

Employability & Employment Guide 2018-2020

The Cork Institute of Technology Employability & Employment Guide outlines the Institute’s overall approach to employability and the supports available to students to assist in the transition to employment.

Contents

Executive Summary	3
What is Employability?	5
Employability in CIT	6
Curriculum Content, Course Development & External Stakeholder Participation	8
Learning Outcomes	8
External Stakeholder Participation	8
Accredited Work Placement Opportunities	9
Career Planning, Employment Services & Employment Outcomes	10
CIT Careers Service	10
Annual Graduate Outcomes Survey	11
Professional or State Body Accreditation & Endorsement	12
Promotion of Enterprise & Entrepreneurship	13
STEM Entrepreneurship	13
Determinants of SME Growth in Ireland	14
Accountancy Futures	14
NEAR Project	14
Engaged Student Project	14
Green Mentor	15
MYBUSINESS	16
NEW START	16
European Projects	17
Personal Development Opportunities & Extra-curricular Employment Skills Development	17
GOOD START Student Induction Programme	17
Class Representatives – Students’ Union Council	18
SPARQ at CIT: Student Partnership in Quality	19

Student to Student/Peer Assisted Learning and Support (PALS)	19
Part time Students' Union Officers	19
CIT Joint Mentorship Programme	20
Sports Clubs & Societies	20
Volunteering Abroad	21
Student Leaders	22
Alumni Internship.....	22
Student Alumni Ambassador Programme.....	22
Meet the Graduate.....	23
Further Information	23
AnSEO.....	23
CIT Employability Framework	23

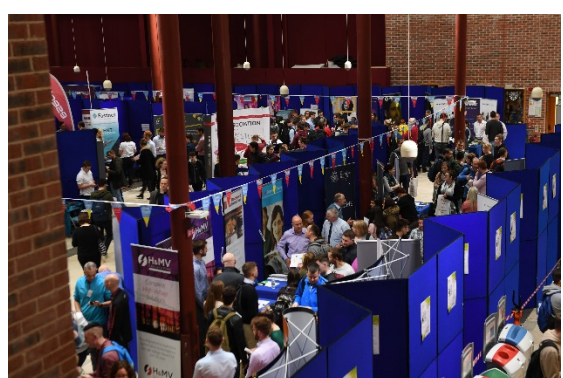
Executive Summary

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) is a leading higher education institution comprising of four campuses: Bishopstown, Crawford College of Art and Design (CCAD), Cork School of Music (CSM) and the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) offering a wide range of full-time and part-time higher education courses, at all levels up to and including PhD, in art and design, business, engineering, humanities, music, maritime studies, science and information technology.

CIT currently has circa 12,500 registered students with approximately 2,300 new entrants year on year. CIT has 1,425 staff members of which 824 are academic staff. CIT was awarded the Sunday Times Institute of Technology of the Year in 2007, 2010 and 2016.

Why study at CIT?

- <https://www.youtube.com/user/cit>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNDaLM3eb7k>



CIT prides itself on its applied approach to learning. There is an emphasis on developing practical skills, 'learning by doing', doing in learning, professional skills training and life-long learning to support preparedness for the workplace and the future among students and graduates. There are

both curriculum-embedded employability education programmes and employability education opportunities outside of the core curriculum. In-course employability includes group project work; cross discipline competitions, research assignments and practical lab work, both individual and team-based.

The multiple opportunities available to students to engage in employability development activities throughout their time in CIT include: work placement; employer engagement on campus and site visits; entrepreneurship initiatives; academic awards and competitions; student representation opportunities; development programmes; engagement with arts and culture; and extra-curricular activities and/or volunteering in college clubs and societies.

The Institute also encourages engagement in the community and additional work opportunities for the overall benefit of the individuals' personal and professional development.

CIT leverages the strengths of the region to foster an employability ecosystem within the Institute and enable opportunities for students and graduates. Cork is a very vibrant region featuring extensive and high-quality employment opportunities, the creation of which CIT has made a fundamental contribution to.

- Cork has the highest share of IDA-supported jobs, per member of the labour force, in Ireland (Ref: Ibec).
- Cork has the third highest share of EI-supported jobs, per member of the labour force, in Ireland (Ref: Ibec).
- 96% of CIT graduates are either in employment or undertaking further study. (Ref: CIT 2017 Graduate Outcomes Survey). STEM areas feature at the top of the list in this context and provide good quality employment opportunities for both STEM and non-STEM graduates alike.
- 94% of employed CIT graduates work in Ireland, 78% of these in Cork. (Ref: CIT 2017 Graduate Outcomes Survey).

Through its supply of STEM graduates, labour force upskilling opportunities, support for FDI organisations, SMEs and start-ups, and its research and innovation work, as well as through its openness to engage, CIT has provided a hugely significant contribution to the achievement of graduates and the wider society.

The impact of technology on work and in every industry requires students to have the skills to adapt to ongoing change and learn quickly. In recognition of this reality, CIT is promoting a portfolio career mindset among students. This is achieved by developing students' ability to self-reflect on project work and also while on work placement. In addition, students are supported in self-directed final year projects completed in partnership with relevant employers on real time issues.

