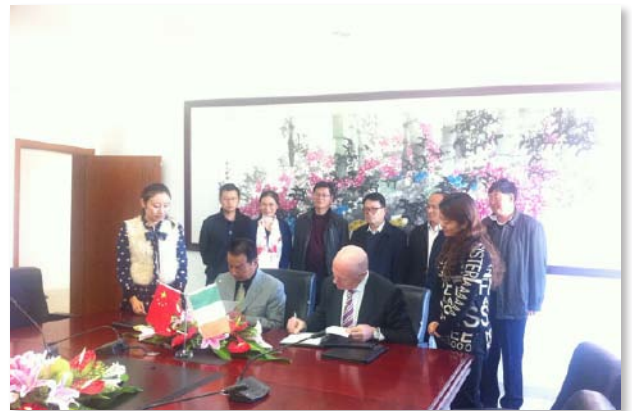
· The hard work of the Student Services team and especially the Careers & Development Office paid dividends when NCI was declared 'Best For Jobs' by the Sunday Times University Guide. The annual higher education league table, is the definitive guide to Higher Education, ranking third-level institutions in Ireland and the UK across a number of criteria. It states: "The best for employment was the National College of Ireland at 96%, followed by Trinity." The guide goes on to say, "As all Ireland focuses on jobs as the driver of economic recovery, the National College of Ireland is sitting pretty with 96% graduate employment. The key is in its solid links with industry…".

· During the year the Norma Smurfit Library & Information Services underwent a Quality Assurance Review with the external panel concluding that we offer an excellent example of a user-centred and responsive service.

· The college continued its programme of industry seminars and conferences; this year's web technologies conference, the dot conf, was particularly successful and built upon the momentum established over the previous two years. A third series of breakfast seminars in partnership with Kellogg's and Metro Herald, titled 'Corn Flakes and Commerce: NCI's Executive Breakfast Serial' took place and was very well received.

· The annual graduation ceremony is always a key highlight of the college year. In the 2011 – 2012 academic year the ceremonies took place in the Dublin Convention Centre on Thursday 4th and Friday 5th November 2011. More than 1900 students were conferred from 48 courses.

School of Business

The 2011/2012 academic year has been very successful from a School of Business perspective. The School has made significant progress with respect to increasing programme numbers, the development and validation of new programmes, the appointment of new staff, as well as significant progress in terms of research.

The School of Business has undergone a restructuring with the creation of two Vice Dean positions. Dr Colette Darcy was appointed as Vice Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research and Mr Colin Whitston was appointed as Vice Dean for Undergraduate Studies. Professor Jimmy Hill, Dean of the School was promoted to Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research in May 2012 but is continuing in an Acting Dean role for the interim.

At a high level the School has consolidated its key relationships with the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development, (CIPD), the Irish Institute of Pensions Management (IIPM), the Chartered Institute of Management, (CMI), the Irish Business Analysts' Association, and the main professional accounting bodies.

Student recruitment in the School has been positive this year with a significant year-on-year increase in non CAO and postgraduate programmes.

New Programme Development
The School has again this year been exceptionally busy on the new programme development front. The School developed and successfully validated the following programmes:

· BA Psychology
· Diploma in Psychology
· Higher Diploma in Psychology
· BA Economics and Finance,
· BA Marketing Practice
· Certificate in Digital Marketing
· Higher Diploma in Finance
· MSc in Finance
· Higher Diploma in Business in Management
· Higher Diploma in Business in Finance.
· Certificate in Pensions Administration
· Certificate in Pensions, Investment and Insurance
· Diploma in Pensions Management
· BA Management Practice - Online
· BA Human Resource Management - Online

We are happy to report that this year we have had our second successful intake into the MBA part-time programme. In addition we have commenced the MSc Marketing, MSc Management, MSc Finance, and Higher Diploma in Finance in both full-time and part-time modes.

Research and Scholarship
This has been a very busy and successful year in terms of research and scholarship in the School of Business.

· Dr Colette Darcy and Prof. Jimmy Hill co-edited a special Issue of the Irish Journal of Management. This Special Issue was compiled of the best papers from the 14th Irish Academy of Management Conference which the college hosted in September 2011.

· Dr Colette Darcy, Prof. Jimmy Hill, Dr T.J. McCabe and Dr Garvan Whelan had papers in the IFSAM Conference at the University of Limerick in June 2012.

· Mr Desmond Gibney presented a paper at the Irish Accounting and Finance Association's Annual Conference in Cork in May 2012.

· Dr Rebecca Maguire presented a paper at the AISHE Conference in DCU.

· Dr Paul Hanly presented a paper at the 34th International Conference of the Irish Association of Cancer Registries.

· Dr Paul Hanly published a paper in the Journal of Conferences and Event Tourism.

· Ms. Karen Murray published two papers in the Bar Review.

· Ms. Corina Sheerin published a paper in the Irish Journal of Management.

· Dr T.J. McCabe published a paper in the International Journal of Nursing Studies.

· Mr Colin Whitston, Senior Lecturer in IR and Vice Dean Undergraduate Studies has been commissioned to write a chapter for a book to commemorate the centenary anniversary of the Dublin Lockout.

· Mr Colin Whitston has again brought to the college the Annual Countess Markowitz Lecture.

Staffing Update
The School made several new appointments during the last 12 months. We are delighted to announce that Dr Garvan Whelan joined us in September 2011 as a Lecturer in Accounting, Dr Rebecca Maguire joined us as a Lecturer in Psychology in and Dr Paul Hanly, as a Lecturer in Economics.

The School Office welcomed Ms Nicola O' Shaughnessy as a Programme Coordinator and Ms Barbara Flynn joined the team to support the Irish Institute of Pensions Management.

Other Notable Developments

International Visits
Professor Hill, Dean of School, made several visits to China with the International Office, signing a memorandum of understanding with Shanghai University and with Chilhee Institute in Taiwan. Mr Des Gargan subsequently visited Chilhee Institute as a Visiting Professor in June 2012. Professor Hill was a guest of Minister Ciarán Cannon at the breakfast organised by Enterprise Ireland for the trade mission to China in March 2012.

Professional Relationships
In November 2011 we graduated the first cohort of McDonald's managers from our collaborative Certificate in Supervisory Management.

Other News
The Department of Education and Skills has agreed to include the BA Economics and Finance and the BA in Marketing Practice under our CAO free fees quota. These will replace the BA (Hons) in Accounting and HR and the BA (Hons) in Financial Services.

School of Computing

The School of Computing had an excellent year and made good progress on a number of fronts. The School worked with different stakeholders towards the establishment of a Cloud Competency Centre and successfully hired a leading cloud computing scientist, Dr Horacio González-Vélez, as Head of Centre. In line with NCI's focus on entrepreneurship, a thoroughly revised IP policy was created to encourage enterprise in our students and to support the creation of invention disclosure, patenting and the formation of companies. In this respect an agreement with DRIC (Dublin Regional Innovation Consortium) led by DIT was signed. On the research side Ms Andrea Molnar completed her doctorate and became the first awardee of the Technology Enhanced Learning PhD Programme. The involvement with local industry advisory group continued, especially in line with the creation of the Cloud Competency Centre.

New Programme Development

The programme development strategy of the School is focused on the development of programmes that are relevant to the needs of the Irish economy and society. The School has an active advisory group consisting of multinational companies and SMEs which play an active role in informing this strategy. During 2011-12 the School focused on the development of Cloud Computing programmes. The overall ethos behind the School's programme development is to produce industry ready graduates in key relevant areas of computing with excellent problem solving, creative, entrepreneurial and communication skills.

New programmes developed

· The MSc in Cloud Computing was developed. This programme caters for technical needs of Cloud and contains two distinct areas of specialisations: Software Development and Infrastructure.

· The Higher Diploma in Software Development (level 8) was created for the Higher Education Authority call 'ICT Skills Programme', to address higher education and training skills gaps in the Irish market. Software development has been identified as a key skills shortage area. The Higher Diploma in Software Development provides level 8 graduates from non-technical background with specialist skills in developing software to solve real-world problems. The programme also contains a career bridge element which assists graduates of the programme to avail of the many job opportunities available in software development. The programme proved very popular and attracted a large cohort of students.

· The Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Learning and Teaching (Further Education Track) was granted professional accreditation by the Teaching Council of Ireland. We are delighted to be able to serve the needs of current teachers and future teachers in the further education sector. This fits very well with the ethos and history of National College of Ireland.

Other programme activities:

· The School defined a strategy for embedding appropriate industry certifications in undergraduate programmes, ensuring our graduates can bridge the current ICT skills gap in Ireland. This strategy is being implemented over a 3 year period (2012 -2015) and involves content and pedagogical changes to facilitate students towards accreditation of relevant popular certifications.

· The School faculty further embedded problem solving approaches into core modules. One of the major elements of the School's learning and teaching strategy is the incorporation of puzzles, problems and projects to deliver module content. This further entrenches a problem solving approach to the learning of computer science and makes our students "industry ready" graduates.

· To progress problem based learning, Dr Orla Lahart and Dr Stephan Weibelzahl created a Web-based Resource and a Tool box called "PBL Induction Made Easy". This research project was funded by NAIRTL (National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning). The toolkit is available publicly for utilisation by any institution and is utilised in the School for student induction on problem based learning.

· The Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Cloud Computing (level 9), Certificate in Cloud Computing (level 9) and Certificate in Web Development (level 6) were funded under the Government's Springboard initiative.

Research and Scholorship

The Schools' current research focus is on the area of Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL). With the establishment of the Cloud Competency Centre the school plans to also establish itself in the area of Cloud Computing research. At present the School has seven research students in TEL. One student has completed all the requirements for PhD award. The School contains the National e-Learning Laboratory (NELL) which evaluates software products by observing and analysing experiments of a group of user's operating such software. NELL completed a number of projects during the academic year and was also utilised by students for projects. The School regularly participates in the competitive funding calls at National and European level and has delivered on a number of successful funded projects in the area of TEL.

· The first PhD in TEL was completed by Andrea Molnar under the supervision of Dr Cristina Muntean (Principal Supervisor), with co-supervisors Dr Pramod Pathak & Dr Gabriel Muntean (DCU).

· To facilitate research and commercialisation the college has approved a revised IP policy. It is one of the most favourable IP policies at 3rd level allowing for major profits going back to inventors and also transferring the ownership on case by case basis.

· NCI signed an Inter-Institutional Collaboration agreement to join the Dublin Region Innovation consortium (DRIC) led by DIT. Total funding for the consortium is expected to be in the region of €3m for 2012-16. Though NCI will have a small portion of this funding it will help in initiating invention disclosures, patents and possible spin out companies.

· NELL completed six projects on usability and user experience for companies and agencies. The products analysed included innovative websites, web applications and mobile apps.

