



Report of Programme Validation Panel

Date: Friday 22nd May 2015

Validation Type:	New
Named Award:	Not applicable
Programme Title(s):	Certificate in the Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse
Exit Award(s):	Not applicable
Award Type:	Certificate
Award Class:	Special-Purpose
NFQ Level:	8
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	10
First Intake:	September 2015

Panel Members

Mr Billy Bennett	Chair	Registrar, Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)
Dr Cherie Armour	External Discipline Expert	Lecturer in Psychology, University of Ulster
Ms Jacinta Carey	External Discipline Expert	Chairperson, SAFE Ireland
Dr Brendan Ryder	Secretary	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Programme Development Team

Dr Edel Healy, Head of School of Health and Science	Dr Geraldine O'Connor	Ms Anita Byrne
Mr Myles Hackett, Head of Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Studies	Ms Jill Atkinson	Elaine Conway
Patricia Rahill	Ma Lisa Mermion	

1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on a proposal from the Department of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Studies in the School of Health and Science at Dundalk Institute of Technology to deliver the following programme(s):

- *Certificate in the Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse*

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

There are several competing definitions of domestic abuse adopted by organisations in Ireland. All agree on the premise that domestic abuse is a pattern of abusive and threatening behaviours that may include physical, emotional, economic and sexual violence as well as intimidation, isolation and coercion. The abuse is not an isolated event but rather a pattern of behaviour with a high rate of repeat victimisation.

Domestic abuse occurs in every culture, country, and age group affecting individuals from all socioeconomic, educational, and religious backgrounds. It affects both women and men and occurs within heterosexual and lesbian, gay and bisexual or transgender relationships. However it is acknowledged, from evidence both nationally and internationally, that the majority of victims are women. Domestic abuse will also affect children even if they are not abused or do not witness it directly. Domestic abuse can present in the form of Elder Abuse where the older person is abused by a significant individual such as their spouse, children, relatives or carer. It is also recognized that it occurs within vulnerable groups such as those with an intellectual and/or physical disability where the abuser may be a carer, partner or relative.

The national survey Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland (National Crime Council and ESRI, 2005) suggests that approximately 213,000 women and 88,000 men in Ireland have been severely abused by a partner at some point in their lives. Specifically the survey identified:

- One in seven women and one in six men have experienced severely abusive behaviour of a physical, sexual or emotional nature from a partner at some time in their lives.
- One woman in 11 has experienced severe physical abuse in a relationship, one in 12 has experienced sexual abuse and one in 13 has experienced severe emotional abuse.
- One man in 25 has experienced severe physical abuse, one in 90 has experienced sexual abuse in a relationship and one in 37 has experienced severe emotional abuse.

- Women are over twice as likely as men to have experienced severe physical abuse, seven times more likely to have experienced sexual abuse, and are more likely to experience serious injuries than men.

Current research would suggest that domestic abuse affects 1 in 5 women in Ireland. Safe Ireland (2015) reported that national figures from 2013 identified:

- At least 8,033 women and 3,424 children received support from a domestic violence service in Ireland.
- There were 46,137 answered calls to helpline calls across Ireland. 1,769 women and 2,699 children lived in a refuge and received accommodation and other supports.
- There were 2,052 women admissions and 2,787 children admissions to refuge (sometimes repeat individuals).
- There were 3,494 unmet requests for emergency refuge accommodation because the refuge was full.

Internationally it is recognized that victims of abuse experience significantly poorer health outcomes than their non-abused counterparts including an increased risk of physical injuries, mental health issues including an increased risk of suicide, psychosomatic disorders, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. They also have an increased risk of being killed by a partner. Female victims are at risk of unwanted pregnancy (World Health Organisation, 2002). Despite this myriad of poor health outcomes it can be challenging to recognize when someone is a victim of abuse.

It is widely recognised that domestic abuse falls within an inter-sectoral and interorganisational domain with victims frequently accessing services from two or more organisations. The two main sectors involved are the Justice Sector (including An Garda Síochána, the Probation Service and the Courts and the Legal Aid Board) and the Health and Environment Sectors (including the Health Service Executive and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government) (The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence, 2011). This results in victims of abuse coming into contact with a number of individuals from a range of organisations.

Dr. Edel Healy, Head of School of Health & Science DkIT and Mary McDonald, Probation Service are members of the Louth Children Services Committee (<http://www.louthcsc.ie/>). Louth Children's Services Committee (CSC) is a collaboration of agencies working together to improve the lives of children, young people and their families in County Louth. Its membership is drawn from a number of key agencies; Health Service Executive (HSE) Louth County Council (LCC), Co. Louth Vocational Education Committee (VEC), An Garda Síochána, The Probation Service, Louth County Childcare Committee, Louth Leader Partnership, Voluntary Representation, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT), Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) and National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD). In its work plan the Committee identified the area of Domestic Violence as one of its priority areas and a working group was established. This working group chaired by Mary McDonald comprised a number of members of this current programme development team including Lisa Marmion, Dundalk Women's Aid and Theresa Wood, Drogheda Women's & Children Refuge. One of the objectives of this group was to promote and develop an understanding of the dynamics of Domestic Violence among the student population and the educational sector. Through discussions at this group it emerged that although the area of domestic violence was covered in third level undergraduate programmes there is a lack of accredited training programmes for those working in the

sector. Therefore it was decided to convene a multidisciplinary programme development team with representatives from all of the relevant agencies to develop the proposed Certificate programme.