CIT has a broad offering of part-time, evening and distance learning programmes. Many part-time, evening and distance learning students remain in employment and participate in education to upskill or to achieve a formal qualification related to their work. Upskilling people already in employment is a key strand of CIT's employability strategy and its belief in 'education in employment'.

What is Employability?

The term 'employability' is used to describe the skills, attributes and achievements that make individuals more likely to gain employment, retain employment and achieve success in their chosen career. This may be in a profession, self-employment, research, academic or portfolio career.

Employability is an important facet of higher education for the 21st century to ensure that graduates are prepared for, and able to contribute to the economy and wider society.

Employability skills enable employees to communicate appropriately and work effectively with colleagues, make important decisions, manage challenging situations, and represent an organisation in a professional manner.

Graduate recruiters look for evidence of students' employability skills during recruitment and selection processes to ensure candidates are the right 'fit' for the organisation and have the ability to contribute in a professional environment.

Examples of Employability Definitions

Stella Cottrell, University of East London (2015)

"A concurrence of: capability, preparedness for employment, and the relevance of these to the current job market."

Ibec (2018)

“A set of achievements – skills, knowledge and personal attributes - that enable individuals to fulfil their potential, gain employment, be effective in the workplace and successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits the individual, the employer, the community and the economy.”

Employability in CIT

CIT recognises employability as the appropriate use of knowledge, universal and technical skills, and competencies to acquire and sustain fulfilling work throughout life. CIT continues to foster an openness to lifelong learning and continuing professional development to support the employability of students and graduates. In the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), CIT gives formal recognition for all relevant learning gained prior to registering for a programme or module which can be used for non-standard or advanced entry, module exemptions and full academic awards. The use of innovation and technology are also important aspects of the learning environment in CIT, promoting accessibility to, and flexibility within courses, ultimately for the benefit of employability development among students.

Employability isn't just about getting a job. Employability takes a longer-term view of the student's ability to find and fulfil the requirements of roles, potentially in multiple careers.

Employers want graduates that can adapt to the rapidly evolving workplace. Organisations seek a mix of relevant subject skills, knowledge and understanding in graduates, in addition to requiring them to be well-rounded individuals with a set of personal skills that equip them to adapt well, work effectively with others, learn on the job, and participate and contribute in a valuable way to the organisation.

In CIT, we view external organisations and employers as key partners in graduate formation. The CIT Extended Campus is responsible for stimulating and supporting interactions which span three main pillars of engagement. This model has also been adopted by the Department of Education and Skills for inclusion in Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025.

Graduate Formation	Workforce Development	Research and Innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Syllabus Review •Curriculum inputs •Work placement •Guest Lectures •Employability and Entrepreneurship •Work-based projects •Site Visits •Sponsorship •Shared Governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Recruitment •Part-time Courses •Customised and on-site learning opportunities •Recognition of Prior Learning •Work-based Learning •Special Purpose Awards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Consultancy •Use of Equipment and Facilities •Contract and Collaborative Research •Innovation Vouchers and Innovation Partnerships •Licensing and Patents •Commercialisation •Incubation supports

In CIT, our approach ensures that from the very early stages of course proposal through to the teaching, learning and assessment, our curriculum is informed by and intrinsically linked to the workplace domain and learning benefits being applied in practical settings. Our relationships with companies includes industry-based case studies, site visits, guest lecturers and adjunct faculty from the forefront of industry as well as practical placement opportunities. Our lifelong learning offerings often result in specialised courses customised for a particular organisation or sector. We work with companies to ensure that flexible and responsive approaches to continuing professional development keep learning current and relevant for their employees for maintaining employability throughout a changing career. This flexibility includes the recognition of work-based and workplace learning within the context and content of academic programmes.

Students are continuously developing useful and marketable skills through the management of college work, assignments and projects, engaging in employment, work experience, internships and part-time jobs, performance in art and music, involvement in sports, personal interests and extracurricular activities, and volunteering.

However, the student or graduate often needs support in effectively articulating their range of skills and competencies, which can be achieved through a variety of supportive employability interventions, both facilitated and self-directed, and CIT is committed to providing development opportunities to all students.

Curriculum Content, Course Development & External Stakeholder Participation

Learning Outcomes

The approach to teaching and learning in CIT involves independent learning, project and team based activities, site visits, continuous assessments, academic supports, and opportunities to study abroad. Problem-based learning and critical thinking are embedded in the curriculum to support the preparation of students for the workplace.

In-depth course details including information about the modules and learning outcomes undertaken at each stage of academic programmes are available on www.cit.ie.

External Stakeholder Participation

Frequent and intensive liaison with external stakeholders is a constant feature of CIT's activities and programme provision, be it through its participation in national and regional fora such as the [South West Regional Skills Forum](#), the formal engagements of offices such as the Office of the Vice President for External Affairs, the [Extended Campus](#) or the [CIT Alumni Office](#) and the stakeholder engagement activities of the faculties. Moreover, a very effective and extensive network of regional, national or international contacts has been built up by CIT's academic and research community.