· The School has been very active in submission of applications for funding and has made a number of funding applications last year. The School was awarded IRCSET EMBARK Industry Partnership post-doc scholarship in partnership with FluidRock.

· The School's faculty has 15 publications to its credit. The paper "Towards Personalised and Adaptive Multimedia in M-learning Systems," by Arghir Moldovan and Cristina H. Muntean was awarded the Outstanding Paper Award for the E-Learn 2011 conference. A journal article published by Dr Stephan Weibelzahl and David Joyce has also been selected as part of the so called CyberBullying Research Collection. Dr Stephan Weibelzahl also presented a scientific tutorial at the International Conference on User Modelling (UMAP 2012). Dr Eugene O'Loughlin was appointed to the Editorial board of International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning.

Other publications include:

· Bruce, B.C. & **Casey, L**. (2012) The Practice of Inquiry: A Pedagogical 'Sweet Spot' for Digital Literacy? *Computers in the Schools.* Vol. 29 1-16.
· Garba M, **González-Vélez H**. (2012) Asymptotic Peak utilisation in Heterogeneous Parallel CPU/GPU Pipelines: a Decentralised Queue Monitoring Strategy. *Parallel Processing Letters.2012; 22(2). DOI: 10.1142/S0129626412400087*
· **Maycock, K**. & Keating, J. (2012). A Framework for Adaptive E-learning: Moving Towards a Generic Model. Conference Paper accepted for the 19th International Conference on Learning London, August 2012.
· **Maycock, K**. & Meaney, J. (2012). Bridging the Gap between Social Networks and Education, London, August 2012. *Conference Paper accepted for the 19th International Conference on Learning* London, August 2012.
· O'Donnell, E., **Macarthur, V**., Sharp, M., & Wade, V. (2012). Personalised Learning: Facilitating students' understanding and mastery of new concepts. *4th Biennial Threshold Concepts Conference in 2012,* Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 27 - 29 June, 2012.
· Moore, A., **Macarthur, V**., & Conlan, O. (2012). Core Aspects of Affective Metacognitive User Models. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, Advances in User Modelling Perspectives: *Selected Papers from UMAP 2011.* Berlin: Springer.
· **Casey, L & Kyofuna, S** (2011). Finding Pedagogy for Blended Learning. *International Conference on Engaging Pedagogy 2011.* Dec. 16th 2011, National College of Ireland, Dublin. Available from

http://icep.ie/icep-2011-proceedings-2/
· **Casey, L** & Bruce B.C. (2011). The Practice Profile of Inquiry: connecting digital literacy and pedagogy. *E-Learning and Digital Media.* Vol. 8 (1) 76-85.
· Bouvry P, **González-Vélez H**, Kolodziej J, editors. (2011) Intelligent Decision Systems in Large-Scale Distributed Environments. *vol. 362 of Studies in Computational Intelligence.* 1st ed. Springer-Verlag; 2011. ISBN: 978-364221270-3
· **Macarthur, V.**, Moore, A., Mulwa, C., & Conlan, O. (2011). Towards a Cognitive Model to Support Self-Reflection: Emulating Traits and Tasks in Higher-Order Schemata. EC-TEL September 2011 *Workshop on Augmenting the Learning Experience with Collaborative Reflection.* Palermo, Italy.
· Moore, A., **Macarthur, V.**, & Conlan, O. (2011). Core Aspects of Affective Metacognitive User Models. *Workshop on Augmenting User Models with Real World Experiences to Enhance Personalization and Adaptation at International Conference on User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization (UMAP July 2011).* Girona, Spain.
· Joyce, D. & **Weibelzahl, S.** (2011). Student Counseling Services – Using Text Messaging to Lower Barriers to Help Seeking. *Innovations in Education & Teaching International*, 48(3), 287-299.
· **Weibelzahl, S.** & Lahart, O. (2011). Developing Student Induction Sessions for Problem Based Learning. *International Conference on Engaging Pedagogy 2011 (ICEP11)* NCI, Dublin, Ireland, December 16, 2011.
· Hauger, D., Paramythis, A. & **Weibelzahl, S.** (2011). Using Browser Interaction Data to Determine Page Reading Behavior. User Modeling, Adaptation and Personalization: Proceedings of the Nineteenth International Conference, UMAP July 2011, *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* LNCS 6787 (pp. 147-158). Berlin: Springer.
· **Weibelzahl, S**. & Lahart, O. (2011). PBL Induction Made Easy: A Web-based Resource and a Toolbox. Proceedings of FACILITATE Conference: *Problem Based Learning (PBL) Today and Tomorrow*, May 26-27, Dublin.
· Cocea, M. & **Weibelzahl, S**. (2011). Disengagement Detection in On-line Learning: Validation Studies and Perspectives. *IEEE Transactions on Learning Technologies,* 4(2), 114-124.

Other Notable Developments

- Dr Horacio González-Vélez was appointed
  as Head of the Cloud Competency Centre. Dr
  González-Vélez joined National College
  of Ireland from Robert Gordon University
  in Aberdeen. His current research comprises
  structured parallelism approaches to
  heterogeneous computing systems such as
  multi/many-core CPU and GPU, clouds and
  grids. He is a recognised expert and keynote
  speaker on cloud computing for the BCS, the UK
  Chartered Institute for IT. He is Executive Editor
  of the International Journal of Grid and Utility
  Computing and is an active reviewer of many
  journal publications on parallel computing and
  distributed systems. Prior to joining academia,
  Dr González-Vélez held a number of posts with
  Sun Microsystems in the USA & Latin America.

Centre for Research and Innovation in Learning and Teaching

The work of the Centre for Research and Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CRILT) involves the following:

· To further develop and implement NCI's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy
· To lead and nurture the scholarship of teaching and learning within NCI.
· To develop NCI's blended learning strategy and to support the integration of new technology and pedagogic practice in learning, teaching and assessment.
· To manage the Centre as a high-quality learning environment to support faculty development and applied research on teaching and learning.

This year we continued to see significant progress in all of these areas. Learning and Teaching Development Days were organised for September, January and June; each of these addressed aspects of the broad theme of assessment innovation. The series culminated in the June workshop where Professor Sally Brown and Professor Phil Race facilitated a highly engaging session for NCI staff. Through each semester the Friday seminar series provided opportunities for research and scholarship in learning and teaching to be shared and discussed in an informal setting. This year also saw the launch of the President's awards for Assessment Innovation, Outstanding Teaching and Contribution to Learning. In December we were proud to host the International Conference on Engaging Pedagogy, many faculty participated and some contributed papers. The postgraduate Diploma in Learning and Teaching, an integral part of our professional development strategy, was recognised by the Teaching Council of Ireland for teacher preparation in the Further Education sector.

One of the biggest challenges facing many students is the daunting prospect of having to write assignments for submission as part of their course work. For many, the skills of writing are underdeveloped and they also lack the confidence and know-how on how to improve. The Academic Writing Club was established as a pilot project in March. CRILT worked together with the library and Learning Development services to convene the club initially targeting post-graduate students. The idea was to facilitate the development of writing skills through guided activities in an informal setting. The project has proved to be a success and is popular with the students. It is now available to all students during the day and there are plans to extend the facility for evening students.

As part of the blended learning strategy CRILT continued to work with the schools to develop programmes and prepare faculty for teaching on-line. The college currently offers the Diploma in Pensions Management and Policy and the Certificate in First Line Management in this mode.

CRILT continued to work with other partners on an EU funded project called E-View – to investigate best practice pedagogies for virtual campus settings especially online instruction. The Centre also undertook and completed a number of applied research projects under Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Voucher Scheme; these primarily involved usability testing using the facilities of the Centre under the academic direction of Dr Stephan Weibelzahl.

During the year CRILT welcomed Ms Jane Liu to the administrative staff. The Director of CRILT, Dr Leo Casey published: Bruce, B.C. & Casey, L. (2012) The Practice of Inquiry: A Pedagogical 'Sweet Spot' for Digital Literacy? Computers in the Schools. Vol. 29 1-16; Casey, L & Kyofuna, S (2011). Finding Pedagogy for Blended Learning. International Conference on Engaging Pedagogy 2011. Dec. 16th 2011, National College of Ireland, Dublin.

Registrar's Office

Admissions
Improving access to Higher Education

NCI participates in a number of national admissions schemes that provide an access route to third level education for under-represented groups. Through the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) eligible school leavers from socio–economically disadvantaged backgrounds or with a disability respectively are offered places through the CAO at reduced entry points.

· 98 students were offered a place in NCI through the HEAR scheme with 33 of these students accepting a place with the required CAO points and a further 17 students accepted a place with reduced points.
· 28 students were offered a place through the DARE scheme, 17 students in total accepted a place and 14 acceptances were from merit offers with 3 on reduced points offers.

Links with Further Education Institutions

NCI currently has links with a number of local PLCs and Colleges of Further Education providing a progression route to higher education for graduates from Higher National Diplomas and FETAC Level 6 courses. The college has links with Marino College of Further Education, Rathmines College, Senior College Dun Laoghaire and Ballyfermot College of Further Education and will continue to expand these links as an important access route into higher education.

Part-Time Student Recruitment
– Academic year 2011-2012

The college introduced a dedicated admissions processing and information service for prospective students and applicants in May 2011. The service enables NCI to provide telephone and email support for prospective students 13 hours per day 7 days per week throughout the year. A recent survey of applicants indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the service provided.

International students

NCI has encouraged a growing number of students to come to Dublin from outside of Ireland. With this decision comes the need for NCI to develop dedicated supports to help prepare students for the transition to living and studying in Ireland.

As part of this, NCI has recently put in place extended orientation activities to specifically help international students to adjust to life in Ireland. These two day events are divided into social, cultural and academic activities. Specifically, each incoming international student is now offered advice on practical issues such as living and shopping in Dublin as well as managing their finances. Coupled with this, students now participate in dedicated sessions on academic writing in NCI, plagiarism, English language supports and specific library and IT supports.

Together, these events have helped our new international students to successfully adapt to life in NCI and have allowed them to more fully participate in an increasingly diverse community.

Mature Student Orientation

This year, Student Support has put in place supplementary orientation sessions to help mature learners to academically adjust to life at NCI. In collaboration with the NCI mature student society, Learning Development has created dedicated sessions to prepare students for academic writing tasks and exams. These sessions typically take place in line with students' first assignments and are repeated in the weeks coming up to examinations in semester one.

Overview of Student Support

Student Support coordinates a range of services to ensure students have a rewarding and fulfilling experience, both personally and academically, while studying at college. Support is provided to all students, full-time and part-time, with an emphasis on mirroring the services for both groups. Where possible supports are mainstreamed across the college, promoting an inclusive environment where all students can access all services irrespective of their individual needs.

