Report of Programme Validation Panel

Date: 20th January 2015

Named Award:	Not applicable
Programme Title(s):	Certificate in Hospitality Operations
Exit Award(s):	Not applicable
Award Type:	Certificate
Award Class:	Special-Purpose
NFQ Level:	6
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	20
Mode of Delivery:	Full-time
First Intake:	February 2015

Panel Members

Dr David Ryan	Chair	Assistant Registrar, Carlow Institute of Technology
Mr Ciaran O'Hannrachain	External Discipline Expert	Head of Department of Hospitality and Tourism, Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LyIT)
Ms Niamh Murphy	External Discipline Expert	General Manager, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk.
Dr Brendan Ryder	Secretary	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Programme Development Team

Dr Patricia Moriarty, Head of School of Business and Humanities (Acting)	Mr Aidan Hoare	Ms Rosemary Leonard
Ms Brianain Erraught, Head of Section, Hospitality Studies	Mr Alan Smith	Ms Elizabeth Murray

1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on a proposal from the Section of Hospitality Studies in the School of Business and Humanities at Dundalk Institute of Technology to design the following programme(s):

- *Certificate in Hospitality Operations*

The evaluators would like to thank the members of the development team for engaging generously and openly with the review process.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Background to Proposed Programme
- General Findings of the Validation Panel
- Programme-Level Findings
- Module-Level Findings

2 Background to Proposed Programme

The philosophy guiding the design of this programme focuses on developing hospitality skills as an intrinsic part of a unique customer experience. The programme aims to strengthen the human resource base and enhance standards of performance and professionalism in the Irish tourism and hospitality industry.

In the hospitality and tourism industry there is an increasing need for employees with "well developed technical and social skills who can deliver a customer experience that will help distinguish Irish tourism from its international competitors. The programme recognises that hospitality operations, requires continuous reflection, practice and development in an increasingly international and culturally diverse environment. This programme affords the learner the opportunity to undertake these activities – reflect, practise and develop - in an effort to optimise potential.

Each module in the programme is designed to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and competencies that will allow them to rise to the challenge of delivering the distinctive and unique Irish hospitality experience. As well as enabling learners to work effectively within the industry, the programme affords them the opportunity of access and progression to a wide range of employments and further educational choices. Fundamental technical skills, combined with a wide range of learning opportunities designed to develop the learners' personal capabilities and creativity, are core elements of the programme.
Graduates of the programme will be competent in the key operational areas of Food and Beverage and Bar Service. In addition, they will have also received continuous coaching and career planning advice to guide and direct them through the programme and assist them in making informed career choices going forward.

The aim of the programme is to provide learners with the professional skills of Irish hospitality operations and to develop an understanding of the practice of quality service in partnership with industry, thereby facilitating career progression within the tourism and hospitality industry. The programme provides the learner with technical skills training in Irish hospitality, accompanied by a focus on social / relationship skills, in order to deliver a quality and unique customer experience.

See programme submission for more detailed information.

3 General Findings of the Validation Panel

The Panel would like to congratulate the programme development team on the quality of the programme documentation presented. The team is to be commended for developing a programme in collaboration with the Department of Social Protection, Diageo and Skillnets that meets a clear industry need, the evidence of which was clearly provided. The engagement and commitment of the team was clearly evident on the day of the panel.

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the validation panel recommends the following:

Certificate in Hospitality Operations

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	
Accredited subject to conditions and/or recommendations	X
Re-designed and re-submitted to the same validation panel after additional developmental work	
Not Accredited	

Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below and a response document describing the actions of the Department to address the conditions and recommendations made by the programme validation panel. In this report, the term Condition is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the validation panel must be undertaken prior to the commencement of the programme. Conditions are mandatory if the programme is to be approved. The term Recommendation indicates an item to which the Programme Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of on-going monitoring.

4 Programme-Level Findings

This section of the report addresses the following programme level considerations:

- Demand
- Award
- Institute strategy alignment
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and progression
- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Quality Assurance.