All programmes are subject to robust academic programme quality assurance processes, and academic and industry experts are involved in these. Any new programme proposal is considered by a programme validation panel, and this panel must include independent experts. In keeping with the career-focused mission of CIT, an appropriate balance between academic and professional expertise is to be sought in the selection. Similarly, any new module must be evaluated by two external experts, one from academia and one from industry. The external reviewers are provided with detailed criteria for content review.

All programmes are subject to periodic review. The Programmatic Review is divided into two phases. [Programme review panels](#) must include a minimum of three external experts with appropriate strategic and management experience for the first, strategic phase of the review. The second phase involves detailed review of the programmes, and the panel for this phase must include at least two external members, one academic and one representative of industry.

Schools and departments are asked to provide information on stakeholder feedback in submission documents for new programme validations and programmatic review. Programme boards are prompted to report on stakeholder engagements, feedback and any proposed actions arising from these as part of the Annual Programme Status Review.

Some departments and schools have also established formal professional/industry advisory boards or focus groups which enable an ongoing formal exchange with external stakeholders on the quality and operation of programmes. Feedback from these boards ensures the relevancy of the curriculum offered by CIT.

The Institute also has a policy for the appointment of adjunct faculty. This allows for the appointment, for a specific term, normally three years, of academic and/or professional experts of various disciplines as adjunct or visiting lecturers. Typically, they will be involved in the delivery of modules, often bringing a new expertise to the academic department. They may also input into the design of new programmes and/or modules, or act as supervisors of postgraduate students. More informally, many departments invite experts from industry to give guest lectures to students.

The involvement of external examiners, one industry – one academic, is regulated under the Institute's regulations. These set out detailed procedures for the selection and appointment of the external examiners and for their role and responsibilities in the examination process.

[Accredited Work Placement Opportunities](#)

Each academic year, approximately 2,000 CIT students from 65 courses undertake accredited work placement opportunities with companies in regional, national and international locations. Students are supported in their pre-placement preparation through access to skills assessments, professional development, CV reviews, and interview preparation and practice.

CIT Placement Coordinators engage with students throughout their time on placement and post-placement activities allow for reflection on the learning and development gained through their relevant workplace experience.

Career Planning, Employment Services & Employment Outcomes

CIT Careers Service

The CIT Careers Service provides student-centred careers education and guidance for the benefit of the individual's personal, professional and employability skills development. The Careers Service actively engages with CIT students and graduates, CIT staff members, employers and external agencies to support the transition to the workplace for students and graduates. This is achieved through the provision of core career planning and preparation activities, employer engagement, employability education programmes and workplace monitoring, all of which positively impact on student employability.

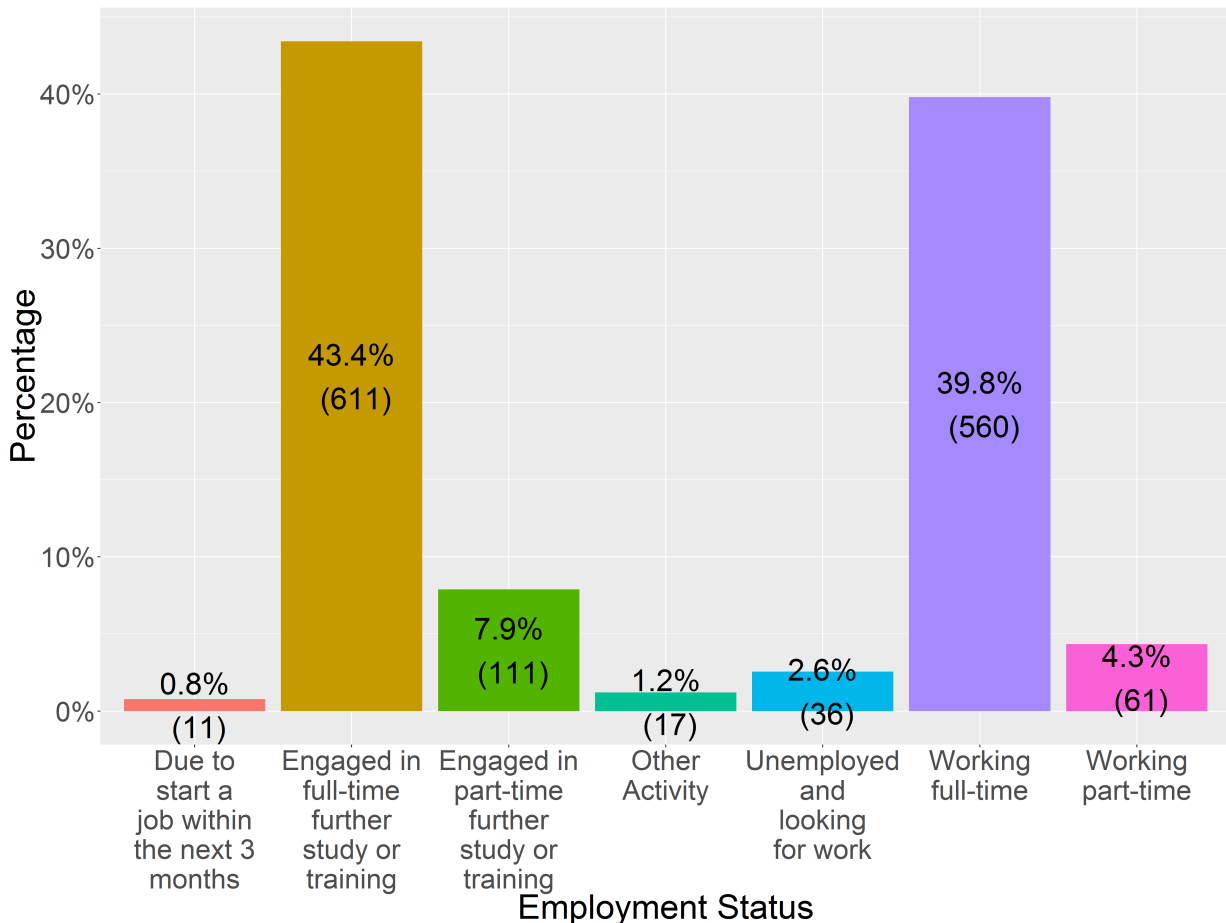
Employability education programmes are designed to raise self-awareness, promote personal and professional development, increase knowledge of job roles and careers, and embed a growth mindset for lifelong learning. The Careers Service is committed to enhancing existing employability education programmes, while also developing additional programmes to continually progress Careers Education in CIT.