Achievements in 2011/2012 Academic Year

Learning Development

Student Footfall – 1,059 students used the Learning Development Service during 2011/2012 academic year. The services provided a range of supports including face-to-face appointments, seminars, workshops and support material both online and in hardcopy format.

The service has created online videos and a development manual for all students to utilise. These online materials have been viewed over 4,000 times thus far, which illustrates the benefit of using online materials to provide a flexible service to all students.

Research in Learning Development – In the 2011/2012 academic year, the service was published in a peer review journal and a white publication. Coupled with these, the service has made new research connections with Stanford University and California Community College. The service will be co-presenting with members of both institutes at a learning technology conference in Budapest in November 2012.

HEA funded Learning Support – In 2011/2012, Learning Development secured HEA funding for a dedicated Learning Support Tutor for students with disabilities. This new role has allowed for an increased level of academic support provided to students with disabilities and has reduced delays in the communication of student needs to faculty and other relevant departments.

Academic Writing Clubs – In 2011/2012, the service, in association with Learning and Teaching and the Library established an academic writing club for postgraduate students. This club was designed to help students with the entire writing cycle, from conception to completion. Based on the success of this pilot, the academic writing clubs have been expanded for undergraduate students and are being rolled out in October 2012.

Student Assistance Fund – In 2011/2012, the service successfully renegotiated a substantial increase in NCI's financial allocation. Learning Development secured this increase by correlating the following data:

- Relationship between withdrawals and financial hardship
- Unemployment rates amongst full-time students
- Year-on-year growth of SAF applications
- Increase in repeat students in need of financial assistance

The service will statistically analyse the relationship between financial supports and retention in the 2012/2013 academic year.

Mathematics Development and Support

The activity of the Mathematics Support Service covering the 2011-2012 academic year included:

Support for School of Computing students, both full-time and part-time, was provided in introductory modules in Mathematics for Computing and Computer Architecture. The service also introduced a Mathematics Programming Competition.

Mathematics Support to School of Business programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level was provided in the areas of Quantitative Analysis and at postgraduate level in Research Methods and Dissertation Hypothesis Framing and Testing.

The service also provided support to Leaving Certificate students from the Docklands area through the Leaving Certificate Mathematics Workshops

Tutorials and workshops are tightly coupled to programme module delivery and typically concentrate on those areas, as identified by module lecturers in consultation with the service, that students found challenging. The tutorial/workshop environment offers students the opportunity to progress through module content at their own pace, ensuring those challenging concepts have been explored and given due time.

In the 2011-2012 academic year the service provided 141 one-to-one student support sessions, an average of 5 appointments per week. Additional examination focused revision sessions were also provided in the lead up to the end of semester and repeat examinations. Programmes, on average, were provided with 4 hours of workshops each week totalling 26 hours of workshops each week with approximately 20 hours of workshops per programme.

Disability Services

Student Footfall – there were 120 students registered with a disability in the 2011/2012 academic year. A number of support services were provided to these students including face-to-face appointments, workshops, assistive technology and examination accommodations.

The O2 Affinity Scheme - The O2 Affinity Scheme was launched in 2010 as a mechanism to acquire financial support from O2 for the Disability Service and to raise awareness about the Disability Service in NCI. As part of the scheme, in 2011/2012, the Disability Officer coordinated a number of information events to encourage students and the parents of students to sign-up to the scheme.

DARE Communications Committee – The Disability Officer continues to work on the DARE communication group. NCI will take a leadership role in communications and coordination of national awareness campaigns such as "Better Options".

Sports and Recreation

The Sports and Recreation service at NCI seeks to develop and promote participative extra-curricular opportunities for the whole student body to provide a well-rounded college experience. Students are encouraged to get actively involved in extra-curricular activities, with Clubs and Societies at the forefront of student life on campus.

A healthy lifestyle supports positive wellbeing while enhancing the quality of the student experience. This student centred approach involves personal development and welfare initiatives that are designed to engage students in the broader college community while increasing awareness of college services. These initiatives include: Student Development Programmes; Sports and Recreation Programmes; and Special Achievements Awards.

Clubs and Societies Membership and Participation:
1,200 students signed up with a Club or Society last year and 71 students were elected to develop and manage Clubs or Society activities. The service recorded 684 students as having participated in an organised Club activity with 1,227 students participating in an organized Society event.

This year over €12,000 was raised by the students and staff members most notably through the Boardroom Challenge and Fashion Show events. Clubs and Societies activities generated income of €13,000, most of which was donated to charities. This is the highest annual amount raised by students to date.

NCI societies won 3 awards at the Board of Irish College Societies National Awards including 'Best New Society' (NCI TV Society), 'Best Individual' (Katie Donohoe), and 'Best Event' – The Boardroom Challenge (Peer Mentor & Business Society). This is a great achievement and is a further testament to the value of the student life experience; showcasing NCI extra-curricular activities on a national scene.

NCI was ranked 9th out of 35 institutions for total team entries competing in the Colleges and Universities Sports Association of Ireland (CUSAI) third level competitions. Involvement with CUSAI encourages Clubs and students to compete in domestic leagues and intercollegiate competitions. The Basketball Club and the Rugby Club were also both finalists in their respective Colleges League Division 3.

Sports Facilities:
Usage of the on-site SV Fitness gym by NCI students has increased by 67% in the past 3 years. The college also provides external sports facilities through a booking facility for Dublin City Council and Dublin sports and recreation centres.

Careers Development & Employability

The Careers Development and Employability service at NCI is dedicated to providing our students with the best resources, advice and opportunities to help them pursue their chosen career. From assistance with CV writing, interview preparation, cover letters and references, to information on current vacancies and a host of dedicated events with potential employers and NCI alumni, the Careers Service leverages all available opportunities to support students as they develop their professional careers.

Range of Services Provided to Students	
Career Workshops	CV and Interview Preparation & Review
Embedded Career Modules (HEA/ICT Courses)	Employer Vacancy Advertising
Tailored One-to-one Meetings	Weekly Vacancy Newsletter
Pop up careers service	Skill Development Projects
Work Placement & Internship Assistance	Careers Website
Careers Publications	Psychometric Testing
e-Guidance	Mentoring
Careers Fair & Alumni Evenings	Employer Presentations

Student demand and activity levels for the Careers Service were significant, driven by student and graduate perceptions and anxieties on entering a very competitive recruitment market.

The Careers Officer held 780 individual appointments in the last academic year and also presented or hosted 60 career workshops. e-Guidance is also a significant feature of the service. Whilst we do not have a usage breakdown by student type for appointments we do have this for e-guidance interactions.

31% of all email interactions were with employers resulting in 407 job opportunities for NCI students. Of student email interaction 10% is from part time students, 16% is alumni, 10% is international and 64% is full time day students. 39 employers visited NCI in the last 12 months and 27 Senior HR Managers and Directors mentored MA HRM students last year.

Careers Service Usage			
Total one-to-one appointments (not unique students) Average per week during term time (20) Average per week outside term time (12)	780	Total workshops	60
e-Guidance - Full-time unique students (interactions)	263 (975)	Total number of employers on campus to deliver presentations or attend careers evening	39
e-Guidance - Part-time unique students (Interactions)	58 (146)	Number of employers mentoring MA HRM students	27
e-Guidance – Alumni students (interactions)	63 (234)	Email interaction – Employers #employers (interactions)	218 (689)
e-Guidance-International unique students (email interactions)	59 (159)	Number of job opportunities advertised to students and logged on system	407

First Destinations
There was an overall response rate of 89% for the class of 2011- 69% of graduates were in employment, 21% undertaking further study, 6% were travelling or unavailable for work and 4% were seeking employment. This seeking employment rate compares favourably with the national unemployment rate of 14.3% (April 2012).

Employer Links
407 vacancies were advertised with the service last year and 39 employers visited campus. The service also hosted a successful careers evening with alumni and employers.

Work Placements
Work placement is an area of massive growth for the college. The placement numbers grew from 26 to 73 in the last year and are due to reach 250 in the next academic year. Courses include BSc (Hons) Computing, BSc (Hons) Business Information Systems, MSc Cloud Computing, Higher Diploma in Web Technologies, Higher Diploma in Software Development, Cert in International Financial Services Regulation, Certificate in Pensions Administration.

Accredited Career Bridge Module
The Careers Support Service has developed a 5 credit Career Bridge module which is accredited and embedded into the curriculum in the HEA/ICT Skills conversion programme.

Mentoring
The service initiated a mentoring initiative for MA HRM students called Career Bridge – Mentoring. The mentoring initiative is a partnership between NCI and leading figures in human resources in Ireland. It provides students with career management training, mentoring, real life insight into HR roles, work shadowing, professional photos and a CV Book to enhance employability. 27 external HR Managers and Directors acted as mentors including the HR Director – Microsoft, HR Director – VHI, HR Director – Irish Prison Service, HR Director – IBEC, HR Director – Irish Life, HR Director – Failte Ireland. The initiative won a bronze AHECS Excellence in Employability award in April 2012.

Skills Development
The Service in conjunction with Maths Support Service ran the "Boardroom Challenge" initiative in which two teams competed to raise the most money for 10 charities. Students developed skills in teamwork, time management, negotiation, project management, leadership and problem solving which they are now using in graduate application forms. Students successfully achieved their target of €10,000 for 10 charities, were featured in the press on two occasions, won the NCI Event of the Year award and the National BICS Event of the Year award with this project.