4.1 Demand

Validation Criterion:	Is there a convincing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
Overall Finding:	Yes with evidence provided

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.2 Award

Validation Criterion:	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.3 Institute Strategy Alignment

Validation Criterion:	Is the proposed programme aligned to the Institute's strategy and are the strategic themes of entrepreneurship, sustainability and internationalisation embedded in the proposed programme as appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.4 Entry Requirements

Validation Criterion:	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- The programme development team need to review the entry requirements to broaden the potential student base.

- Selection and recruitment strategies to deal with the variety of applicant backgrounds and qualifications need to be clearly articulated (e.g. Diageo involvement, etc.).

4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme incorporate the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the NQAI and does it accommodate a variety of access and entry requirements?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Progression routes into other programmes at DkIT should be clearly articulated (if relevant).

4.6 Standards and Outcomes

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme meet the required award standards for programmes at the proposed NFQ level (i.e. conform to QQI Award Standards)?
Overall Finding:	Yes (Level 6 award standard)

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at
http://www.hetac.ie/publications_pol01.htm

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.7 Programme Structure

Validation Criterion:	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated proposed programme outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to condition(s) and recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- The programme should be refocused around professional skills deficits in the industry given the identified target student cohort and the specific needs of the stakeholders involved:

    o **Food and Beverage Operations 1** should be re-titled as **Food and Beverage Skills**.
    o **Introduction to Bar Operations** be re-titled as **Bar Skills**.
    o In both instances the credit allocation, module learning outcomes, content and assessment should be reviewed accordingly.

Recommendation(s):

- The panel recommend that the programme development team consider providing a weekly placement workshop (1 hour per week) in advance of the work placement.

- Ensure hours allocations are correct in programme schedule.

4.8 Teaching and Learning Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate teaching and learning strategies been provided for the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.9 Assessment Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI/HETAC Assessment and Guidelines, 2009)?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Assessment strategies are required in line with HETAC's Assessment and Standards and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme

validation panel. See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 4.6.1, page 33). Accordingly the assessment strategy should address the following (See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 2.2.5, page 13) :

- Description and Rationale for the choice of assessment tasks, criteria and procedures. This should address fairness and consistency, specifically their validity, reliability and authenticity;
- Describe any special regulations;
- Regulate, build upon and integrate the module assessment strategies;
- Provide contingent strategy for cases where learners claim exemption from modules, including recognition of prior learning;
- Ensure the programme's continuous assessment workload is appropriately balanced;
- Relate to the teaching and learning strategy;
- Demonstrate how grading criteria will be developed to relate to the Institutional grading system.

The Institute resource entitled Assessment and Learning: A Policy for Dundalk Institute of Technology (Nov 2010) (https://www.dkit.ie/celt/documents-and-policies/assessment-and-learning-guidelines-dundalk-institute-technology) should also be consulted.

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.10 Resource Requirements

Validation Criterion:	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.11 Quality Assurance

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures have been applied and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes?
Overall Finding:	Yes

The Institute's Quality Assurance Procedures are published in the Academic Quality Assurance Manual available at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrar/policies/academic-quality-manual and include approved procedures for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of Programmes.

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Module-Level Findings

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Include work placement manual in the programme documentation.

4.13 Assessment Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

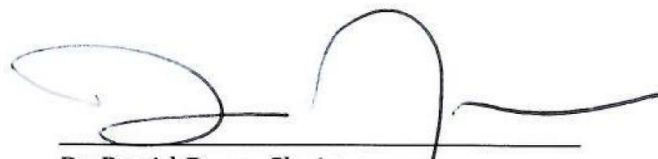- None.

4.14 Other Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:

Dr David Ryan, Chairperson.

Date: 9th February 2015

Response to the Report
of the Programme Validation Panel

Date: 20th January 2015

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Programme Title(s):	Certificate in Hospitality Operations
Exit Award(s):	Not applicable
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Ms Brianain Erraught, Head of Section, Hospitality Studies	Mr Alan Smith	Ms Elizabeth Murray

1 Introduction

The following report is the School response to the expert panel of assessors report on a proposal from the Section of Hospitality Studies in the School of Business and Humanities at Dundalk Institute of Technology to design the following programme:

- *Certificate in Hospitality Operations*

The evaluators would like to thank the members of the development team for engaging generously and openly with the review process.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Background to Proposed Programme
- General Findings of the Validation Panel
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2 Background to Proposed Programme

The philosophy guiding the design of this programme focuses on developing hospitality skills as an intrinsic part of a unique customer experience. The programme aims to strengthen the human resource base and enhance standards of performance and professionalism in the Irish tourism and hospitality industry.