Core Career Planning & Preparation Activities	Core Career Planning & Preparation Activities	Employer Engagement Activities
Careers Clinics and Drop-in Sessions for all career related queries	Mock Interviews – Individual work with students and work with departments as part of assessments	Company Presentations & Information Stands On Campus
Individual Career Planning sessions with students	Employability Education Programmes	Annual Careers & Employability Fair
'What Next' series of discipline specific informational resources including employability skills, and career options	<i>In-class Programmes</i> ; Work Placement Preparation. Career Development & Planning.	Dedicated SME Careers Events
Use of self-assessments including Employability Skills Audit, personal SWOT analysis, etc...	Workplace Preparation Programme for students registered with the Disability Support Service	Joint Mentorship Programme (In conjunction with CIT Alumni Office)

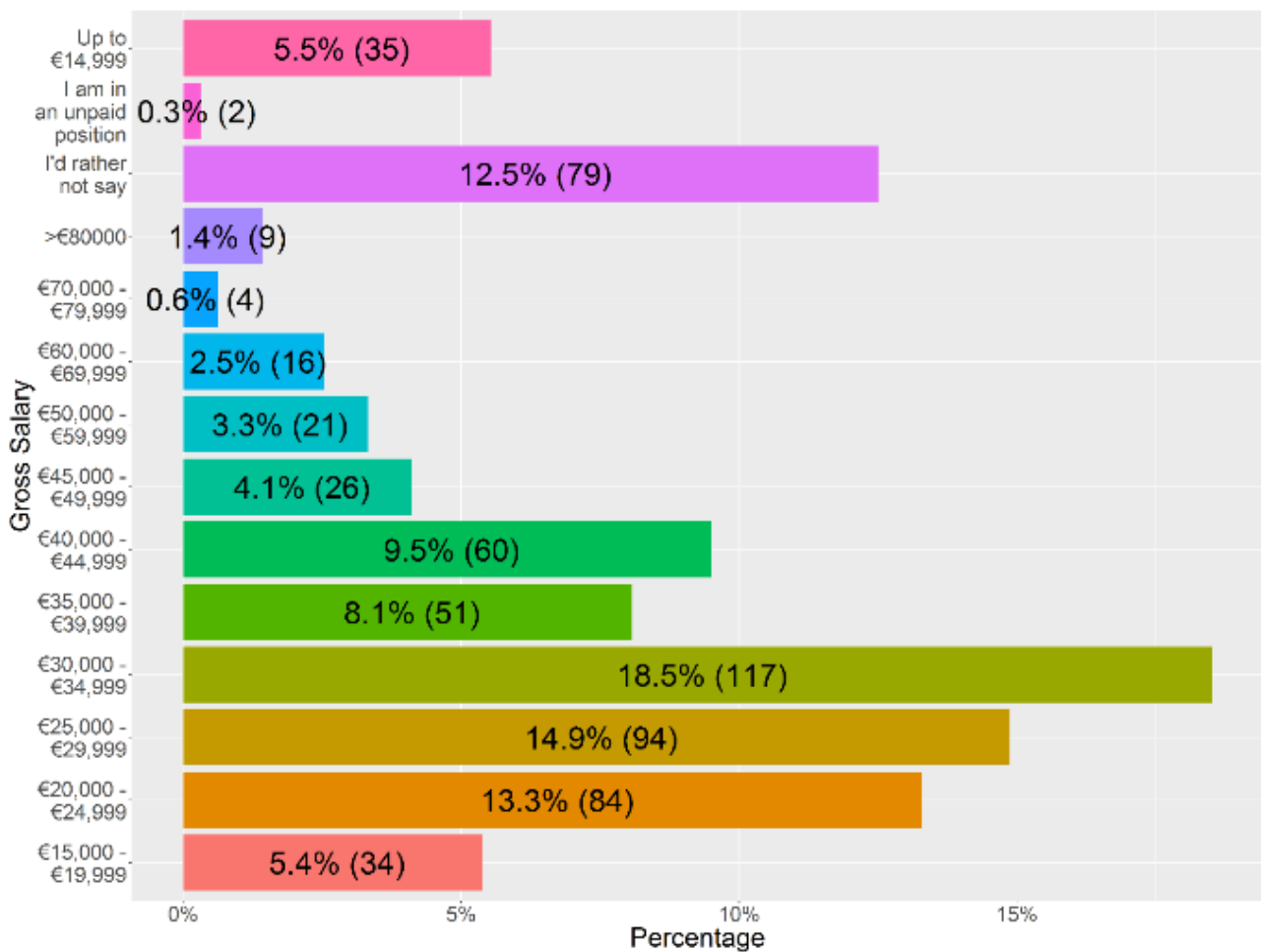
Career Options Talks & Skills Workshops	Monitoring the Workplace & Graduates	Mock Assessment Centres
CV Talks and Clinics	Annual Graduate Outcomes Survey (Cross-functional team)	CV & Interview Clinics with external stakeholders
Interview Preparation Workshops	Annual Employability Conference for CIT staff members, invited employers, regional stakeholders and other institute colleagues	