Media Relations
The Careers Officer has given radio interviews on Newstalk, and has written a number of articles for the Irish Independent and contributed to pieces in the Irish Times.
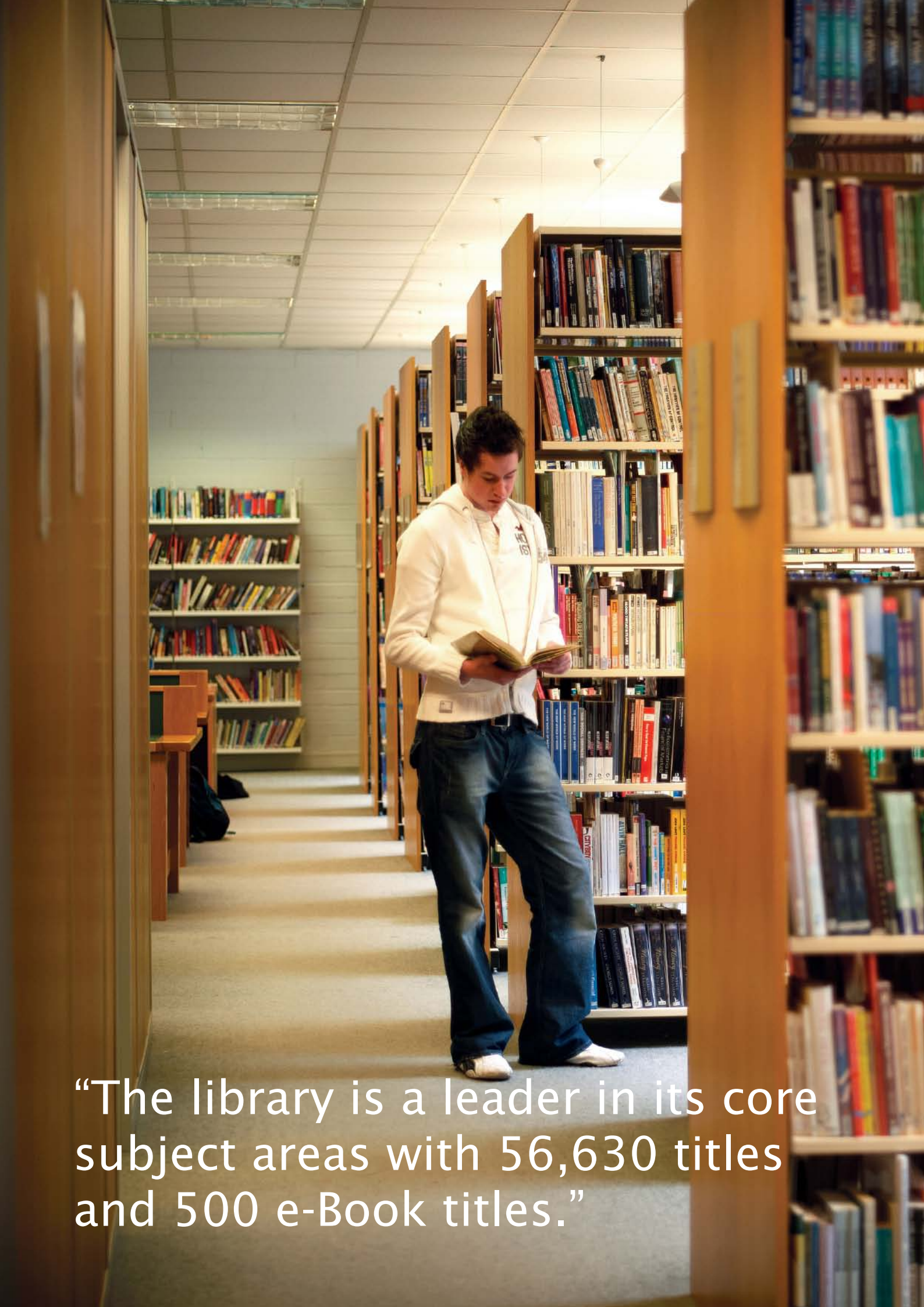
"The library is a leader in its core subject areas with 56,630 titles and 500 e-Book titles."

Norma Smurfit Library

The Norma Smurfit Library at NCI is a resource for staff and students. It seeks to be a centre of excellence, by utilising developments in information technology to provide students, staff and corporate members with a wide network of information resources. A fully integrated library management system (Horizon) is in operation in the library, which allows an automated system of lending and self-service loans and returns. Postgraduate students may borrow up to twelve books; undergraduate students may borrow up to 5 books, on presentation of a current college identity card. Students may request subject searches, and assistance with searching, information requests and internet access. Students, such as the flexible learning students studying at NCI have access to a postal service from the library who will supply subject requests and book loans.

Information Services

The library also offers a range of information and research services. A number of user guides are published in hardcopy and available electronically for undergraduate, postgraduate and international students. Comprehensive user education for both students and staff is also provided on internet access, research methods and saving materials either in electronic or printed formats.

Students studying at off-campus centres and on distance learning programmes have access to a postal service from the library and requests for book loans can be made online, however increasingly students access materials and resources in electronic format. Internet and online database instruction is provided by a member of the library staff on site.

Supporting Learning & Teaching

Induction: The library service provides a formal induction for learners at the start of each academic year as part of the college's induction process for new entrants. During the first semester demonstrations on the use of library resources and user support is also carried out in class and in specific workshops for users by the library staff.

With the increase in programmes commencing through the year a library induction is also provided as new cohorts and classes commence. In 2011 the library introduced an online induction with live interactive participation by students and library staff. College Institutional Repository TRAP (Thesis Reports & Projects) The institutional repository TRAP, where online versions of student theses are maintained, now has 554 titles, with 12,677 downloads. 2012 saw a significant increase in usage of the database by students. Further enhancements are planned including development of personal research pages and increased functionality to enable multimedia functionality.

Facilitating Research

An Information Project Officer was appointed to provide tailored services for postgraduate students. The service provides guidance on academic writing, referencing and accessing and critically evaluating academic research to assist students in preparation for their literature review. Feedback from users to date has been positive and the service is now being extended to enhance the support for International Students.

The library service works with other academic and support staff to organise the Academic Writing Club. Initially the club focused on supporting postgraduate students in improving their academic writing skills. It is planned to extend the Academic Writing Club format to all students. The club has also established a firmer link with English Language Support tutors. Individual and class group tuition is provided on the library's online resources and on topics such as referencing and academic writing.

Resources
Online Databases & Journals: The Library currently subscribes to 42 online databases/ resources, these resources are accessible from multiple entry points (Library portal; Library catalogue; Athens website and from Summon, the Library search platform). Search facilities across these databases are provided through Summon and JustCite a specialised legal search platform.

The introduction of degrees in Cloud Computing and Psychology resulted in the provision of a number of additional databases in the physical sciences, e-journals and e-books of the Science Direct database and the American Psychological Association databases.

Alternative formatting of texts for students with special needs is provided using scanning software to convert hard copy texts into electronic formats.

Library Collections: The library is a leader in its core subject areas with 56,630 titles and 500 e-Book titles. Through providers such as DawsonEra and Safari students can read popular course texts online at home or on campus. The library currently subscribes to over 250 serial/periodical titles. A number of these titles are also available online (either as separate issues or on one of the commercial online databases to which the library also subscribes).

Quality Assurance Review
In March 2012 a Peer Review Group was formed by National College of Ireland to review the Library & Information Services. Panel members from Dundalk Institute of Technology, the Irish Council of General Practitioners, IT Sligo along with a Learner Representative from UCD undertook the review. The panel found the Library & Information Service to be an excellent example of a user-centred and responsive service. The service is currently implementing a number of recommendations from the review.

NCI Business Incubation and Commercial Office

The Commercial Office
The Commercial Office manages a number of areas in the college, including conferencing, student residences, commercial property letting, the Business Incubation Centre and the NCI car park. Apart from revenue generation, the Commercial Office oversees the management of the campus facilities where there is great emphasis placed on energy/waste management and controlling costs.

There are 286 rooms on-campus within the student residences and NCI strives to create a community of resident learners. We have maintained 100% occupancy by extending residency to students from all of Dublin's colleges and universities.

Over the past year NCI has hosted commercial events on behalf of a number of organisations. Over the past year NCI has hosted a number of international conferences and worked with a number of commerical, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations in education.

Business Incubation Centre
Since the Business Incubation Centre opened in 2004 over 350 jobs were created in companies incubated here at NCI within the ICT sector. The primary objective of the Business Incubation Centre is to attract entrepreneurs and start-up companies in the technology area creating employment and trading globally. The Centre works with Enterprise Ireland's High potential Start Up (HPSU) division to ensure we continue to attract companies of this nature.

In June 2012 there were 21 companies in residence employing 130 people helping to maintain 100% occupancy and a pipeline of companies wishing to take space here at NCI. There are many success stories of companies and entrepreneurs that started out in NCI or scaled their companies from our Incubation Centre.

A good example of a high growth company that has just exited NCI in order to expand further is Storyful, with over 30 staff and trading globally.

The Business Incubation clients give talks and host workshops with students and potential entrepreneurs to assist in getting start-up companies off the ground and creating further employment. The client companies are also very proactive in giving student placements and a number of graduates have gone on to work for host companies. The concentration of activities in the Cloud Computing area as well as the opening of the Cloud Competency Centre has increased the activity and interaction between client companies and NCI both in practical ways and also by sitting on advisory committees for programme development.

Funding is paramount for all start-up companies and we are delighted to say that NCI host Frontline Venture a new VC providing start up finance to technology companies. In total €2.2million was raised in 2012 by companies in the Business Incubation Centre. This funding will enable many of these companies to accelerate their growth and expand into new markets. Eventovate, a company that joined us in 2011, haS grown to 9 employees within the year.

Current resident companies in the Business Incubation Centre include: Clear Currency, Frontline Ventures, Commodity Vectors, Sam 360, Eventovate, Tapadoo, Barracuda FX, Davra Networks, ClipSure/Trackalyse, Britebill and Lucey Technology.

Technology Transfer/Commercialisation
NCI joined the Dublin Regional Innovation Consortium with DIT, IADT, ITB and ITT to centralise and avail of the expertise provided through the commercialisation office at DIT. The Alliance currently is recruiting for a TT expert to join the team and work with each member of the alliance providing support to individual colleges.

Open Innovation
In 2010 NCI joined up with Dublin City Council, UCD and Nova in an Interreg funded project to promote Open Innovation through a series of workshops, masterclasses and lectures. The aim of the project is to encourage more open innovation and to have tangible projects that have a transnational dimension.
In June 2012 NCI in conjunction with University College London and NCI's Discovering Universities programme hosted a Citrus Saturday week long series of workshops aimed at developing second level school children to become entrepreneurs. 17 students with 8 mentors worked in an open innovation environment to start up a company to sell citrus drinks through 3 stalls within the Dublin Docklands; an added incentive for the student was that they got to keep the profits.

Early Learning Initiative

Supporting Parents, Communities and Schools in the Education of Children

The Early Learning Initiative (ELI) at the National College of Ireland (NCI) engages parents, educators and the community as a whole in preparing young people for life in Ireland today. In 2011-12, we reached a greater number of children, parents and educators than ever before and, through independent assessment, we confirmed the impact and significance of our work.

For the past five years, the ELI has operated as a pilot programme. With initial funding from generous, social-minded individuals, companies and foundations, ELI has been successful. It has developed a reputation for designing innovative programmes, both nationally and internationally, that are relevant and responsive to our ever-changing social environment. As it is our intention to grow and develop over the next five years, broadening both our reach and impact, a detailed fundraising plan, based on initial, positive conversations with existing ELI contacts, has been put in place. A number of corporate donors, including Smurfit Kappa, Dublin Port Authority, McCann FitzGerald, State Street, and Citco have made generous, early commitments and this gives us great hope that, having learned about the ELI, many more business and community leaders will pledge support in the coming weeks and months.

Without the generosity and commitment of all our supporters, the ELI would not be able to reach out to ever more children and families in the local community. We would like to acknowledge and thank all who supported the ELI over the past year.

