

Irish Education Awards Application Cork Institute of Technology Academic Success Coaching



AnSEO
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT OFFICE

Academic
Success
— Coaching —

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) has a long and well-earned reputation for being student focused. Our students matter and every student counts. AnSEO – The Student Engagement Office - has been intentional in adopting a whole-institution approach to our student engagement practices, ensuring all students and staff can partner and engage in experiences to improve student outcomes resulting in more confident and employable graduates. In 2018/19 our work and impact have seen measurable improvements with positive developments across areas including skills and employability, equality of opportunity, ongoing enhancements to learning and teaching and student progression.

A core offering, open to all students, with a focus on Year 1, is our unique programme of Academic Success Coaching (ASC). As the first institution in Ireland to offer such provision, CIT is pleased to offer this comprehensive service as an exemplar in the field and consequently a submission to the Student Engagement and Communications Award. Following a pilot and development phase in 2017/18, in 2018/19 two new staff members were recruited as Academic Success Coaches with the particular brief of building and developing a very focused programme of student engagement and communications based on Coaching and Mentoring approaches. There has been significant growth over the last academic year, a trend which continues into 2019/20.

Our ASC programme has been developed in response to listening to our students / staff and researching international best practice – something which this submission demonstrates continues to be a focus for our programme.

‘Clear and high expectations are central to the value and impact of an institution’ (Felten, Gardner et al, 2016). Student engagement and success does not happen by chance. No matter what a student’s experience of education has been; starting third level education is a new beginning, a time to step up and take hold of a really great opportunity. Adapting to third level and getting used to a new course of study may be challenging at times. It is important that students take a deep breath and actively manage expectations of themselves. We do not expect students to succeed by chance - ASC provides a reflective space for students to be challenged and supported to identify and activate their potential. Coaches facilitate sessions using coaching principles and tools, through which students acknowledge their strengths and recognise solutions within themselves. They realise they can drive their own direction and potential, accelerating their own engagement, building effective communication mechanisms between each other, their lecturers, support staff and CIT services generally.

ASC is for all students. Every student has the opportunity to reflect on their CIT experience with a trained staff member (an Academic Success Coach) who will facilitate honest dialogue with the focus on their engagement, progression and success, on an individual basis or within a group setting.



CIT is a leading higher education institution based in Cork City, comprising of four campuses: Bishoptown, Crawford College of Art and Design (CCAD), Cork School of Music (CSM) and the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI). CIT offers a wide range of full-time and part-time higher education courses, at all levels up to and including PhD, Art & Design, Business, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Maritime Studies, Science and Information Technology.

CIT was awarded the Sunday Times Institute of Technology of the Year in 2007, 2010 and 2016.

AnSEO – The Student Engagement Office is a function of the Office of the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs, that works with students and staff to develop and facilitate proactive and collaborative activities with a view to significantly improving student success. It has six main programmes: Good Start Student Induction Programme, Academic Learning Centre (ALC), Academic Success Coaching, sparo at CIT (Student Partnership in Quality), Peer Assisted Learning and Support (PALS) and Transitions to CIT projects (Department-led induction activities supported by AnSEO).

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



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visit: studentengagement.cit.ie/asc

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ACADEMIC SUCCESS COACHING AS A PROGRAMME OF WORK

Offerings available to students:

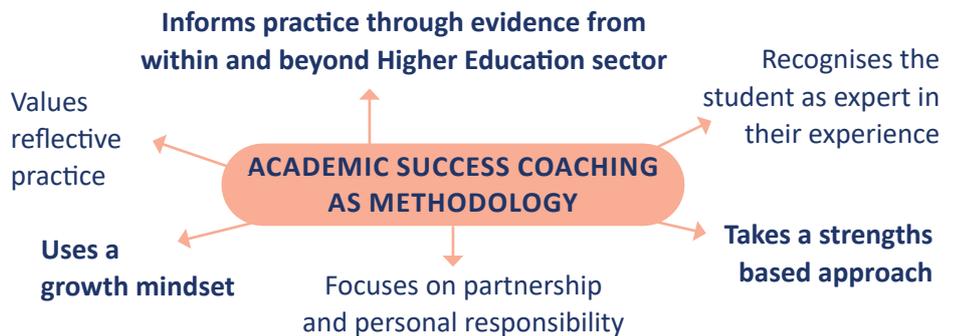
- One to one coaching sessions
- Phone and video call coaching sessions
- Class profiling in partnership with departments
- Tailored interventions for individuals and groups
- Group coaching
- Workshops on: Study Skills, Time Management, Motivation, Study Plans
- Goal setting