Annual Graduate Outcomes Survey

Each year, information is gathered from CIT graduates (Level 6 to 10) through the Graduate Outcomes Survey, which addresses graduates' principal economic status, whether in employment or due to start work, undertaking further study or otherwise. The breakdown for 2017 graduates is outlined in the graph below.



With regards to annual salary, over 62% of 2017 graduate respondents compare very favourably to the national average graduate salary of €28, 554.



Based on information gathered through the annual Graduate Outcomes Survey, 6.6% of the 2017 graduate cohort identified as self-employed. This is an increase of 1.6% compared to 2016 graduates, indicating the interest in, and opportunities for self-employment following higher education.

Professional or State Body Accreditation & Endorsement

Many professional/state bodies accredit or recognise programmes of study in CIT. Further information on this is available at <http://www.cit.ie/aboutcit.recognitionofcitcoursesandawards>

Promotion of Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

All CIT students have the opportunity from first year to look at entrepreneurship as a career option. Annually, over 500 first year students pitch their business ideas to the Rubicon team. The Rubicon is CIT's campus incubator with over 450 Alumni companies. Throughout the year, all students can compete in various entrepreneurship competitions, which are not discipline specific, and students can apply for CIT's student accelerator programme, Student Inc.

Student Inc. is a full-time summer programme for CIT students who want to start a business. Participants are based in the Rubicon Centre and receive funding, training and mentoring for the duration of the summer. Entrepreneurial experience and education help students to develop new skills that can be applied to other life challenges and employment opportunities – non-cognitive skills such as opportunity recognition, innovation, critical-thinking, resilience, decision-making, teamwork, and leadership will benefit all students whether or not they intend to become an entrepreneur.

Based on information gathered through the annual Graduate Outcomes Survey, 6.6% of the 2017 graduate cohort identified as self-employed. This is an increase of 1.6% compared to 2016 graduates, indicating the interest in, and opportunities for self-employment following higher education. More information is available at <http://enterprise.cit.ie/>

STEM Entrepreneurship

CIT's work in STEM education, research and innovation produces students and graduates who routinely win international acclaim and make a huge impact in the region and beyond as industry-ready, entrepreneurial and innovative STEM professionals.

- On the research front, 90%+ of CIT's major research funding is won for work in STEM, averaging in the region of €14M per annum.
- The students and graduates of CIT's STEM departments, supported by staff who are passionate and committed to their work, win national and international prizes on a routine basis and, in the process, enhance CIT's reputation for developing industry-ready, entrepreneurial and innovative STEM professionals.

CIT has made a distinguished contribution to the development of the region and Ireland in the entrepreneurship context.

Determinants of SME Growth in Ireland

Funded by the Certified Public Accountants (CPA) Ireland, the Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship is conducting a study that involves primary research with incubator and non-incubator firms along with incubation centre managers and enterprise support agencies. The aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the key characteristics of growing SMEs. This study will provide empirical evidence of what determines growth in SMEs in Ireland. More importantly, for those firms that have not grown to their potential, this study will provide insight into the specific issues that are constraining growth and the specific supports that are required to overcome these barriers.

<http://www.cpaireland.ie/aplus/2015/q2/index.html>

Accountancy Futures

Research and experience are telling us that firms are increasingly looking at the internship model to complement their current graduate recruitment strategies. This research study is funded by ACCA Ireland and the overall aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the benefits and challenges of internship programmes for recruiting accountancy graduates. This study explores the relevant literature on cooperative accounting education and the benefits from a stakeholder perspective, namely the student, the firm and the accountancy body. A large scale survey of both employers and student/practitioners across Ireland (North and South) will be carried out. The findings will inform the development of a guide to responsible internships to be developed in conjunction with ACCA.

<http://www.cit.ie/contentfiles/2015news/hiringinterns-guide-checklist-2015w.pdf>

NEAR Project

Recent entrepreneurship education literature notes that assessment practice is an important consideration and that it has been somewhat neglected by researchers. To understand assessment practice in entrepreneurship, we need to observe actual practice through empirical research and do so in a comprehensive way to appreciate the different forms and types that entrepreneurship education might take. The NEAR project aims to deliver a review of current assessment practices in entrepreneurship education across all of the Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and disseminate the findings to support entrepreneurship education practices both nationally and internationally.