The sustained financial investment of our patrons and funders has enabled the ELI to provide world-class parent and child learning support programmes in the Docklands. These include the original donors, along with the Department of Education and

Skills, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Mount St Club Trustees, The Atlantic Philanthropies and Pobal, who fund the National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) Early Numeracy Project in the Docklands, Irish Continental Group, Royal Sun Alliance and the Ireland Funds. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. We would also like to extend our sympathies to the family of Maeve Binchy, who was another generous supporter of the ELI.

Local parents, childcare centres, schools, TDs and community groups have actively engaged with and participated in the ELI programmes and we thank them for their friendship, generosity and commitment to improving the education and life chances of the children in the Docklands.

Annual Overview
At least 3,000 children, parents and professionals in the Docklands took part in various ELI programmes last year. Over 3,000 books were read during Zoom Ahead with Books Programme, while the 19 local home visitors modelled talking, reading and playing with 80 children and their families 3,150 times this year. Over 140 children in 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes spent at least 1,750 hours playing board games and taking part in quizzes for the NCI Challenges.

The Baseline Evaluation by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College confirmed for us the impact ELI is having on the Docklands community (Share et al 2011). The knowledge and skills of parents in the Docklands have increased. By making learning enjoyable and something to be shared across the family, ELI has succeeded in deepening parents' involvement in their children's development. The educational aspirations and attainment of the children in the Docklands have also increased.

In 2011-12, the interest in the community in the Parent Child Home Programme increased significantly. We had budgeted for 60 families but accepted 80 families on the programme. Unfortunately, there were no places available for approximately 100 families, who had applied. Feedback from parents is very positive with most mentioning how much their children are learning and how they love books as a result of the programme. Parents also enjoy the programme and mention how through PCHP they are learning different ways to talk, read and play with their children.

The involvement of fathers in our programmes has also increased, which is extremely encouraging in light of the research which highlights the importance of fathers' involvement in their children's learning if they are to succeed in education and life. A single father, who was very worried about his ability to parent his child, told us how PCHP helped both himself and his son gain more confidence. The Home Visitor in her interactions with the child showed the father how much his son was capable of. As a result, the father now has high hopes for his son along with the belief in his ability to support his son's journey through the education system.

The implementation of the NEYAI Docklands Early Numeracy Programme, in particular the Curriculum Priority weeks, was very successful due to the enthusiasm and creativity of all involved. Parents, NCI, the early years centres and primary schools in the Docklands all worked together throughout the year to improve the numeracy outcomes for children. Parents felt that the programme helped them to understand the simple things they could do at home to help improve their children's numeracy skills, while early years staff found that the children really grasped the numeracy concepts, which were reinforced at home and in school. In the Docklands, maths became great fun for everyone.

Over the past year, ELI continued to influence national policy. In May, the ELI was asked to make a submission to the Oireachtas Joint

Committee on Jobs, Social Protection and Education on the work we are doing to address educational disadvantage in the Docklands. Following the submission, on 13th July, Josephine Bleach made a presentation at a seminar 'Empowering the Community to Teach the Child' organised by Aodhán Ó Ríordáin, TD, as part of the process of informing the report for the Oireachtas Committee on new strategies to tackle educational disadvantage in the community. Submissions were also made to the public consultation by the Department for Children and Youth Affairs on improving the lives of children and young people over the next five years and to the Early Years Policy Unit, DES in relation to Síolta - The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and the future development of the ECCE sector in Ireland.

Members of the ELI team have also presented at various conferences throughout the year. These included the European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Conference; PLÉ Conference; British Early Childhood Education Research Association (BECERA) Conference; Dublin Region Higher Education Authority (DRHEA) Widening Participation Symposium; Value and Virtue (Action Research) Conference and the Start Strong Conference, The National Children's Strategy and Children's Early Years.

Programme	Outline	Numbers involved in 2011-12
Toddler Groups (0-3 years)	Based on Síolta, The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (CECDE 2006) and Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2010), this programme gives parents an opportunity to learn how to support their children's' development, while networking with other parents.	66 parents

68 children |
| **Parents Together Community Course** | A parenting programme, developed jointly with Parents Plus Charity, it is run in partnership with the Home School Community (HCSL) Coordinators, family support workers etc. in the local community. | 20 facilitators

30 parents |
| **National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI) Numeracy Project** | Beginning in 2011, this project is aimed at improving early years' numeracy and mathematical skills in the Docklands through the provision from birth to 6 years of an integrated programme of activities, training and support for children, their parents and families, and educators.

It incorporates ELI's continuous professional development for Early Childhood and Care (ECCE) practitioners, which is designed to improve the quality of service and education provided in the ECCE settings in line with Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2009) and Síolta, The Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (CECDE 2006b). There are training workshops for parents, three curriculum priority weeks and two story telling workshops a year as part of this programme. | 188 Early Childhood and Care Staff

663 children and their parents |
| **Parent Child Home Programme (18 months – 3yrs)** | Local home visitors visit families twice a week to model talking, reading and playing with the children.

Weekly supervision sessions and a training programme, which incorporates Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework and Síolta, The Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, is provided for the home visiting team. They are also completing a FETAC Level 5 Major Award in Child Care. | 19 home visitors

80 children and their families |

Programme	Outline	Numbers involved in 2011-12
Zoom Ahead with Books (Junior Infants – 1st Class)	This programme is extremely popular with both parents and children reading together at home and doing a drawing (both parent and child) to illustrate the part of the book that appealed to them.	293 children 245 adults Over 3,000 books read
NCI Challenge (2nd, 3rd & 4th Classes)	This programme was designed to encourage the development of the children's cross-curricular skills as well as encouraging parental involvement in their children's education and schools.	Rummikub: 55 children 45 parents Table Quiz: 60 children 55 parents Monopoly: 25 children 18 parents
Educational Guidance (5th & 6th Classes)	This programme aims to raise the awareness among students, parents and teachers of the necessity of having a third level education if one wishes to pursue certain careers. The exhibition helps to inform the local community of how choices made at the end of the primary school can limit life chances in terms of accessing further education and career opportunities.	68 children 25 parents attended the exhibition
Stretch to Learn Awards	These awards are designed to encourage and celebrate educational achievement. They recognise the efforts students and their families have made to improve their skills and knowledge. The criteria are: · Listener · Persistence · Communicator · Friendship · Good Student/Academic Excellence	Primary: 300 children (83 received awards) 172 adults attended ceremony Second Level : 135 students (36 received awards) 58 adults attended ceremony
Tuition Support (14-18 years)	This programme provides tuition support in English and Maths for second level students, both in NCI and the community.	56 students

Programme	Outline	Numbers involved in 2011-12
Discover University (14-17 years)	This programme helps young people to develop a positive set of attitudes, learning dispositions and skills that will support them at both second and third level.	32 students 30 adults attended ceremony
Third Level Support (17+ years)	This programme provides personal, career and financial support to third level students from the area to help them develop the life skills they will need for college and future career.	19 students
Volunteering Programme	Raising young people's educational and career aspirations is a key element of ELI's work. Involving NCI's students and corporate volunteers in ELI's primary and second level programmes allows young people to see third level education as an attainable, desirable and accessible prospect. This programme allows volunteers (third level students and corporate) to enhance their own interpersonal communication skills as well as make a positive difference to the educational life chances of the people in the local community.	12 students and 4 corporate volunteers
Research and Development	Using a community action research methodology, programmes are being evaluated and developed in partnership with the local community. Increased interest in ELI at both national and internal level · A submission to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Jobs, Social Protection and Education on the work ELI is doing to address educational disadvantage in the Docklands. · Involvement in national consultation processes e.g. Síolta, National Children's Strategy · Invitations to speak about our work The baseline evaluation of ELI by the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College has been completed and it is hoped to launch the final report in 2012-13. The NEYAI Project is being externally evaluated by a team of researchers comprising Dr. Kieran McKeown (Project Co-ordinator), Trutz Haase (Data Analyst) and Professor Jay Belsky (Research Director of the UK's National Evaluation of Sure Start Research Team).	10 conference papers accepted last year (6 national and 4 international)

Quality Assurance & Statistical Services

During the academic year 2011/12, the Quality Assurance & Statistical Services (QASS) office continued to support academic and service function operations through policy and process development and improvement.

Programme Development & Validation
In January 2012, HETAC devolved validation sub processes on a case-by-case basis for programmes in Computing and Business from levels 6-9. This facilitated NCI's continued programme development strategy. The table below outlines the new programmes which were validated in 2011-12.

Programme Title	Award Type	Level	Credits
School of Business			
MSc in Finance	Major	9	90
Higher Diploma in Business in Finance	Major	8	60
BA (Hons) Psychology	Major	8	180
Higher Diploma in Arts in Psychology	Major	8	60
Diploma in Psychology	Special Purpose	7	60
BA(Hons) Marketing Practice	Major	8	180
BA(Hons) Economics & Finance	Major	8	180
Certificate in Digital Marketing	Special Purpose	8	30
School of Computing			
MSc in Cloud Computing	Major	9	90
Higher Diploma in Science in Software Development	Major	8	60

Support Service Reviews
2011-12 also saw the completion of
two support service reviews which were
undertaken by the Library & Information
Service and the Student Support Service
teams. Each service undertook a
self-evaluation process which involved
external benchmarking and engagement
with stakeholders. Panel visits took
place in April 2012 and September 2012
respectively. Each service will provide an
update on progress in 2012-13.

Learner Satisfaction 2011/12:
Overall satisfaction for teaching and learning
is at 4.7 out of a possible 6. This is on a par
with previous years.

Overall satisfaction for college services is
at 4.2 out of a possible 6. This is lower
than previous years and may be as a result
of taking the library indicators out of the
survey this year as the library is undertaking
its functional service quality review.

In both cases, this indicates that students
'agree mostly' with the indicators for
services and teaching and learning.

Seminars/Conferences Attended
EAIR conference at University of Warsaw,
September 2011.

International Office

There are now 123 international students from 22 countries studying at NCI with another 40 expected to start in January. Undergraduate students make up 55 per cent of the current total of international students while 45 per cent are at postgraduate level. The students are divided very evenly between the School of Business and the School of Computing. We aim to increase the number of international students by 100 per cent over the next 2 years. We plan to achieve this through collaborations with institutions and continuing marketing activities in our targeted world regions.

Intercultural student support at NCI
The Chinese New Year and the Indian Diwali festival as well as Irish celebrations such as Easter, Halloween and Christmas were celebrated at NCI in 2012 with excellent international students participation. We plan to extend this in 2013 to include a Middle Eastern festival. This year an English language support class was made available to all international students during their first year of study at NCI. Students are given learning and language support in an informal environment where they are shown methods of self-directed learning and study skills.

