DUNDALK

INSTITUTE — TECHNOLOGY

Response to the Report
of the Programme Validation Panel

Date: 7th December 2016

Type of Validation:	Differential (Full-time to Part-time)
Named Award:	Higher Diploma in Science
Programme Title(s):	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing
Exit Award(s):	n/a
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	8
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	60
First Intake:	January 2017

Panel Members

Dr. Derek O'Byrne	Chair	Registrar, Waterford Institute of Technology
Mr. Fergal Cassidy	External Discipline Expert	Managing Director of Measuresoft, Dundalk
Ms. Brigid Crowley	External Academic	Head of Department of Computing, Creative Media and Information Technology, IT Tralee
Dr. Breda Brennan	Secretary	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Programme Development Team

Dr. Gerard (Bob) McKiernan, Head of School of Informatics and Creative Arts		
Dr. Christian Horn, Head of Department of Computing Science and Mathematics		
Dr. Cornelia Connolly, Programme Director		
Mr. Enda Finn	Dr. Gerry Coleman	Mr. Tony McCarron
Mr. Kilian Logan	Dr. Frank Keenan	Dr. Michelle Graham

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 Informatics and Creative Arts at Dundalk Institute of Technology to design the following programme:

Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

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 development team on an already successful programme and on their engagement with the validation process. They commend the team on their innovative thinking and commitment to find solutions to the structural challenges of moving to the part-time delivery mode.

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

Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

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

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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

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

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

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)? For parent award? For exit award (if applicable)?
Overall Finding:	Yes

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at http://www.nfq-qqi.com/index.html

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

Condition(s):

* The programme is validated subject to all modules being delivered within one semester and credits for all modules being allocated at the end of each semester. Any resulting new modules will be reviewed by the panel remotely to facilitate a timely validation process.

Recommendation(s):

* None.

Response:
The modules have been split and realigned. Please see attached revised programme documents.

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 Quality Assuring Assessment Guidelines 2013)?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Assessment strategies are required in line with QQI's Assessment and Standards and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme validation panel. (See: http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers,%20Revised%202013.pdf)

- 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):

- Specify non-contact hours for the module *Software Engineering and Design.*

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.12 Module-Level Findings

Condition(s):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.13 Assessment Strategies

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

Condition(s):

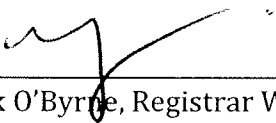- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

4.14 Other Findings

Condition(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- None.

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:

Dr. Derek O'Byrne, Registrar WIT

Date: <date>   3/2/2017