Engaged Student Project

In partnership with CEEN (Campus Entrepreneurship Enterprise Network) and funded by the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, the Hincks Centre has taken lead on the

Engaged Student Project. The aim of the Project is to support the introduction, growth and sustainability of Enterprise societies across higher Education in Ireland with objectives to develop a network for collaboration, analyse case studies of successful initiatives, support development of enterprise society action plans, share the toolkit of resources developed by the project across Higher Education Institutions and provide support, feedback and advice when needed. Partners include: Dundalk Institute of Technology, Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Institute of Technology, Sligo and National University of Ireland, Galway.

<http://www.ceen.ie/the-engaged-student-project>

Green Mentor

Green Mentor is a two year European Commission project, funded under the Erasmus+ programme 2015-2017. While mentoring is an established business practice, particularly in the entrepreneurial start-up area, mentoring to green entrepreneurs, who wish to incorporate environmental values into their businesses is a new and growing reality in Europe.

The five partner organisations for Green Mentor include: Utopicus and Infodef from Spain, BEST from Austria, BGE from Hungary and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) from Ireland. The Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship, within CIT, are responsible for developing one of the key project outputs, namely, the Green Mentor Handbook. Other key project outputs include a draft curriculum which may form the basis for seeking certification of a green mentoring curriculum under existing European Vocational Educational Frameworks and a Green Mentor Toolkit containing useful tools designed to guide the mentor and mentee along the green mentoring journey.

The Green Mentor project seeks to define and support the new emerging professional role of Green Mentor, i.e. those who mentor and provide practical support to entrepreneurs in starting up a green business or in greening an existing business by the introduction of green or eco-friendly processes and practices. Development of the green economy offers great potential for opportunities for green entrepreneurs and for sustainable future jobs. Further information about the project, the project partners and the materials produced and tested as part of the project are available on the project website <http://greenmentor-project.eu>

MYBUSINESS

The project MYBUSINESS aims to create and test a customised training programme tailored to older unemployed people (over 50 years old) who are interested in becoming self-employed or entrepreneurs. This training will be based on your needs and aims to strengthen your entrepreneurial skills and competences while taking advantage of your life experience and skills. The project is financed by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme and its main objective is to increase the managerial and entrepreneurial skills of older unemployed, giving them confidence and providing them with the tools to create their own business and to promote lifelong learning and employability. This project is implemented by a consortium of six partners from six European countries (Romania, Ireland, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Austria).

<http://mybusiness-project.eu>

NEW START

This project funded under the EU Daphne Programme and is built around the development and delivery of life coaching and mentoring sessions to victims of gender violence. The implementation activities will be supported by the design of training materials, the enhancement of the skills of mentors and coaches and the development of a Transnational Guide for Life Coaching and Mentoring that could be transferred to other organizations.

The project will focus on two innovative methodologies. On one hand, life coaching will be carried out to improve women's' self-esteem and self-confidence. On the other, mentoring on entrepreneurship will help the women become independent, develop their managerial skills, and eventually, help them to re-enter the labour market and even to become self-employed and/or undertake entrepreneurial activity. NEW START comprises a partnership of seven relevant institutions from seven European countries (Ireland, France, Greece, Spain, Romania, Italy and Belgium) helping and providing specialist support and training to women victims of violence and designing a common methodology and transnational materials to be used for coaches and mentors.

European Projects

Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence is currently involved in the following European Projects:

- *Silver SME's*: Silver SME's general objective is to improve the implementation of Regional Policies for SME's competitiveness by taking better advantage of opportunities derived from the Silver Economy.
- *Start In*: The aim of Start In is to design and develop a new model of entrepreneurship education in schools in Europe.
- *Cool Route*: A project to develop a new maritime tourism route between Cork and Arctic Circle areas of Norway.
- *ecoRIS3*: ecoRIS3 addresses the transfer of innovation and knowledge to all types of Enterprises.

Personal Development Opportunities & Extra-curricular Employment Skills Development

CIT recognises that higher education is more than examinations, coursework and lectures. As a result, CIT students have access to multiple opportunities for the development of non-discipline specific skills and competencies, with a view to increasing self-confidence and preparing students for the workplace and effective citizenship. Student involvement in a variety of voluntary activities is encouraged and supported by CIT and there are a huge variety of opportunities to choose from.

Particular involvement in leadership roles provides an opportunity for self-development and to enhance employability, as students receive training, gain practical experience and enhance their interpersonal, communication and organisational skills, and grow in confidence.

GOOD START Student Induction Programme

Every year a student team of Good Start Ambassadors is trained and hired to work alongside AnSEO – *The Student Engagement Office* to co-create and roll out the Good Start induction programme across all four campuses.

The *Good Start* Induction Programme is a first 5 weeks themed programme of activities and communications targeting new incoming first year students, making transition to CIT easier and very welcoming. *Good Start S2*, is a week of reassuring information campaigns and activities easing the

return to CIT for students after the Christmas break, coinciding with release of Semester 1 examination results.