Interventions and techniques deployed:

- Referrals to other services
- Motivational Interviewing
- Active Listening
- Liaising with teaching staff
- Advocacy
- Study planning
- Time management skills
- Social media and poster campaigns
- Positive Psychology Tools eg. Best Possible Self

Themes explored through Academic Success Coaching:

- Motivation
- Attendance
- Study Skills
- Study burn out
- Personal issues
- Time Management
- Dropping out
- Academic Writing
- Questioning the right course
- Drifting
- Exam Preparation
- Exam Performance



'CIT's academic success coach recently visited all 5 first year Bachelor of Business classes and offered an informal session which was timely and inclusive as it highlighted to the students, that it's normal to be finding the adjustment to college challenging and perhaps uncomfortable (as they step outside their second level comfort zone). I believe the goal setting exercise was motivating for students and presented in a way that students could have confidence that they would achieve their goal. Any doubts were addressed by the chance to book at 1-2-1 Academic Success Coaching session.' **Sinead Huskisson, Lecturer in Business, CIT**

THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS COACHING TEAM



Joe Murphy

Academic Success Coach



Louise Murphy

Academic Success Coach

2 Academic Success Coaches

Attached To Specific Faculty

Experienced coaches, who are engaging in ongoing professional development and supervision, with qualifications and training in Coaching Psychology, Non-Formal Guidance, Youth and Community Work, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid, Facilitation Skills, Disclosure Training, Drug and Alcohol Interventions, Motivational Interviewing and Personal Development.

ASC in the AnSEO Context

Ensuring ASC is well situated in the wider AnSEO programme means learnings are not siloed but shared to inform CIT's Student Engagement and Communications activity.

For example, ASC profiling results can be triangulated with ISSE/Student Survey results to inform dialogue workshops between students and staff as part of Student Partnership in Quality (SParQ@CIT) discussions.

Academic Staff – Class Coordinators / Heads of Department

Coaches work closely with teaching teams who champion the work of AnSEO. These 'Student Engagement Champions' observe and support ASC Class Visits. Creating ASC Champions in Academic Departments demonstrates to students the value of coaching and its approaches, resulting in increased referrals to 1-2-1 coaching sessions.

Student Engagement Champions are key to fostering CIT's Coaching Culture. They are key change agents who will influence and inform future development in this space, in partnership with the European Mentoring and Coaching Council.



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CLASS VISITS

In partnership with academic staff, coaches deliver an interactive coaching intervention to first year classes at two points per semester. These class visits offer students an opportunity to connect with ASC in a variety of ways (in person and online) and to flag any immediate concerns they might have which are followed up on by coaches after the class visit. The information gathered is also fed back to the teaching staff and tailored intervention is actioned where necessary.

Class visits provide an opportunity for first year students to experience coaching interventions and coaching methods in a comfortable environment – taking coaching to students and not waiting for students to attend a session.

What happens:

- 30 - 45 minute interactive coaching intervention
- Group and individual exercises using reflective practice
- Students fill in online profiling survey
- Increases coaching awareness of staff who are supporting students to progress and succeed
- Builds credibility in the eyes of the student

Class visit exploring Growth Mindset

We set students a challenge in the first weeks of term, at our first class visit... see who can raise their hand the highest. Some reach high in their seats, some stand up tall, others jump onto the desk, reaching for the ceiling... in all cases, from this first interaction, our desire is to stimulate agency, encouraging them to think “if I want to win for myself, I need to stretch myself, it’s up to me to take the next step,” It encourages students to consider themselves in a new space, a new mindset, a new attitude.



TIMELINE OF PROFILING AND COACHING INTERVENTION

Each class visit covers two key areas: a Profiling Survey and a distinct Coaching Intervention that encourages students to build capacity to apply coaching methods beyond that specific visit.