International Marketing activities in the 4 NCI focused markets
NCI targets China, India, Ireland and, to a lesser extent, some other countries including Russia, Brazil and Argentina. The following describes the main current activities and new developments in the 4 regions:

China
In March 2012 NCI was reinstated as an approved college on the Chinese Ministry of Education's website which we had been excluded from for the last 3 years along with other Irish colleges. This development means that NCI can now progress with collaboration agreements with Chinese institutions as well as work with education agents across China with the support of the NCI China manager Lisa Pan in our Office in Shanghai.

Dr Phillip Matthews and Professor Jimmy Hill both made visits to China this year to progress collaboration agreements. Mr Des Gargan from the School of Business lectured in Taipei at our partner college Chihlee IT for the second year running.

The following collaboration activities are currently underway in China:

· This year for the second time we received HRM students from our partner colleges in China , Hubei University and Chihlee IT in Taipei
· Dr Phillip Matthews signed MOUs to collaborate with Kunming University and Hebei University in the areas of HRM and Computing
· NCI plans to collaborate with two other institutions, the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SHUFE) and Dalian University through the School of Business in 2013

India
Almost a quarter of the current NCI international students are from India - studying mainly in the School of Computing at postgraduate level, with the MSc in Cloud Computing being a particularly popular choice of programme.

NCI appointed John Murphy agent manager for India in 2011 and John has been developing the NCI agent base for the last year. The plan for 2013 is to develop the NCI agent base to new regions in India and beyond the larger main Indian cities.

The NCI India office opened in 2011 which is located in Hyderabad in the region of Andrah Pradesh South India. The main focus and ultimate goal of the activities in the NCI India office is to develop undergraduate collaboration programmes with colleges in that region with both the School of Computing and the School of Business.

· This year our current collaboration agreements in computing made progress with our partners KL University, Vignan University and the Chaitanya group of colleges in Andrah Pradesh
· There are 2 further collaboration agreements in the pipeline with branches of the JNTU University in Andrah Pradesh and we should see the first group of students arriving from JNTU in 2015

Ireland
Most new NCI International students are students who are based in Ireland but this will become less the case as the new Irish visa rules allow students 7 years as a maximum to study in Ireland so many potential postgraduate students choose to return to their home country instead when their visas are 'timed out'.

This year NCI collaborated well with the Dublin International Foundation college and we received undergraduate and postgraduate graduates who progressed on to our programmes.

NCI has close links with the Chinese Association of students and scholars (CSSA) and they held their AGM at NCI in 2012. NCI regularly advertises in local Chinese newspapers and websites in Ireland.

Other Countries
NCI has in the past welcomed small numbers of students who have discovered NCI through word of mouth or on-line from other countries such as Russia, Brazil and Argentina. Now there are more students coming to Ireland from the Middle East due to generous government scholarships which these students can avail of. NCI is building relationships with Middle-Eastern country Embassies that administer these scholarships such as Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. NCI Director of Marketing Robert Ward attended an education fair in Oman April of 2012 and plans to attend again in 2013.

The planned development of a new NCI website will attract individual students from other parts of the world as well as agents from regions in the world that we don't visit.
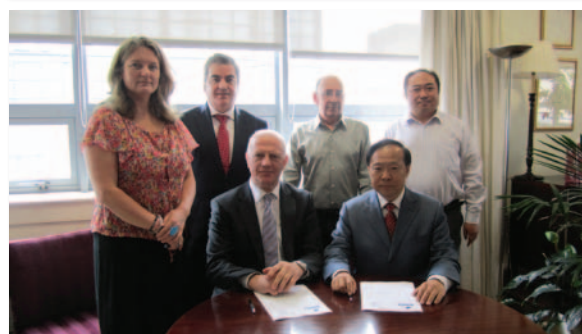
Marketing and Student Recruitment

The role of the marketing and student recruitment department is to raise the profile and awareness of NCI and to inform potential students about the educational options available at the college. In 2011/2012 we continued our communications campaign using real NCI students in their own words, to emphasise the real world nature of the programmes, approachability of staff, excellence of facilities and location, and the internationally accredited nature of programmes offered. At peak recruitment periods this was emphasised through advertising across TV, radio, online and press. This testimonial approach continues to be well received by potential students.
In addition to ongoing advertising and communications several other initiatives are noteworthy:

· Through our School Liaison Programme we visited over 200 schools to inform senior cycle students about the CAO courses at NCI. Free leaving cert revision sessions were also held to encourage potential CAO applicants to visit the college.

· Open information events were held throughout the year for part-time and full-time students, with attendance numbers continuing to grow.

· Our awareness campaign around the launch of the Cloud Competency Centre was particularly successful and secured considerable media coverage both traditional and online.

· A third series of business breakfasts, 'Cornflakes and Commerce: NCI's Executive Breakfast Serial' took place with all events fully booked and attended by senior managers across a range of business disciplines. Speakers covered topics from HR to social media to cloud computing which allowed us to profile relevant courses to a new audience. All events are covered by our media partner Metro Herald, which has a readership of 195,000 people every day in the greater Dublin area.

· We continue to represent NCI at a wide range of educational fairs and events - some highlights of the 2011/2012 academic year include: Media Futures Conference in Dun Laoghaire; Which Course, GradIreland and Postgrad Ireland, all in the RDS; Career Zoo in the Mansion House; the Dublin Inner City Education Fair at Croke Park, and Legal Island events in the Shelbourne Hotel.

· We hosted the third year of our web technology conference, the dot conf, with 300 attendees, an eclectic range of high quality speakers and considerable media coverage, both new and traditional. The event continues to grow year on year and its success has had considerable benefits in positioning NCI as a centre for excellence in the web technologies and cloud computing arenas.

· An extensive range of publications were produced throughout the year, ranging from our full and part-time prospectuses to posters, reports, leaflets, brochures and more.

· The marketing department manage the college website and have commenced a period of consultation to relaunch the website in summer 2013. The process started with usability testing carried out by the National e-Learning Laboratory at NCI.

· Our social media efforts continue to pay dividends with our Facebook fans growing to 5191 and Twitter followers to 2886. This year we also launched the college blog which can be accessed through the homepage of our website, and has been very well received.

NCI at a Glance

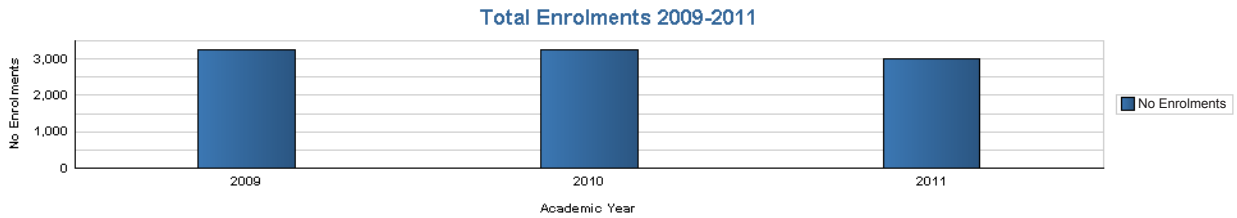## 1. General Enrolment Trends

Figure 1: Total Enrolments

Total Enrolments 2009-2011

Figure 2: Full-Time Enrolments by Level

Full-Time Enrolments by Level 2009-2011
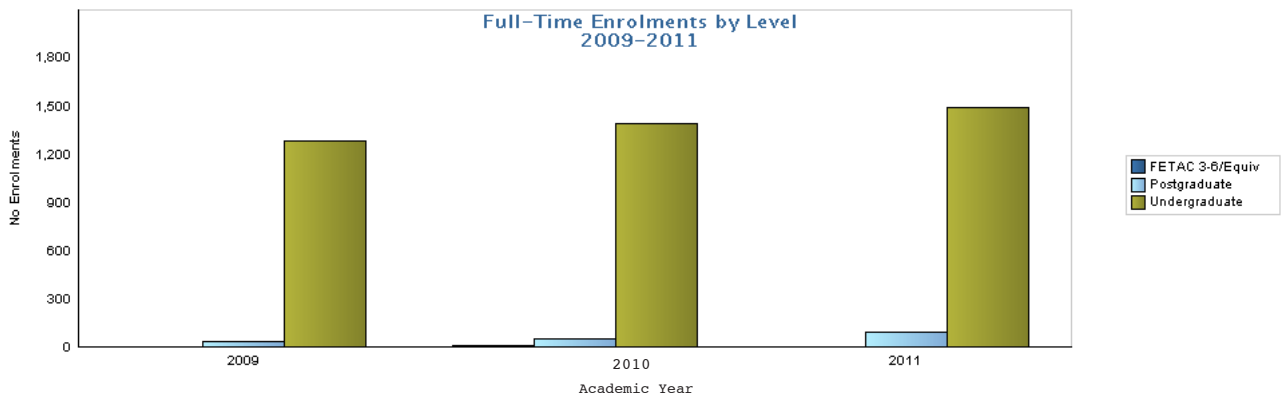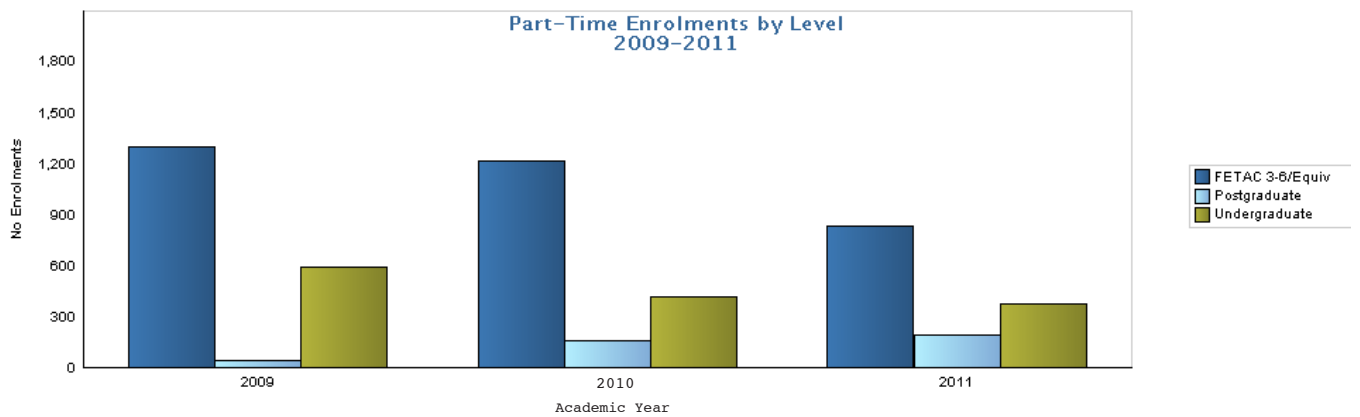

