School Response to Report of Programme Validation Panel

Date: 11th May 2017

Named Award:	Higher Certificate
Programme Title(s):	Higher Certificate in Arts in Front Office Management and Business Administration
Exit Award(s):	n/a
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	6
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	120
First Intake:	September 2018

Panel Members

Mr. Billy Bennett	Chair	Registrar, LYIT
Mr. Gerry Talbot	External Academic	Head of Department of Culinary Arts and Service Industries, GMIT
Mr. Anthony Johnston	External Academic	Head of Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Studies, AIT
Ms. Dolores O'Connor	External Industry Expert	BE Recruitment
Dr. Breda Brennan	Secretary to Panel	Assistant Registrar, DkIT

Programme Development Team

Dr. Colette Henry, Head of School of Business and Humanities	
Ms. Brianain Erraught, Head of Department of Hospitality	
Mr. Colin Cooney, Head of Department of Business Studies	
Ms. Lorraine Dunne	Ms. Vicky Leahy
Mr. Maria RoddyFreyne	Ms. Karen Commins
Mr. Brian Boyd	Ms. Mairead McKenna
Mr. Alan McCabe	Ms. Elizabeth Murray
Ms. Mairead McKiernan	Mr. Alan Smith

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(s):

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Front Office Management and Business Administration

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 commend the engagement of the programme development team. The panel particularly commend the support for the work placement element of the programme with the accompanying documentation and protocols and the programme assessment strategy which was very well presented.

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

Higher Certificate in Arts in Front Office Management and Business Administration

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:

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?
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):

- Consider engaging with the Further Education Sector regarding progression opportunities such as advanced entry from cognate programmes onto this programme.

Response. The programme team will liaise with our partner college in the FE sector and look for appropriate programme to map to provide for advanced entry.

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):

- Review the programme and module learning outcomes (for draft modules) to ensure they are written at the appropriate level and using measureable active verbs.   Approved modules should be reviewed at the next programmatic review.
- Response
  All learning outcomes have been reviewed and rewritten where appropriate using the appropriate level and measurable active verbs.

Recommendation(s):

- The panel recommend the development of a more focused, programme-specific list of programme learning outcomes.
- The mapping of learning outcomes should be more discriminating, not <u>all</u> modules should necessarily contribute to <u>all</u> programme learning outcomes.

Response
The programme learning outcomes have been reviewed and rewritten to a more focused set of learning outcomes
Mapping of programme and module learning outcomes has been reviewed and amended where appropriate

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):

- None.

Recommendation(s):

- Increase the amount of IT covered in the programme. Students should be exposed to a <u>range</u> of IT systems relevant for Front Office.
- Consider providing students with greater choice through the use of electives (and consider offering additional languages, e.g. existing modules such as Chinese).
- Workload:
  - Ensure that the contact hours for part-time provision are included in the course schedule.
  - Consider an option for part-time delivery based on block delivery and reduced contact hours.
  - Consider re-balancing the contact hours over the 4 semesters, e.g. Front Office Operations 1 and 2.
- Response
  Since the validation of the programme the department has purchased a new Front Office IT system which provides for a wider range of training than the existing system. All of the essential office administration IT packages , word , excel and power point are included in programme , along with other industry specific packages including CVent.

  The inclusion of electives on all programmes in the department is part of the wider strategy planning for the upcoming programmatic review, the structure of   this programme will form part of that wider discussion

  Contact hours for part-time provision have been included in the document
  The programme team are considering options around the delivery of the programme parttime.
  The hours across the four semesters have been balanced.

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):

- Articulate the Learning and Teaching Strategy for the programme, outlining the unique approach to learning and teaching for <u>this particular programme</u>, while it is noted that a Department Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy was included in the document.
- Response
  This has been included in the document, see page. 30

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 for Providers 2013)

Overall Finding:	Yes

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

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):

- 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	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's

Criterion:	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):

- Review all reading lists to ensure they are up to date during programmatic review.

- Review some module titles to ensure they reflect the module content:
    - Introduction to the Industry
    - Customer Service

- Link module learning outcome 2 in the Customer Service module to an assessment.

Response
 All reading lists are currently being reviewed as part of the programmatic review process
Consideration will be given as part of the programmatic review process to the titles of modules which are delivered across a number of programmes
Learning outcome two has been linked to as assessment in the Customer Service module

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:

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Mr. Billy Bennett, LYIT.

Date: 29/8/17