



## Report of External Peer Review Group for the Programmatic Review of:

<b>Named Award:</b>	Bachelor of Business
<b>Programme Title(s):</b>	Bachelor of Business in Tourism Management L7 (3 years) Higher Certificate Business in Tourism L6 (2 years)
<b>Exit Award(s):</b>	Higher Certificate Business in Tourism L6
<b>Award Type:</b>	Higher Certificate Ordinary Degree
<b>Award Class:</b>	Major
<b>NFQ Level:</b>	Level 6 Level 7
<b>ECTS / ACCS Credits:</b>	120 180
<b>Minor Award(s):</b>	None
<b>Location:</b>	Galway

### Panel Members

Name	Position	Organisation
Ann Campbell	Chairperson	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Gerard MacMichael	Secretary	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Dr Sean Duffy	IOT Member	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Sean T Ruane	University Member	Shannon College
Michael Vaughan	Professional Practitioner	Irish Hotel Federation
Gosia Letowska	Institute Graduate	

### Programme Board Team

Susanne O'Reilly	Shane Durcan
Gerry O'Neill	Beatrice Colleran
Maria Murphy	Marie Burke
John Carty	Sally Reidy
Tom Conlon	George Finnegan
Tom Edwards	Sinead Lomas
Helen Scully Owens	Deirdre Fahy
Jacinta Dalton	

## 1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on the approval of the programme Bachelor of Business Tourism Management.

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 Self Evaluation Report (SER) for more detailed information.

## 3 General Findings of the External Peer Review Group

- The External Peer Review Group has come to the conclusion that they approve the programme for a further five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner, subject to 3 conditions and a number of recommendations.
- The EPRG acknowledge the hard work that the programme board have put into this process and the participation that was involved is commendable.
- The level of enthusiasm by staff is very evident and the EPRG acknowledge and commend this.
- The EPRG commend the programme board on establishing the identity of this programme as a tourism programme in the College of Tourism and Arts.

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the External Peer Review Group recommends the following:

### Bachelor of Business Tourism Management

*Place an x in the correct box.*

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	
Accredited subject to conditions and recommendations	X
Re-designed and re-submitted to the same External Peer Review Group 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 External Peer Review Group (EPRG). In this report, the term Condition is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the EPRG 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:

- Evidence of reflection by the programme board to include, where relevant evidence of collaboration and engagement with other programmes from a similar discipline area within GMIT
- Demand
- Award
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and progression
- Retention
- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Learning and Teaching Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Research Activity
- Quality Assurance
- Internationalisation
- Professional Practice (Work Experience / Internship etc)

### 4.1 Reflection, including internal and external engagement

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there evidence of reflection in the SER of how the programme performed since the last programmatic review.
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

### 4.2 Demand

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there a need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

### 4.3 Award

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### 4.4 Entry Requirements

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate? Is there a relationship with this programme and further education?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### 4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme incorporate the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the HEA and as contained in the Institute's Quality assurance Framework (QAF) COP No.4?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### 4.6 Retention

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme comply with the Institute norms for retention, both in first year and subsequent years? Are both elements of the First Year Experience {(i) Learning to Learn (now Learning and Skills Innovation) and (ii) PASS} embedded in this programme? Evidence of other retention initiatives?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

#### Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommends that the programme board monitors the retention initiatives currently in place to ensure they are successful. These initiatives should form part of an overall student retention plan which the board should develop and monitor going forward.

#### 4.7 Standards and Outcomes

<i>Consideration for the panel:</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? For exit award (if applicable)? For Minor Award (if applicable)? For Special Purpose Award (if applicable)?
<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>

It was noted that an embedded Level 6 Exit Award in the Level 7 programme would provide greater flexibility and efficiency for programme delivery, rather than those experienced from having separate delivery.

#### 4.8 Programme Structure

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated programme intended learning outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

#### Recommendation:

- The EPRG suggests that the programme board develops a plan for the progression to common delivery for common modules in the Level 6 and the Level 7 programmes.