Figure 3: Part-Time Enrolments by Level

Part-Time Enrolments by Level 2009-2011

2. New Entrant Data

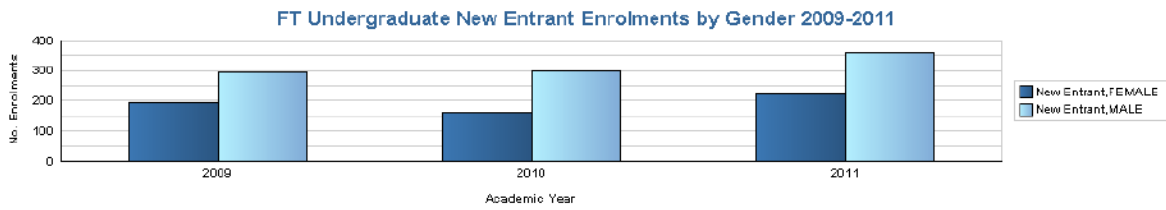Figure 4: New Entrant (FT) Enrolment by Gender

FT Undergraduate New Entrant Enrolments by Gender 2009-2011

Figure 5: Mature New Entrants by Gender

FT Mature New Entrants by Gender Enrolments 2009-2011
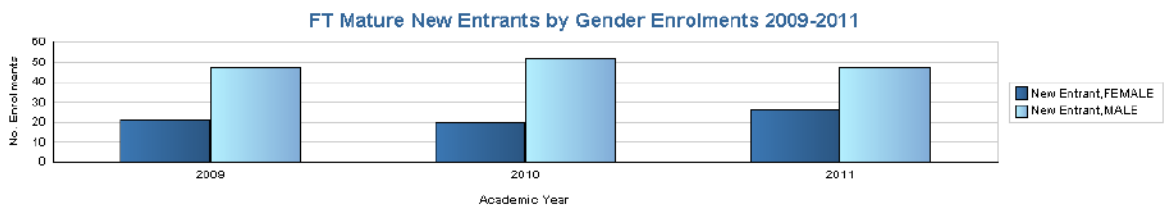
3. Programme Trends

Figure 6: Full-Time Enrolments by Subject Area

Full Time Enrolments by Subject Area 2009 - 2011
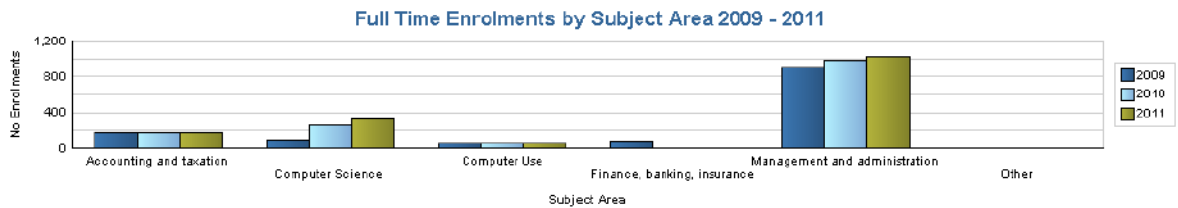
Figure 7: Part-Time Enrolments by Subject Area

PT Enrolments by Subject Area 2009 - 2011
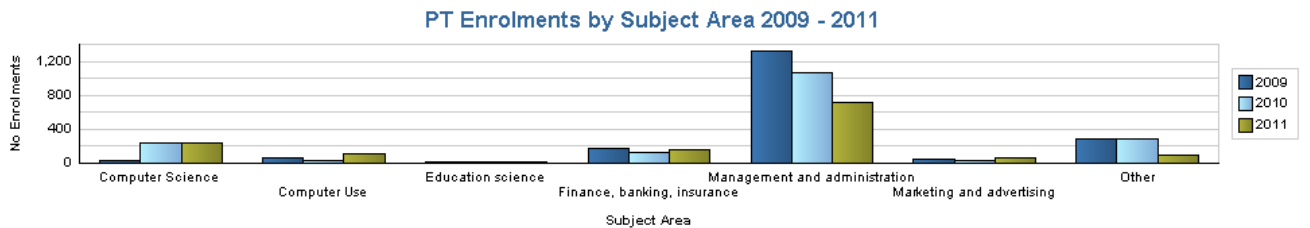
Figure 8: Postgraduate Enrolments by Subject Area

Postgraduate Enrolments by Subject Area 2009 - 2011
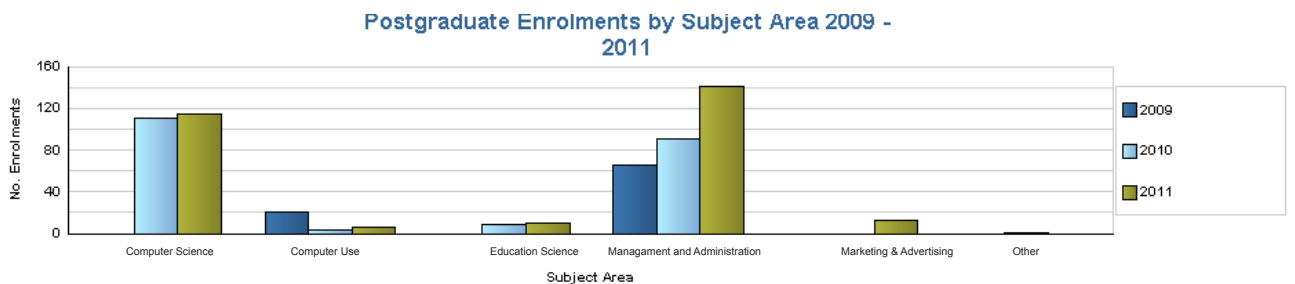
Figure 9: Percentage of Part-TIme Enrolments in NCI Subject Areas
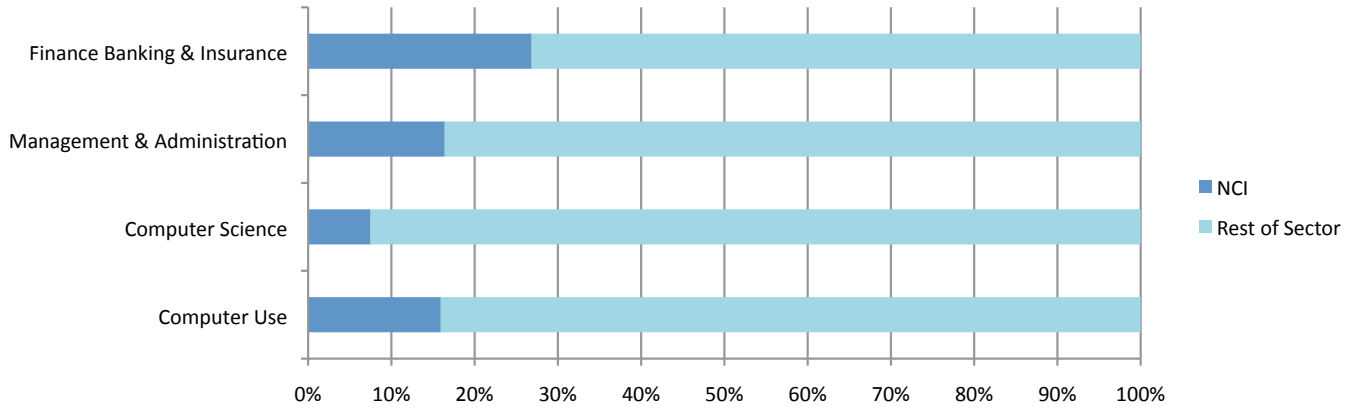
4. Demographic & Socio-Economic Data

4.1 Mature Learners

Figure 10: Percentage of Full -Time New Entrants that are Mature Students

Mature Students as a % of all FT Students 2009-2011
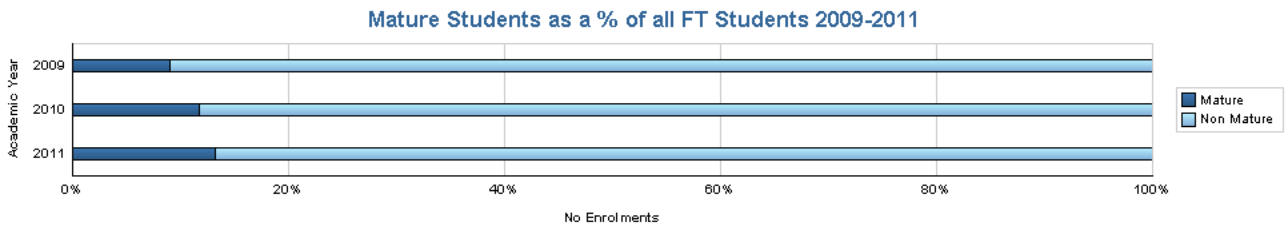
Figure 11: Mature Students as a Percentage of all New Entrants

Mature Students as a % of all New Entrants 2009-2011
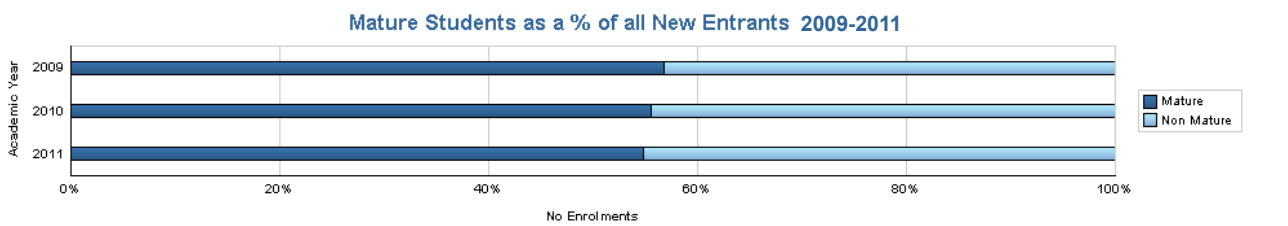
Figure 12: Mature Students as a Percentage of all Full-Time Undergraduate Students

Mature Students as a % of all Full-Time Undergraduate Students

4.2 Students in Receipt of Maintenance Grants
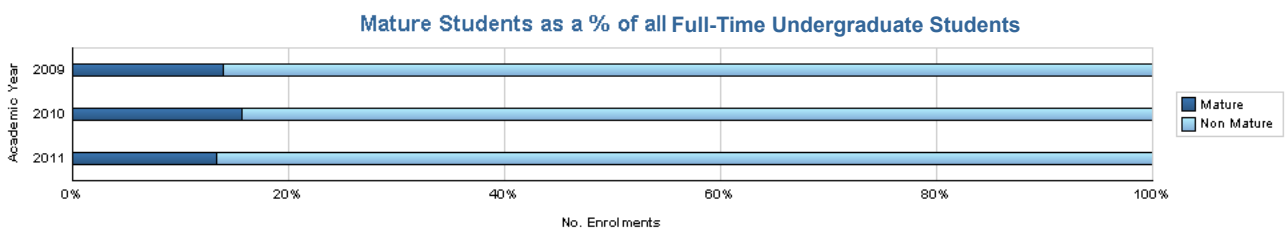
Figure 13: FT Undergraduate Students in Receipt of Maintenance Grants