Profiling Survey: this acts both as a survey to capture views and as a prompt to stimulate agency through the Coaching questions asked.

Coaching Intervention: this encourages and equips students to take action whilst experiencing coaching in action. In some cases students will feel prompted to make an individual appointment with a coach having experienced a more informal / light-touch coaching environment.

Focus of Profiling Survey

Focus of Coaching Intervention

Semester 1

P1 This profiling is an opportunity for students to acknowledge and reflect on their strengths, for us to nudge them towards relevant services and for them to flag any concerns they have to the coaches and their teaching team.

Goal Setting Exercise: Write down goals, identify actions, consider any obstacles and someone who could help. In Semester 1, 2019, 3,000 goals have already been set by Year 1 students.

P2 The second profiling survey queries and prompts good study habits, asks students to check their exam readiness and gathers feedback about their course for the department.

During the second profiling (P2), the coach, in partnership with the department, responds to themes and patterns arising from what students said in the first profiling (P1). This closes the feed back loop and allows students to really hear others thoughts about their third level experience. The goals the students set in P1 are reflected on and a coaching scaling exercise is used.

Semester 2

P3 The profiling 3 survey (P3) encourages students to reflect on their successes in semester 1 so that they bring their learning forward to semester 2. They reflect on their exam prep and performance and are again prompted to use appropriate services. Feedback for the department is also gathered.

The coaching tool, The Wheel of Life is used in this visit which raises students awareness of how their life is currently 'balanced'. If they feel that they would like their wheel to look different, they are asked to choose how they would like it to be. They then set actions on how they will get there. Those who are happy with their wheel are asked to set actions on how they will maintain it.

The final profiling survey (P4) of the academic year focuses on students motivation and exam preparation.

P4 They reflect on their first year in third level education and acknowledge their successes as well as identifying what they would have done differently.

In this session, coaches reflect back P3's profiling data and ask students to reflect on where they are now in relation to the themes and patterns that emerged at that point in the semester. Using a coaching approach, students are brought through a study planning technique which taps into their own knowledge and strengths. The Wheel of Life is revisited using reflective practice.

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'I learned more about how I ticked and how to best approach my studying, as a result, with the help of worksheets and talking to my coach. I booked a few sessions before the exams and I felt more secure in myself with my approach to studying.'

Student Coachee

'I went into the coaching session ready to leave my course as it was all getting on top of me. It was at a daunting stage of the semester. The coach highlighted to me how far that I came and gave me great techniques to help me - such as the "Best Possible Self" exercise.'

Student Coachee

'I came away from the sessions ready to re-embrace the challenge.'

Student Coachee

'I felt like the coaching sessions were a space whereby I could really open up and discuss what I think was causing me stress. I didn't feel rushed or forced into how to solve it...instead I was able to come to my own conclusion with the help of my coach who was really easy to talk to. I think everybody should definitely book a session, because there is always room for improvement when it comes to academia and studying. Be it you find it difficult to study and can't concentrate or you study too much and get stressed easily, the coaching sessions are essential to find your feet.'

Student Coachee

IMPACT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS COACHING

ASC Figures 2018/2019:

To give context, there were 2,359 registered full time first year students in CIT.

ASC predominantly targeted 1st year students and engaged some later years students.

2
Academic Success Coaches



Louise Murphy
Joe Murphy

4 Academic Coaching Sessions delivered in **4** CIT Campuses



18

Partnered with **18** Departments

20
Ran **20** workshops

495
495 one to one sessions

▲ Increase of over 300 sessions in comparison to 2017/18

10%
1st Years Approximately **10%** of 1st year students engaged with one to one coaching sessions



32
Profiled **32** courses



2,289

Gathered data from **2,289** Profiling Questionnaires completed by students and staff

▲ Increase of over 1,400 profiles in comparison to 2017/18

3,000

Over **3,000** face to face interactions with students throughout the year

EMERGING FIGURES FROM 2019/20 (3 MONTHS OF ACTIVITY)

★ **52** class visits

★ **29** bespoke workshops covering expectation setting, academic writing and study planning

