

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

Named Award:	Bachelor of Science (Honours) Bachelor of Science
Programme Title(s):	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sustainable Building Technology Bachelor of Science in Construction Management in Refurbishment and Maintenance One Year add-on
Exit Award(s):	Higher Certificate in Science in Construction Management.
Award Type:	Higher Certificate, Degree, Honours Degree, One year add-on
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	Level 6 Level 7 Level 8 One year add-on
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	120, 180, 240
Location:	Mayo
Minor Award(s):	None

Panel Members

Name	Position	Organisation
Maria Kyne	Chair	LIT
Larry Elwood	Secretary	GMIT
Alan Hore	IOT Member	DIT
Declan Phillips	University Member	UL
William Malone	Professional Practitioner	William Malone & Associates
Michael Trench	Institute Graduate	Graduate

Programme Board Team

Dave Cashman	Sinead Kilgannon	Pearse McDonnell
Anne Wiseman	John Scahill	Mairead Ludden
Michael Gill	Deirdre Garvey	Noel Crean

1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on Thursday 29th May 2014 – am -Mayo

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

After discussions the panel have decided to approve the programme with some conditions, recommendations and commendations. The Campus underwent a programmatic review two years ago and the most recent review was conducted again to synchronise with all programmes across the Institute.

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

Bachelor of Science in Construction Management in Refurbishment and Maintenance
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sustainable Building Technology One Year add-on

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 revised programme documents that take 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 with one condition

It was noted that the panel members felt that the SER document was poorly structured with no conclusion. It was also noted that because the last review happened two years previously, the programmatic review panel did not have a lengthy period of time to review. It was also noted that the last programmatic review panel imposed a condition of an earlier introduction of refurbishment and relevant materials. The panel were happy that this had in fact occurred.

Condition(s) :

- The programme board should review the level 7 and level 8 programme titles in consultation with Industry stakeholders with a view to creating an integrated level 8 programme with embedded awards

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

It was noted by the panel that demand for this programme was essentially local i.e. from the Mayo region. The higher than normal proportion of mature students on the programme was also noted. The future sustainability of this programme will require more standard entry students (non-matures). The panel have concerns as to the programme's failure to attract CAO students.

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 & Innovation Skills) and (ii) PASS} embedded in this programme? Evidence of other retention initiatives?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

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

4.8 Programme Structure

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

Condition(s):

- The delivery of the Building Information modelling module be introduced earlier in the programme.
- The programme board should establish an industrial liaison advisory panel for the programme and it should meet annually, so that the programme can be more responsive to and be informed by industry.

Commendation(s):

- The panel noted that feedback from the students was very positive.

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?
Overall Finding:	Yes with two recommendations

Commendation(s):

- The panel would like to commend the programme board on their commitment to this programme and their students.

Recommendation(s):

- The panel recommends that booklists are updated for a number of modules
- The panel also recommends that the programme be re-examined for a better balance between lectures and practicals given the practical orientation of the programme as many of year 4 modules have 4 hours of lectures only.

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)?
Overall Finding:	Yes with two recommendations

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.

Recommendation(s):

- In the module descriptor forms the assessments for the 100% continually assessed modules should be expanded as it is imperative that students have an understanding of the range of assessments required from them
- In the module descriptor forms the re-assessment opportunities for students must be clearly set out so that each student has an opportunity to be re-assessed in each module.

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 with 1 condition and 1 recommendation

Condition(s):

- The panel noted the programme board's proposal to provide this programme in outreach centres and also noted the heavy resource requirements that this would entail. Before proceeding with these proposals these resource requirements should be both fully understood and approved by the Executive Board.

Recommendation(s):

- Contact hours will be an average of 24 hours over the duration of the programme.

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>	No with one recommendation

Recommendation(s):

- The panel recommend that the curricula is internationalised so as to prepare students for the global marketplace.

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 with one condition

Condition(s):

- The programme board should introduce a 16 week work placement in year 3 of the programme. The programme board should draw from the Galway based Construction Management programme experience in this area.

5.0 Module-Level Findings: General

Overall findings of the panel should be documented here.

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

5.2 Module Level-Findings: Specific Named Modules

5.2.1 Module (Group Project)

The students felt that manual drawing takes up too much of their time and suggested that instead drawings and schedules can be done up on Revit and this should be introduced in 2nd year.

5.2.2 Module (Construction Technology)

The programme board should include more refurbishment and maintenance content in year 1 and year 2 Construction Technology modules.

6.0 Student Findings

12 Students

The students found the course interesting especially the surveying and drawing elements and they would have liked to have done more. They stated that there was not enough practical usage of instruments and could only use them at certain times. In particular they suggested that doing a building survey is of no use in Year 3, this should be done in Year 2. They identified the building survey module as very important, as well as CAD, as being of critical importance for the construction industry in Ireland. To be able to understand drawings is very important and this happens in construction technology.

The students felt that it is important to have refurbishment / maintenance in the title – majority of the students came to this course because of the title. Feedback from employers was good and students with this qualification felt they were equipped to progress from a green field right up to turning the key in the door. The students felt that there was a good coverage of all aspects of building, and provided a good grounding if you wanted to progress to heritage. The health and safety aspects are good also.

All agreed though that work placement is a great way of getting experience and for confidence building. Many get jobs through work placement and it is a great way for making contacts in the industry, however there is no work placement at the moment on the programme.

In relation to assessment the students found it very good, they were given a timetable at the start of the year but it can be work heavy at the end of the year.

The students enjoyed the final year project and really loved it – some of the students present worked on the Mayo Campus building. In suggesting possible improvements for the Programme the students suggested that greater emphasis be placed on payback & feasibility in Year 4, with perhaps less emphasis on technical aspects of costing- which they felt could be done by accounting professionals. Greater emphasis on quantity surveying was also recommended by the students.

In relation to exam results enquiries all students were happy with the process. All lecturers were very approachable and take everything on board. The 3rd year group project was generally well received. The students felt that manual drawing were taking up too much of their time and suggested that instead of this drawings and schedules can be done up on Revit and this should be introduced in 2nd year. The students felt in any future changes to the programme BIM needs to be expanded in coverage as this is a critical skill for students to have. The students felt that the programme is 3+1 but if it was introduced as a 4 year programme it would be more marketable and attractive to students. They also recommended an Ab-Initio in Sustainable Technology Level 8 would be good as would Building Technology – sustainable is the future.

7.0 Stakeholder Engagement

Overall findings of the panel should be documented here.

8.0 Future Plans

Overall findings of the panel should be documented here.

<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:

Maria Kyne
Maria Kyne
Chairperson

Date:

27/04/15