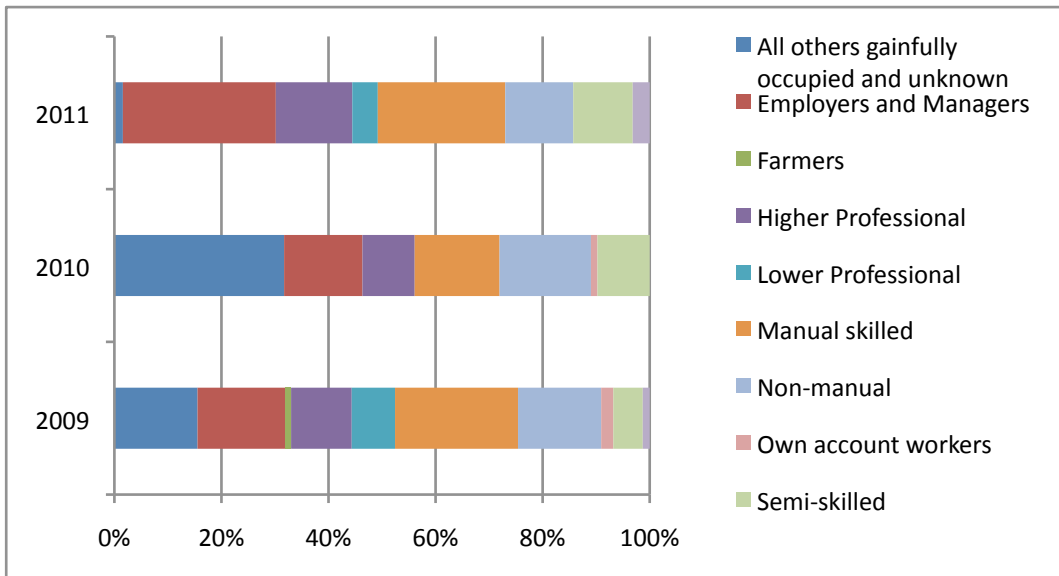### FT UndergraduateStudents in Receipt of Maintenance Grants 2009-2011
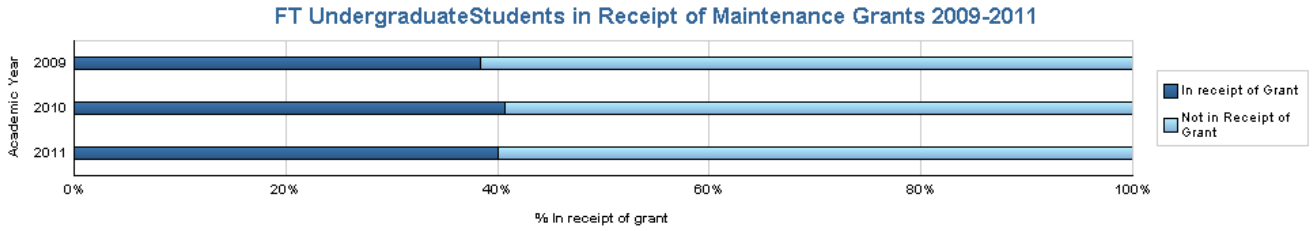
Figure 14: FT Undergraduate New Entrants in Receipt of Maintenance Grants

FT Undergraduate New Entrants in Receipt of Maintenance Grants 2009-2011
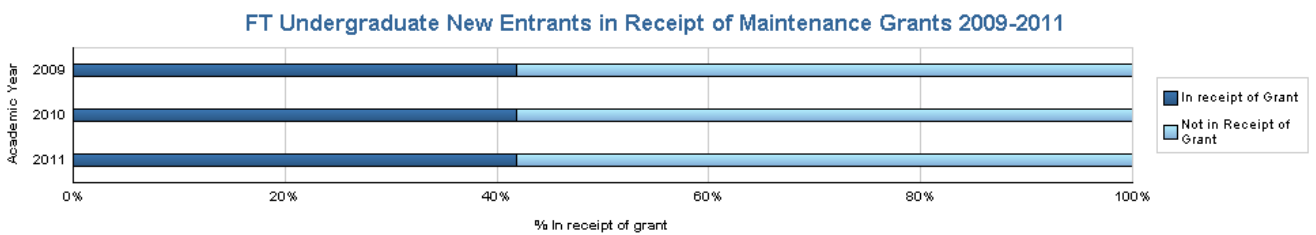
4.3 Socio-Economic Background

Figure 15: Father's Socio Economic Group

4.4 Disability

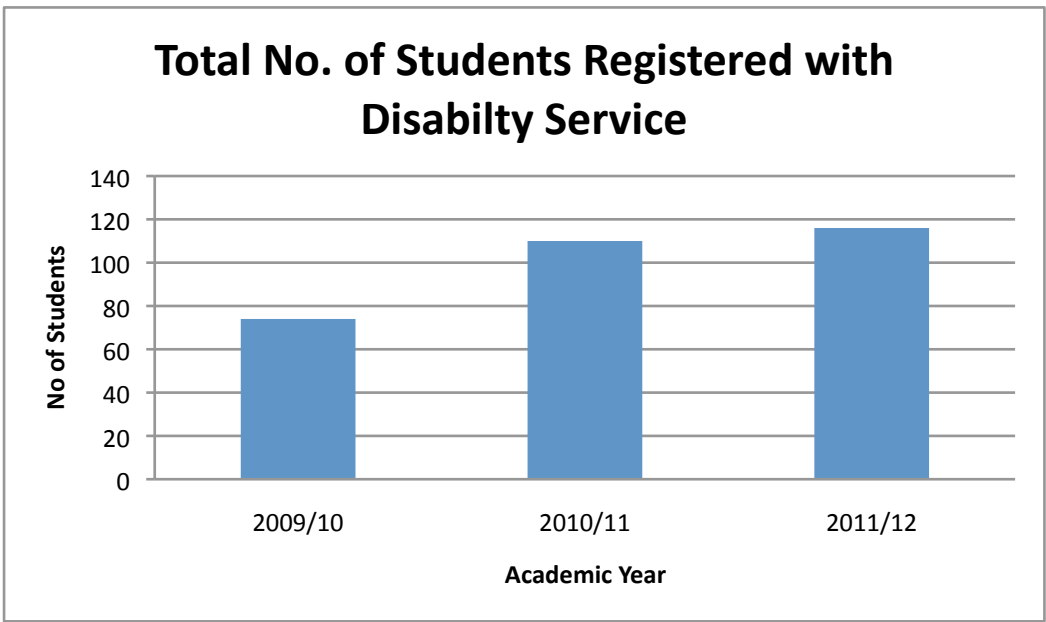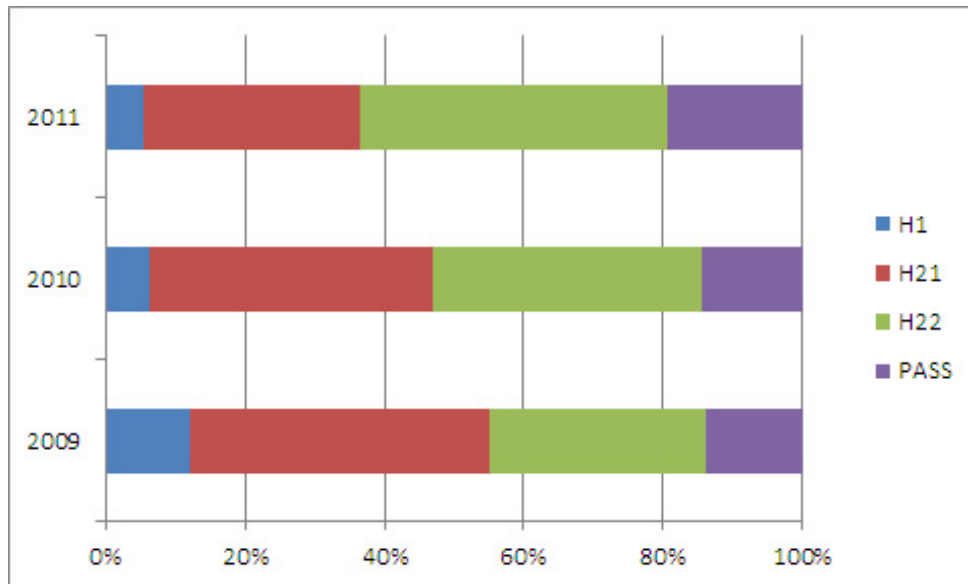Figure 16: Number with and Category of Disability
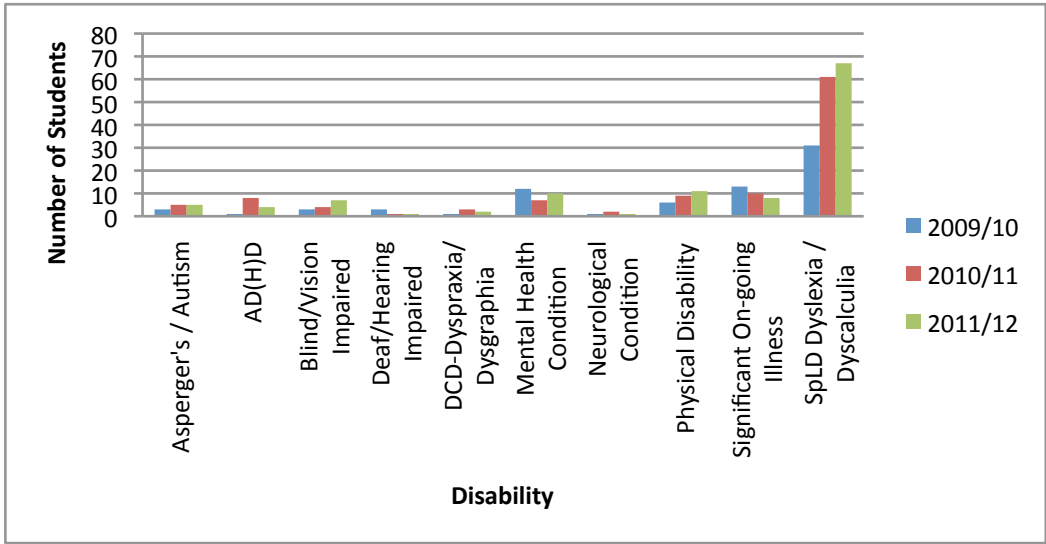
Figure 17: Total No. of Students Registered with Disability Service

5 Graduate Data

Figure 17: Graduate Data

Mayor Square
International Financial
Services Centre

George's Dock
Duga Sheoirse

chq
chq

olly Station
honghaile

Busáras
usáras

National College of Ireland, Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

National College of
Ireland