



Projects funded by IAFA and the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority

Project 1	
Title	Audit quality: Definitions, measurements and determinants
Investigators	Karen-Ann Dwyer (Dublin City University) Bríd Murphy (Dublin City University)
Summary	<p>The objective of our study is to understand the definitions, measurements and drivers of audit quality. There are two stages to our study.</p> <p>First, we investigate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions of audit quality in the academic and practitioner literature. • Measurements of audit quality in the academic and practitioner literature. <p>Second, our empirical study examines the drivers of audit quality. We adopt audit quality measurements identified in our literature review in Stage 1. We test the following hypothesis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit quality is associated with auditor and client characteristics <p>The population comprises companies listed on the FTSE-350 Index. We examine six years (anticipated 2020-2025) data for each company.</p>

Project 2

Title	Deconstructing a concept that cannot be constructed: Corporate social responsibility in Chinese versus Irish state-owned enterprises
Investigators	Xinwu He (Lancaster University) Martin Quinn (Queen's University Belfast)
Summary	<p>This research aims to explore the deconstruction of the complex concept "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) at intra-organisational level over the past two decades and how does the evolution of its meaning impact state-owned enterprises' (SOEs') sustainability reporting and stakeholder accountability. Also, by comparing Chinese and Irish SOEs, this research can reveal contextual differences in risks associated with sustainability reporting practices and potential mitigation strategies, thus generating practical implications for global sustainability reporting practices and standard-setting procedures. It will address (1) How has the meaning of CSR been deconstructed within Chinese and Irish SOEs over the past two decades? and (2) How does the evolving meaning of CSR at intra-organisational level impact the SOEs sustainability reporting practices over time?</p>

Project 3	
Title	Professional service firms' perceptions of the evolution of the European Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CRSD)
Investigators	Sandra Brosnan (Munster Technological University) Peter Cleary (University College Cork) Claire O'Sullivan-Rochford (Munster Technological University) Louise Gorman (Trinity College Dublin)
Summary	<p>This study examines the uptake of sustainability reporting and assurance over the evolution of the European Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) from the perspective of professional services firms. Using data gathered from semi-structured interviews with sustainability assurance providers and advisors, the study explores the disruption caused by the recent legislative sustainability reporting and assurance requirements. The meta-logic of 'the audit trail' is employed to position sustainability reporting and assurance as undergoing a formative process characterised by pull and push factors. Preliminary evidence thus far suggests that resistance to mandatory sustainability reporting, characterised by costs and 'reductionist effects' outweighs the realisable benefits or 'performance facticity'. The study provides evidence of the decoupling of mandatory sustainability reporting and assurance through 'accounting means' from 'regulatory ends'. Such decoupling may represent just one stage in the formation of longer-term accepted practice contingent upon access to financial, time, and human resources. Practical and policy implications include the importance of a phased and proportionate implementation of future reporting requirements and the continued provision of education and skills development for reporters and assurance providers alike.</p>