#### 4.9 Learning and Teaching Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have appropriate learning and teaching strategies been provided for the proposed programme that support Student Centred Learning (SCL)? Evidence of consideration of flexible delivery methods including eLearning?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

It was noted that a lot of the modules on this programme have potential for online delivery, especially the finance based modules. This should not take away from the learning experience of the students, so seminars could also be run with expert lecturers from different areas attending. This would facilitate blended learning as opposed to online learning only and could reach out to people in industry who may not be able to attend a full time course.

#### 4.10 Assessment Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</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 to include 1 condition and 1 recommendation

Assessment strategies are required in line with HETAC's Assessment and Standards and should be considered by the programme EPRG. 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 learning and teaching strategy;
- Demonstrate how grading criteria will be developed to relate to the Institutional grading system.

**Condition:**

- The EPRG requests that the programme board develop a more focused programme assessment strategy to ensure there is proportional relevance and constructive alignment between the learning outcomes of this programme and the assessment of those learning outcomes.

**Recommendation:**

- The EPRG recommends that integrated assessment be used across appropriate modules of the programme.

**4.11 Resource Requirements**

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

**Recommendation:**

- The EPRG recommends that support should be put in place for students who have little or no I.T. experience. Mature students found it especially difficult to keep up. The programme board should take cognisance of the different levels of ability and encourage students to complete an ECDL course at lunchtime, or alternatively to include a greater emphasis on I.T. in the new Learning and Skills Innovation module.

**4.12 Research Activity**

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Evidence that Learning & Teaching is informed by research? Number of staff engaged in institutional/pedagogical research?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

**4.13 Quality Assurance**

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures (QAF) have been applied and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### 4.14 Internationalisation

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the syllabi represent an international dimension? Is there evidence of approaches to induct international students?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

It was noted that although there were no international students on this programme there were a lot of students from the EU.

There is also the international study element of the programme with a student trip to the London World Travel Market event and an assessment is devised around their experience.

#### 4.15 Professional Practice (Work Experience / Internships etc)

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme incorporate professional practice as per the Institute's policy on professional practice (PP)? If not, is there evidence that PP is under consideration by the programme board?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 2 conditions

#### Conditions:

- Upon reviewing the SER documents the EPRG found that the ECTS credits available for the proposed work placement module are too low. The EPRG requests that there should be 20 credits available overall for work placement. This would apply 10 credits to each work placement completed.
- The EPRG states that if the programme board wishes to include Erasmus placement in this programme, they must develop a module descriptor for modules taken abroad showing all expected learning outcomes and the assessments required for those learning outcomes.

#### 5.0 Module Level Findings: General:

#### Recommendation:

The EPRG recommend that languages should not be electives in this programme due to their importance, but should be mandatory in every year.

#### 5.1 Module Assessment Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in each Module Descriptor?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

#### Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommends that the programme board create a more structured feedback mechanism for students regarding their assessment results. (An example could include an official feedback form given to students after correction of their assessments)

## 6.0 Student Findings

6 Students attended the meeting from various years in the programme.

They said that the work placement was very beneficial as it put what they had already learnt into context. They found that the continued assessments were very helpful rather than having one 100% exam at the end of the year as it took away some of the stress. They felt that the programme will prepare them for a wide variety of jobs both here and abroad. One student commented that there was fantastic support from the student union.

Two students commented that more could be done to help support students who may not have any I.T. skills before registering for the course. For example to introduce a 1 week induction course in I.T. at the beginning of year 1.

## 7.0 Stakeholder Engagement

### Recommendation:

- The EPRG suggests that research is carried out to track the outcome of graduates of this programme. The EPRG endorse the idea of setting up an alumni group for all the past graduates. This will enable their feedback and knowledge to inform future developments of this programme.

## 8.0 Future Plans

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Evidence that the programme board considered and identified opportunities and signalled proposals for related new programme and award development.
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

### Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:



Ann Campbell  
Chairperson

Date:

23.4.2015