Some activities that these students are involved in which helps develop their skillset include:

- **JUST ASK! INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS**
 - The Just Ask! desks, run by the Good Start Ambassadors, are pop-up colourful and interactive help desks staffed by trained student ambassadors, seminars, workshops and complementary social media campaigns on a variety of topics, on a timely basis. Just Ask! about IT (in collaboration with IT Services), getting started on Blackboard, myCIT email, etc.; Just Ask! about Library (in collaboration with library team); Just Ask! about study; Just Ask! about Exams (in collaboration with Examinations Office).

- **GET CONNECTED! ICE-BREAKER EVENTS**
 - Trained Good Start Ambassadors work with academic departments in first weeks of Semester 1 to run fun, social induction/icebreaking events with new First Year class groups and their teaching teams. Improves communications and relationships, increases feeling of belonging and engagement.

[Class Representatives – Students' Union Council](#)

Class Representatives act in a voluntary capacity to enhance the college life of the students in their classes. The 'Class Rep' position is a responsible one, involving engagement with students, senior management, academic staff, professional and support staff and the Students' Union. Class Representatives represent their class at course boards, Union Council and at a national level through the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).

Training is provided, with particular emphasis on communication, negotiation, event organisation, time management, confidence building and public speaking. Class Representatives play a key role in academic quality, learn to 'think outside the box', and hone excellent problem solving skills.

The Students' Union Council Awards Ceremony recognises the contribution of Class Representatives to the Students' Union and to the Institute as a whole. At this ceremony, each Class Representative is presented with a Certificate of Merit (endorsed by the Institute's Registrar & Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Students' Union President) which recognises their voluntary contribution

to Students' Union activities. This Certificate is an honour to receive and it provides evidence to employers of potential employees' voluntary activities. A number of awards recognising 'outstanding voluntary contributions' are also presented at the ceremony. Each year, one of the Class Representatives is selected to be honoured with an Institute Presidential Citation.

www.citsu.ie/union/class-reps

SPARQ at CIT: Student Partnership in Quality

Student Partnership in Quality at CIT in partnership with the Students' Union, is focused on enhancing student/staff interaction and communication to better enable targeted quality enhancements that reflect need. Work includes: Capacity building with staff and students, Student representative training and communications skills development, Institutional Analysis to identify what is working/ needs improvement in the student engagement and partnership space and facilitated, purposeful discussions and consultations between teaching teams and student groups. In these sessions, students have the opportunity to practice and develop the ability to articulate their experience as a student and give feedback to lecturers and management. Class reps engage in gathering feedback from class groups through a variety of ways and represent those views impartially. Students are required to listen, communicate, negotiate, practice working in partnership and teamwork, all of which are good practice for the workplace environment.

Student to Student/Peer Assisted Learning and Support (PALS)

PALS is a scheme that fosters support between students. PALS encourages students to support each other and to learn co-operatively under the guidance of trained PALS Leaders. Significant opportunity for further development of Student to Student/ Peer Assisted Learning and Support exists across all of the AnSEO programmes, enabling us to grow the best of our work in close collaboration with all the academic departments and their students. PALS Leaders and those students who avail of PALS develop skills at different levels. PALS leaders develop skills in leadership, communication, facilitation, planning, organisation, marketing and PR. Those who avail of PALS are showing initiative, agency, self-awareness, drive, motivation and an ability to self-regulate.

Part time Students' Union Officers

These Officers act in a voluntary capacity while studying. They are members of the Union Executive and undertake key areas of responsibility in the management of the Students' Union. They are key to the development of Union policy and undergo training delivered by the Students' Union and from

the Union of Students in Ireland. Students are trained in project management, negotiation and communication skills and grow in confidence and assertiveness.

<http://www.citsu.ie/union>

CIT Joint Mentorship Programme

The CIT Joint Mentorship Programme is a voluntary, extra-curricular activity open to all CIT students, which is facilitated by the CIT Alumni Office and CIT Careers Service. The programme matches mentees (CIT Students) with mentors in relevant roles and organisations, who are willing to support students and share their professional knowledge and insights. The Joint Mentorship Programme is an interactive learning experience provided to students over a six-month period to assist them in their personal and career development, enhancing the knowledge gained through third level education.

Sports Clubs & Societies

Getting involved with a Sports Club or Society is something that is encouraged from the first week students arrive on campus. CIT offers a diverse range of Sports Clubs and Societies to choose from. We also encourage students who have a particular interest to set up their own Sports Club or Society. This means taking on a committee role like Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Equipment Officer, PR Officer or being an ordinary member. As a committee member, this provides skills that will enhance a person's overall self-development which will carry them through their entire working life. It will also enhance their communication and interpersonal skills. It gets students involved with students from other disciplines outside of their own. Training is provided at the beginning of the year. Each student committee is also met with at the start of the year to find out their plans, and they are subsequently monitored throughout the year.

Sports & Society Awards

Annually, CIT hosts both Sports Awards and Society Awards. These awards recognise the contribution students make to their chosen Sports Club or Society.

Sports Awards recognise the high level of achievement both in CIT and outside of CIT. They also recognise a student's contribution to their Club.