In the hospitality and tourism industry there is an increasing need for employees with "well developed technical and social skills who can deliver a customer experience that will help distinguish Irish tourism from its international competitors. The programme recognises that hospitality operations, requires continuous reflection, practice and development in an increasingly international and culturally diverse environment. This programme affords the learner the opportunity to undertake these activities – reflect, practise and develop - in an effort to optimise potential.

Each module in the programme is designed to equip learners with the knowledge, skills and competencies that will allow them to rise to the challenge of delivering the distinctive and unique Irish hospitality experience. As well as enabling learners to work effectively within the industry, the programme affords them the opportunity of access and progression to a wide range of employments and further educational choices. Fundamental technical skills, combined with a wide range of learning opportunities designed to develop the learners' personal capabilities and creativity, are core elements of the programme.
Graduates of the programme will be competent in the key operational areas of Food and Beverage and Bar Service. In addition, they will have also received continuous coaching and career planning advice to guide and direct them through the programme and assist them in making informed career choices going forward.

The aim of the programme is to provide learners with the professional skills of Irish hospitality operations and to develop an understanding of the practice of quality service in partnership with industry, thereby facilitating career progression within the tourism and hospitality industry. The programme provides the learner with technical skills training in Irish hospitality, accompanied by a focus on social / relationship skills, in order to deliver a quality and unique customer experience.

See programme submission for more detailed information.

3 General Findings of the Validation Panel

The Panel would like to congratulate the programme development team on the quality of the programme documentation presented. The team is to be commended for developing a programme in collaboration with the Department of Social Protection, Diageo and Skillnets that meets a clear industry need, the evidence of which was clearly provided. The engagement and commitment of the team was clearly evident on the day of the panel.

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the validation panel recommends the following:

Certificate in Hospitality Operations

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	
Accredited subject to conditions and/or recommendations	X
Re-designed and re-submitted to the same validation panel after additional developmental work	
Not Accredited	

Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below and a response document describing the actions of the Department to address the conditions and recommendations made by the programme validation panel. In this report, the term Condition is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the validation panel must be undertaken prior to the commencement of the programme. Conditions are mandatory if the programme is to be approved. The term Recommendation indicates an item to which the Programme Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of on-going monitoring.

4 Programme-Level Findings

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- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and progression
- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Quality Assurance.

4.1 Demand

Validation Criterion:	Is there a convincing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
Overall Finding:	Yes with evidence provided

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.2 Award

Validation Criterion:	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.3 Institute Strategy Alignment

Validation Criterion:	Is the proposed programme aligned to the Institute's strategy and are the strategic themes of entrepreneurship, sustainability and internationalisation embedded in the proposed programme as appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.4 Entry Requirements

Validation Criterion:	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- The programme development team need to review the entry requirements to broaden the potential student base.

- Selection and recruitment strategies to deal with the variety of applicant backgrounds and qualifications need to be clearly articulated (e.g. Diageo involvement, etc.).

School Response

- The entry requirement for the programme has been amended to broaden the potential student base (See Programme Document)

Entry Requirements for this special purpose award is a level 5 Certificate or equivalent. All applicants will be interviewed. The interview assessment criteria will include education record, knowledge of the programme, the relevancy of their work experience, applicants career plan, their understanding of the challenges and demands of undertaking a higher education programme. Experiential learning will be assessed under the institute's Recognition of Prior Learning(RPL) process.

Recruitment for the programme is support by the Department of Social Protection who will identify suitable applicants, whose social welfare status will not be affected by participation in a programme. Selection of the suitable candidates will be the sole responsibility of the institute. Diageo have no input in this aspect of the programme

4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme incorporate the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the NQAI and does it accommodate a variety of access and entry requirements?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Progression routes into other programmes at DkIT should be clearly articulated (if relevant).

