

Response to Report of Programme Validation Panel

Date: Wednesday 18th May 2016

Named Award:	B.A.
Programme Title(s):	Digital Marketing, Public Relations and Business Communications
Exit Award(s):	No
Award Type:	Ordinary Bachelor Degree
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	7
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	180
First Intake:	2016

Panel Members

Mr. Billy Bennett	Chair	Registrar, Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)
Ms. Lisa Clancy	External Discipline Expert	Managing Director Clansult
Ms. Edel Griffin	External Academic	Course Director, University of Ulster
Ms. Carmel Brennan	External Academic	Head of Dept. Galway/Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)
Dr. Breda Brennan	Secretary	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Programme Development Team

Paula Mullen (Programme Director)	Ciara O'Connor	Vicky Leahy
John Sisk (Programme Director)	Tara Kinney	Catherine Staunton
Shane Hill (Head of Department)	Paula Browne	Annmarie McHugh
Dr. Collette Henry (Head of School)	Seamus Rispin	Pat McArdle
Brian Boyd	Helen White	Siobhan Duffy
Fiona Oster	Bobby Arthur	David Coggans
Maeve McCardle	Johdi Quinn	Colin Cooney

1 Introduction

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

B.A. in Digital Marketing, Public Relations and Business Communications

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

See programme submission for more detailed information.

3 General Findings of the Validation Panel

The panel congratulate the team on the innovative programme presented, the level of engagement with the panel, and in particular the applied nature of the programme.

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

B.A. in Digital Marketing, Public Relations and Business Communications

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	

Note:

- Conditions and recommendations described for the parent award apply equally for the higher certificate as appropriate.

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

<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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.2 Award

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation:

Revise the programme title with a view to shortening it and reflecting Marketing Communications in the title. A proposed title is *B.A. in Digital Marketing, Communications and Public Relations*.

The development team acknowledges importance of above and has decided on the following title; BA in Digital Marketing, Communication and Public Relations.

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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation:

Revise the entry requirements to include the new Leaving Certificate grading structure from 2017.

(i.e. Six grades at O6 or H7 including Maths grade O6 or H7 and English Grade O6 or H7 or Irish Grade O6 or H7 with at least one H5 or better or 200 points).

This is now completed

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 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)? For parent award? Yes For exit award (if applicable)? n/a
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

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:

The Institute should review the approach to writing programme learning outcomes. The Panel recommends that programme learning outcomes should be tailored specifically to the programme and mapped to the appropriate award standard.

This recommendation is acknowledged and will be discussed with the Office of Registrar at DkIT.

4.7 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.

Recommendations:

- Clearly articulate the streams within the programme. A diagram showing the modules attached to each stream would make the link to the programme title and specialisms clearer.

This is currently being formulated and developed by the programme team and will be in place for programme commencement in September 2016.

- It is strongly recommended that the modules *Consumer Psychology and Behaviour* and *Branding and Customer Relationship Management* become mandatory modules. The panel

suggest reviewing the elective structure to ensure that core modules are taken by all students but that students still have choice via the elective structure.

The modules Consumer Psychology and Behaviour, and Branding and Customer Relationship Management are now mandatory modules. Furthermore, the development team have reviewed the elective structure as suggested.

4.8 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.

4.9 Assessment Strategies

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

Review the assessment workload to ensure there is not assessment overload and consider further opportunities for integrated assessments.

The programme team endorses the above and is developing appropriate joint assessment initiatives.

4.10 Resource Requirements

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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.11 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.

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Module-Level Findings**Condition(s):**

- None.

Recommendations:

- Revise module learning outcomes and ensure they have measurable active verbs, avoiding non-measurable verbs such as ‘understand’, ‘appreciate’, etc.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation. Pre-validated modules will be changed accordingly at Programmatic Review.

- In the case of modules with *MarComm* in the title, use the full title - *Marketing Communications*.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation.

- *MarComm and Public Relations*: Include ‘media buying’ and ‘contemporary issues’ in this module.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation.

- *Sales Management and Practice*: Separate sales management and sales practice in this module. Include correct workload hours.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation.

- *Writing for Digital Media*: Remove N/A from module descriptors.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation.

- *Consumer Psychology and Behaviour*: Include ‘cyber psychology’ in this module.

The programme development team have now completed this recommendation.

- *Image Editing and Design Theory*: Replace ‘Theory’ with ‘Practice’ in title.

This is a pre-approved module which will be examined at the next Programmatic Review.

4.13 Assessment Strategies

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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.14 Other Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Given the nature of the programme, ensure that platforms used to promote the programme reflect current technology (e.g., mobile responsive website).

The programme development endorses this recommendation and will make every effort to ensure contemporary communication platforms are fully exploited.

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:



Billy Bennett, Chairperson.

Date: 25 June 2016