Each year, following a competitive process, CIT awards Sports Scholarships to students across a wide range of sports. It is expected that each scholarship holder will have a high level of achievement in both their programme and sport, and that they will participate in this sport in the Institute. The benefits to the recipients include access to the CIT Sports Facilities including the Elite Gym and Weights Room, Sports Education Talks and Workshops, and a Mentoring Support Network.

Society Awards recognise the contribution and commitment that a student has made to their chosen Society. Each Committee Officer is also presented with a Certificate of Merit for their contribution to CIT.

The Enactus CIT Social Innovation Award 2016 (sponsored by Dell EMC) represents socially innovative ideas that make a positive impact on individuals and communities. The overall award is awarded to students who take entrepreneurial action to empower individuals and communities in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable way.

In addition to internal CIT Society awards, students also have access to BICS Awards. BICS – the Board of Irish College Societies – is the national organisation which brings together societies across all third level colleges and universities. The BICS National Awards event is an opportunity for students and their societies to showcase their numerous achievements from the previous year. The purpose of the National Awards is to recognise the huge effort made by the many individuals who run student societies across Ireland. The BICS Awards are a means of recognising this dedication and are an opportunity to celebrate the importance and value that societies contribute to college life and student experience.

[Volunteering Abroad](#)

This programme was initiated in 2011 to support students who wished to undertake volunteering. The aim of the programme is primarily to offer financial support but also to give students an experience which they may not have been able to partake in otherwise. To date, the programme has supported 80 students volunteering in over 19 different countries. Feedback has been very positive, with many student volunteers describing it as a most significant life experience.

Student Leaders

Each year, CIT Student Services recruits up to 60 student leaders to promote a positive adjustment and environment for first year students starting in the Institute. The aim is to help new students make friends, develop strong support groups and assist in accessing all the student support services available within the Institute. Student leaders work across the four campuses, helping with many events and activities throughout the year such as Registration & Orientation, Open Days, Conferings, Careers Fairs and other department events. Student Leaders must be punctual, professional, helpful, and able to work as part of a team. All student leaders must complete a two-day training course which is provided to them. Being part of this team helps students to develop a wide range of skills particularly communication and interpersonal skills, time management and problem-solving, in addition to building self-confidence and the ability to clearly articulate information to others.

Alumni Internship

The Alumni Intern actively supports, promotes, and develops alumni relations activity at CIT. This entails the implementation of a range of initiatives and activities which supports this goal amongst all CIT students.

This initiative provides valuable work experience to a CIT student while supporting them to pursue a master's degree. It is a paid position, with tuition fees also covered.

Student Alumni Ambassador Programme

The aim of the CIT Student Alumni Ambassador Programme is to develop positive relations and interactions among students, alumni, faculty and staff.

The benefits of becoming an Alumni Ambassador include:

- Make professional contacts.
- Potential opportunities to travel on behalf of the Institute.
- Unique access to alumni and friends of the Institute.
- Invitations to exclusive programmes and events.
- Opportunities to acquire and sharpen leadership and communication skills.
- Enhance CV content.

Meet the Graduate

The CIT Alumni Office, in collaboration with AnSEO – the Student Engagement Office, creates opportunities for graduates to revisit CIT through a “Meet the Graduate” initiative. The aim of this initiative is to reconnect with alumni and to enhance the current CIT student experience.

Graduates share their career journey with current CIT students through role model seminars, workshops or café conversations. It is an opportunity for graduates to promote graduate programmes and vacancies on behalf of their organisations, and give assistance to current students in a fun and engaging manner. Each session is targeted to relevant courses of graduates.

Further Information

AnSEO

Cork Institute of Technology has a long and well-earned reputation for being student focused. CIT is committed to improving student engagement, progression, employability and success. This commitment is evidenced through the proactive establishment and resourcing of AnSEO – The Student Engagement Office. The focus of AnSEO is to work with students and staff to develop and facilitate implementation of proactive and collaborative activities with a view to significantly improving student engagement, progression and successful graduation. Active engagement, partnership and communications with students is a hallmark of how we work to co-create and establish student engagement programmes.

For more information please visit: <http://studentengagement.cit.ie>

CIT Employability Framework

CIT is keen to develop a CIT framework which recognises and values student engagement across the student lifecycle and allows CIT to recognise, incentivise and value attainment of skills and knowledge by engaged students in CIT that add significantly to our students’ ‘graduateness’. This framework recognises students who are building particular skills through both intra-curricular and extra-curricular activities. We are suggesting a working title of *EDGE³ – Engaging and Developing Graduates for Employability, Entrepreneurship and Effective Citizenship*. As of September 2018, this initiative is a project development phase.

Additional Information Sources

- Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf
- Action Plan for Education 2017: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Action-Plan-for-Education-2017.pdf>
- EGFSN: <http://www.skillsireland.ie/>
- AHECS: www.ahecs.ie
- Ibec Smarter Work, Smarter World;
<http://www.ibec.ie/Ibec/SWSW.nsf/vPages/Home~smarter-world,-smarter-work!OpenDocument>
- Enhancing Employability Report prepared for the G20 Employment Working Group:
<https://www.oecd.org/employment/emp/Enhancing-Employability-G20-Report-2016.pdf>
- <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/universities/>
- <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/general/employability-skills.html>