↳ Over **750** profiling surveys completed

→ **3,000+** goals set during first round of class visits

INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- The ASC programme facilitated an ERASMUS+DELTA study trip from Beate Brevik Sæthern (Associate Professor, Østfold University College, Norway) exploring institutional models of student-staff coaching and identified CIT as a model of good practice in preparation for their own institutional expansion.
- Dr Simone Schut (Utrecht Medical School, Utrecht University) invited the coaches for a study trip as part of ERASMUS+ DELTA. The purpose of the visit is to share information about and to inform the 'Study Counselling' model of practice in Utrecht University and University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht.
- Coaches presented at the European First Year Experience Conference (2019). This drew strong interest from delegates because of CIT's holistic, inclusive and non-judgmental approach to Academic Success Coaching. Delegates viewed CIT's model as progressive because it was not targeted at students in difficulty but open to all.

visit: studentengagement.cit.ie/asc

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STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT – A VISION OF GROWTH, LINKING 2017 – 2018 – 2019 – 2020...

2017/18

- Pilot phase of ASC, building awareness and foundations with Faculties, profiling survey developed as 'Early Alert' system

2018/19

- Appointment of 2 dedicated Academic Success Coaches linked to Faculties, profiling survey moves online and coaching interventions built into class visits

2019/20

- Programme of 4 profile points across first year, aggregating profiling data across Department, School, Faculties to inform whole of CIT approach and understanding – linking to the National Data Enabled Student Success Initiative (DESSI).
- Developing skills of Academic Champions to support their own in-class activity

2020/21

- Ongoing development of reach and impact of ASC across disciplines and departments.
- Evaluation of impact and trends emerging from the ASC programme to inform Teaching, Learning and Assessment enhancements. AnSEO and Teaching and Learning Unit (TLU) are increasingly working together to maximise synergies to create a dynamic Teaching, Learning and Student Engagement enhancement function that is both student and staff facing.
- Actively involved in chairing and participating in Munster Technological University (MTU) working groups to enact our vision of a coaching culture across the student and staff lifecycles.

"Our students are new to third level structure and environment - we often underestimate how lost they are and with the best intention in the world one individual cannot reach all of the students all of the time and this is where the support from AnSEO in profiling and conducting group coaching with our students proves very valuable. Our students hear a new voice, an external voice, they respond because they are asked, being asked empowers the students and gives them the freedom to open up. Through the personal and heart-felt examples the coach gives, the students feel at ease, safe in a trusting environment. The coaching and goal setting in conjunction with the profiling shows the students that they are the drivers in charge of their own journey to success. The right balance of support and challenge offered by the profiling and coaching in tandem helps create the self-motivated, flexible, resourceful learner of the future. Our students visibly shifted after the parallel profiling and goal setting."

Eileen O'Leary, Lecturer in Chemistry, Department of Physical Sciences.

CIT's new academic plan, strategic development plan and explicit commitment in HEA compacts set out a vision and commitment to an ongoing development of our CIT student experience with student engagement, progression and success at their core. The foundations set by ASC and its future vision provides a vehicle to support this strategy.

Our strategy for ASC growth continues to be one of:

- **Meaningful dialogue:** One to one coaching, group coaching, devised tailored student sessions, class development
- **Relationship development:** Working alongside academic staff to build individual capabilities and ongoing invitations to contribute to classroom activity such that coaching methods become integral to a student's experience
- **Connected provision:** Identifying intentional opportunities for partnership across student and staff activity, bringing ASC approaches into provision of other AnSEO activity such as informing Student Partnership in Quality workshops, partnering with Student Services offering tailored support for specific groups such as HEAR, Disability Support Office and International Office; feeding outputs to inform academic and curriculum development by fostering links with Teaching and Learning Unit (e.g. invited session at CIT's Tus Maith for staff, to raise awareness and potential impact for staff to engage with ASC)
- **Pursuit of Excellence:** We are actively developing a coaching culture at CIT that includes both staff and students. We are partnering with the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) to ensure quality standards and best practice. CIT was invited to lead a discussion group at EMCC's international gathering in London in November 2019 on our work developing a coaching culture in a Higher Education Institute.