See programme submission for more detailed information.

3 General Findings of the Validation Panel

The team is to be commended for providing ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for the nursing profession. There is a clear rationale for providing the programme, the first accredited programme of its type in the Republic of Ireland. The panel further commend the multidisciplinary, collaborative approach taken to the development of the programme. The engagement and commitment of the team was clearly evident on the day of the panel. The panel note the blended learning approach proposed for the delivery of the programme which will provide flexibility for prospective participants. The School is leading the development of blended learning programmes within the Institute and they are to be congratulated for meeting stated Institute objectives in this regard.

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

Certificate in the Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	X
Accredited subject to conditions and/or recommendations	
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:

- Rationale and Demand
- Award
- Institute strategy alignment
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and Progression
- Protection of the Enrolled Learner

- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Quality Assurance.
- Module-Level Findings.

4.1 Rationale and Demand

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is there a convincing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, both primary and secondary evidence provided

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.2 Award

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the title, level, type and classification of the award appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Condition(s)

- The title should be amended to reflect the scale and scope of the programme including the word “Fundamentals”. For example, “Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse”.

Recommendation(s):

- The programme development team should consider including the three R’s in the programme title - Recognise, Response and Refer.

4.3 Institute Strategy Alignment

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.4 Entry Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Condition(s)

- The entry requirement for the programme should be a full NFQ Level 7 award or equivalent.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.6 Protection of Enrolled Learners

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the provider have arrangements in place which make provision for learners in the event that it ceases to provide the programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.7 Standards and Outcomes

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

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the **NFQ Framework** can be found at <http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/Active-NFQ-Standards-for-HE.aspx>.

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.8 Programme Structure

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.9 Teaching and Learning Strategies

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

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.10 Programme Assessment Strategies

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI Assessment and Guidelines, 2013)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Assessment strategies are required in line with QQI's Assessment and Standards (2013) and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme validation panel. Accordingly the assessment strategy should address the following:

- 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):

- The programme development team need to clarify how the technology-enhanced learning elements are assessed and linked to learning outcomes.

4.11 Resource Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme (including reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Quality Assurance

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	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.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.13 Module-Level Findings**Condition(s)**

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Additional resources including books, journals, and systematic reviews should be included in module descriptor(s).

4.14 Assessment Strategies

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation:

- None.

4.15 Other Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- The statistics on domestic abuse need to be updated and revised to reflect the most recent research.

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Billy Bennett', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr Billy Bennett, Chairperson.

Date: 12 June 2015



Response to the Report of the Programme Validation Panel

Date: Friday 22nd May 2015

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1 Introduction

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sector. Therefore it was decided to convene a multidisciplinary programme development team with representatives from all of the relevant agencies to develop the proposed Certificate programme.

See programme submission for more detailed information.

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

Certificate in the Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	X
Accredited subject to conditions and/or recommendations	
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:

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- Award
- Institute strategy alignment
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and Progression
- Protection of the Enrolled Learner

- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Quality Assurance.
- Module-Level Findings.

4.1 Rationale and Demand

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is there a convincing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, both primary and secondary evidence provided

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.2 Award

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the title, level, type and classification of the award appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Condition(s)

- The title should be amended to reflect the scale and scope of the programme including the word “Fundamentals”. For example, “Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse”.

School Response

- The School shall amend the title as outlined in the example above.

Recommendation(s):

- The programme development team should consider including the three R's in the programme title - Recognise, Response and Refer.

School Response

- The team would prefer to leave the title as outlined in the condition as including the 3 R's would make the title very long.

4.3 Institute Strategy Alignment

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.4 Entry Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Condition(s)

- The entry requirement for the programme should be a full NFQ Level 7 award or equivalent.

School Response

- The entry requirements shall be amended as required above.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.6 Protection of Enrolled Learners

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the provider have arrangements in place which make provision for learners in the event that it ceases to provide the programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.7 Standards and Outcomes

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

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the **NFQ Framework** can be found at <http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/Active-NFQ-Standards-for-HE.aspx>.

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.8 Programme Structure

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.9 Teaching and Learning Strategies

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

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.10 Programme Assessment Strategies

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI Assessment and Guidelines, 2013)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes, with recommendation(s) and/or recommendations

Assessment strategies are required in line with QQI's Assessment and Standards (2013) and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme validation panel. Accordingly the assessment strategy should address the following:

- 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):

- The programme development team need to clarify how the technology-enhanced learning elements are assessed and linked to learning outcomes.

School Response

- The e-learning components of the assessment strategy are not linked to any programme learning outcomes. They are included purely to monitor and provide marks to the students for their level of engagement with the blended learning aspects of the programme.

4.11 Resource Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme (including reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Quality Assurance

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	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?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	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.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.13 Module-Level Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Additional resources including books, journals, and systematic reviews should be included in module descriptors.

School Response

- The team shall review the module descriptor and include additional resources.

4.14 Assessment Strategies

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation:

- None.

4.15 Other Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- The statistics on domestic abuse need to be updated and revised to reflect the most recent research.

School Response

- The statistics will be amended accordingly.

Signed on behalf of the School:

Signed:



Dr Edel Healy,
Head of School of xHealth and Science.

Date: 20th September 2015

Validation Panel Response Approved By:

Signed:



Mr Billy Bennett, Chairperson.

Date: 21 September 2015