- Following the Special Purpose Award graduates would be encourage to apply through the CAO for one of the full-time level 6 programmes. There is however no direct entry route from this special purpose award into a full-time programme in the Section.

- Following the requested changes to the modules no exemptions can be granted from modules on one of the level 6 or 7 programmes, however the modules on the programme provide a good foundation for further study in the hospitality area.

4.6 Standards and Outcomes

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme meet the required award standards for programmes at the proposed NFQ level (i.e. conform to QQI Award Standards)?
Overall Finding:	Yes (Level 6 award standard)

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at http://www.hetac.ie/publications_pol01.htm

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.7 Programme Structure

Validation Criterion:	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated proposed programme outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes, subject to condition(s) and recommendation(s)

Condition(s):

- The programme should be refocused around professional skills deficits in the industry given the identified target student cohort and the specific needs of the stakeholders involved:

  o **Food and Beverage Operations 1** should be re-titled as **Food and Beverage Skills**.
  o **Introduction to Bar Operations** be re-titled as **Bar Skills**.
  o In both instances the credit allocation, module learning outcomes, content and assessment should be reviewed accordingly.

- The requested changes have been made (See revised programme document)
  - Module titles have been changes
  - Module learning outcomes have been changed to reflect a more practical skills based focus
  - Content has been reviewed and again refocused to reflect a skills and operational emphasis
  - Additional hours have been added to the Bar Skills module, bring it in line with the hours allocation for the Food and Beverage Module

Recommendation(s):

- The panel recommend that the programme development team consider providing a weekly placement workshop (1 hour per week) in advance of the work placement.

- Ensure hours allocations are correct in programme schedule.

School Response

- Weekly work placement workshops will be included as part of the weekly timetable for the programme, this is normal practice on all programme with a work placement element.

- Allocation of hours are now correct as per programme schedule

4.8 Teaching and Learning Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate teaching and learning strategies been provided for the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.9 Assessment Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI/HETAC Assessment and Guidelines, 2009)?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Assessment strategies are required in line with HETAC's Assessment and Standards and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme

validation panel. See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 4.6.1, page 33). Accordingly the assessment strategy should address the following (See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 2.2.5, page 13) :

- Description and Rationale for the choice of assessment tasks, criteria and procedures. This should address fairness and consistency, specifically their validity, reliability and authenticity;
- Describe any special regulations;
- Regulate, build upon and integrate the module assessment strategies;
- Provide contingent strategy for cases where learners claim exemption from modules, including recognition of prior learning;
- Ensure the programme's continuous assessment workload is appropriately balanced;
- Relate to the teaching and learning strategy;
- Demonstrate how grading criteria will be developed to relate to the Institutional grading system.

The Institute resource entitled Assessment and Learning: A Policy for Dundalk Institute of Technology (Nov 2010) (https://www.dkit.ie/celt/documents-and-policies/assessment-and-learning-guidelines-dundalk-institute-technology) should also be consulted.

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.10 Resource Requirements

Validation Criterion:	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.11 Quality Assurance

Validation Criterion:	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures have been applied and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes?
Overall Finding:	Yes

The Institute's Quality Assurance Procedures are published in the Academic Quality Assurance Manual available at: https://www.dkit.ie/registrar/policies/academic-quality-manual and include approved procedures for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of Programmes.

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Module-Level Findings

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Include work placement manual in the programme documentation.

School Response

- Work Placement handbook has been included (see programme document)

4.13 Assessment Strategies

Validation Criterion:	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in the proposed programme?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.14 Other Findings
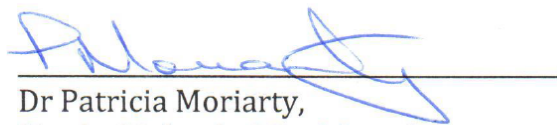
Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

Signed on behalf of the School:

Signed:

Dr Patricia Moriarty,
Head of School of Health and Science.

Date: **20th February 2015**

Validation Panel Response Approved By:

Signed:

Dr David Ryan, Chairperson.

Date: **23rd February 2015**