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### Case Study: Implementing a Virtual Induction Programme for Students

CCT College Dublin

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**Case Study: Implementing a Virtual  
Induction Programme for Students**

## **‘Implementing a Virtual Induction Programme for Students’**

### **What was the nature of the project and when did it take place?**

Prior to the pivot to emergency online teaching and learning, CCT staff and students gave the digital environment at CCT (hardware, software and digital teaching and learning) a high rating of 88.6% and 79.6% respectively in the Irish National Digital Experience INDEX survey. This robust digital environment provided a strong basis to underpin the migration of traditionally face-to-face student support services to an online environment. This was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic but will be continued both as a supplement to face-to-face induction, and as a permanent feature for recently validated blended programmes. This case study outlines the development and delivery of a virtual induction programme at CCT College that commenced in September of 2020.

### **Which department(s), committee(s) and/or team(s) managed the project?**

### **Which others were involved in the project / initiative?**

This project, coordinated by the Student Services Department, was cross-departmental in nature engaging academic faculty, Library Services, Careers Services, Student Success, IT Support, Moodle Support and Academic Affairs.

### **Describe the aim(s) of the project?**

The overarching aim of the project was to design and implement a virtual induction programme that would maximise opportunities for students to familiarise themselves with CCT and its virtual campus, promote interactivity with CCT platforms, resources, services and staff, and initiate the creation of online learning communities.

The Virtual Induction working group used the Online Orientation tool as described in the Student Success Toolbox, an initiative supported by the National Forum for Teaching and Learning Building Digital Capacity fund, as the guide and, as such, prioritised the following areas:

- Reduce Anxiety,
- Set Expectations,
- Provide Positive Role Models,
- Provide Socialising Opportunities,
- Introduce Campus, and
- Provide Access to Study Skills.

### **What were the intended learning outcomes or objectives of the project?**

The overarching headings introduced in the Student Success Toolbox were used to create the following objectives for the project:

- To ensure the continuity of induction services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- To effectively welcome and orientate new students through the online environment, providing them the opportunity to interact with each other, CCT staff, supports, services and technology platforms
- To present essential support services staff, how to contact them, and expected availability

- To introduce key academic supports that can be referred to throughout their CCT career
- To reiterate that the College provides supports and resources to help them succeed
- To provide an overview of the Irish higher education system including quality assurance as many CCT students are international and/or returning to the classroom
- To explore the scope of providing a virtual induction alongside face-face induction and for pre-orientation activity
- To underpin student success initiatives at the College

## Describe the project / initiative

A dedicated space for the Virtual Induction was established on Moodle as a module accessible to all new students. Using Screencasting software [Screencastomatic](#), a number of online videos were produced featuring relevant departmental staff providing information on supports, systems and resources including:

- An overview of the Irish higher education system
- A brief overview of quality standards
- Online Student Success Classes (classes are provided on group work, academic writing, referencing and applied projects)
- CCT's Online Library
- [Online Careers Service](#). The Careers Service also offers a range of classes as part of CCT's Student Success Classes
- [The CCT Learning Space](#) which includes guides for students to alternative assessment, [online learning](#), academic writing and referencing

In addition to videos, the induction also included infographics, Step by Step guides, PDFs, and PowerPoint presentations to present information to the students. In line with best practice, a checklist guides students through content. A survey at the end of the induction garners feedback to inform future iterations. The virtual induction is open to new and returning students.

## What data was collected during this project / initiative?

An anonymous Virtual Induction Survey was created on CCT's Survey Monkey platform. The survey comprised a range of multiple choice and open-ended questions. Survey Monkey also provides the facility to include star rating questions which are useful for obtaining a final overall rating of the experience. 235 students completed the Virtual Induction Survey. 45% of participants were international and 55% domestic. 90% of respondents were mature students. There was a high degree of completion for each subject in the induction (over 90%).

90.64% of students said that the virtual induction made them feel welcome to the College. Only 0.43% of students said that the virtual induction was unhelpful. 48.2% of students said that organisation of content in the virtual induction was excellent and 39.74% said that it was very good. The induction gained an overall rating of 4.5 stars out of 5. See Tables 1 and 2 for further data.



### Overall student rating

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand the higher education system in Ireland (1)	68.09% 160
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand my programme of study (2)	53.62% 126
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand CCT policies (3)	72.34% 170
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand academic standards at CCT College (4)	70.64% 166
▼ CCT's virtual induction provided access to key documents (academic calendar, student handbook etc.) (5)	84.68% 199
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand College supports and resources (6)	89.36% 210
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to understand College technologies (7)	65.96% 155
▼ CCT's virtual induction made me aware of supports for students with physical or learning difficulties (8)	58.30% 137
▼ I did not find the virtual induction helpful (9)	0.43% 1
Total Respondents: 235	

**Table 1:** The key benefits of completing CCT's virtual induction

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ CCT's virtual induction made me feel welcome	90.64% 213
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to get to know other students	25.96% 61
▼ CCT's virtual induction helped me to get to know staff	71.91% 169
▼ CCT's virtual induction made me aware of the CCT Student Mentoring Academy	71.49% 168
▼ I did not find CCT's virtual induction helpful	1.70% 4
Total Respondents: 235	

**Table 2:** The Role of the Virtual Induction in Orientating Students

## What insights were gleaned from the project data?

The Virtual Induction gave new students a way to connect and feel part of the college community before classes began. From the survey, it was gleaned that they were comfortable with how to access classes and resources. Anecdotally students had less issues accessing Moodle and overall, a lower percentage of students required password resets. Additional insights were:

- Virtual inductions are highly rated by students not just in the context of the COVID pivot but generally, offering convenience, flexibility and the ability to revisit content at the learner's own pace. Additionally, students expressed a comfort with CCT prior to classes beginning
- Integrating content into the CCT's Virtual Learning Environment Moodle promotes engagement with content. Moodle analytics at CCT highlight strong interaction with CCT's Virtual induction.
- The CCT Virtual Induction acted as both an effective pre-orientation tool and space for continued Induction space throughout the semester. Information regarding Student Mentoring, Academic Integrity Week, and the Support Hub were introduced/funnelled through the Induction module.

## How has practice changed on the ground at CCT as a result of the project?

Harnessing technological tools such as Screencastomatic, discussion forums, H5P and CCT's Learning Space offers an engaging and real-world induction experience that students can reference again and again throughout their career. These tools were initially used for the Induction, but have continued to be used campus wide.

Going forward, virtual induction will be offered alongside face-to-face induction to extend student reach, support and inclusivity. It will also continue as a pre-orientation activity. Virtual induction also underpins student success activities by providing a more seamless transition into higher education as well as facilitating student progression.