

Report of New Programme Evaluations

- a. Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Finance and Economics
- b. Bachelor of Business (Ordinary) in Finance

External Validation Panel Members:

Dr. Derek O'Byrne (Chair), Registrar, WIT

Dr. James Cunningham, Director of Whitaker Institute, NUIG.

Dr. Amr Arisha, Head of International Business Department, DIT.

Mr. Paul Shelly, Chartered Accountant.

Mr. Pdraig O Ceidigh, formerly Galway Airport.

Mr. Jarlath O'Dwyer, Supermacs.

Mr. Michael Hannon, Registrar.

Delivery Mode / Duration / Validation Date(s):

Full-time Part-time Semesterised Modularised

New Programme Modification of existing programme

Duration: 3 or 4 years. The Higher Certificate is a 2 year programme

Date(s) of meeting(s): 16th and 17th February, 2015

Educational Aim

The educational aim of this programme is to:

- equip the learner with expertise in economics and finance combined with training in quantitative methods and big data analytical skills
- expose the learner to other core business areas such as strategic management, IT and enterprise which seeks to complement their specialist knowledge in finance and economics.
- prepare students to take the relevant professional qualifications in the field of finance and economics. Students taking this degree are eligible to sit the level 7 Qualified Financial Advisor (QFA) and the level 7 CFA Claratis Investment Certificate.
- produce graduates that are employable in the areas of financial economics, banking and finance
- provide a sound basis for more advanced study in the fields of finance and economics.

Access

GMIT Code of Practice No 4. GMIT Policies on Access, Transfer and Progression details how a learner may commence a programme of education and training in GMIT. It includes direct admissions (e.g. Mature applicants) and indirect admissions (e.g. CAO applicants).

GMIT Code of Practice No. 6 Policy and Procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) details how RPL can be used to gain admission to a programme, and/or to gain exemptions from parts of a programme of study.

Transfer

GMIT Code of Practice No 4. GMIT Policies on Access, Transfer and Progression explains how an application from a student wishing to transfer from other HEIs (including universities) can do so. The Code of Practice also allows internal transfers (transfer from one GMIT programme to another) and transfers from providers of Further Education.

Progression

GMIT Code of Practice No 4. GMIT Policies on Access, Transfer and Progression explains how a graduate from GMIT and external HEI students may progress from one award level to a higher level.

Teaching and Learning

Learning and teaching is a core activity of GMIT and through its academic Programmes, GMIT ensures that all graduates have a comprehensive understanding of relevant disciplines, professional knowledge and skills appropriate to their awards. GMIT Code of Academic Policy No 4. GMIT Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2010-2015 provides direction on how programmes in GMIT will be taught and delivered.

The Teaching and Learning strategy of this programme will be achieved through the adoption of a range of different pedagogical approaches which recognise the centrality of the student in both a traditional and self-learning environment.

Assessment Strategies

There will be a variety of assessment methods used on this programme including inter alia continuous assessment (CA), assignments, practical work, project work, individual and group-work, and examinations. The students will be given assignments and projects to demonstrate their learning including case study projects and assignments that will be both practical and conceptual and will be structured and organised in order to link with the world of business and industry. These assignments will be linked to current business practices and technology will be used in the assessment where possible.

The programme assessment strategy (see GMIT's Code of Practice No. 3 Student Assessment: Marks and Standards) outlines the relationships between each programme outcome, the intended learning outcomes of the modules, and the assessment elements of the constituent modules.

Findings and Recommendations:

The panel commend the strategy adopted by the Business School in developing Level 8 programmes in response to market demand.

Recommendations of Panel in relation to award sought:

- A distinctive element of the programme is that it provides a basis for professional body certification and this is something that should be promoted by the programme as it provides further enhance employment prospects for students.
- The panel recognise the degree of commonality between this programme and the other programmes presented for validation. Programmes with common entry and

multiple exit routes are the current policy in Irish HE and are specifically compatible with the Transition debate. While it is noted here that the School intend to facilitate transfers between programmes it also intends to denominate each programme separately on the CAO listing. However, the panel also consider that this particular specialisation is overly constrained due to having 90 credits common in the first three semesters. The impact of this constraint is evident in the reduced number of electives available in later stages of the programme.

- The integration of data analytics is commended.
- Professional Practice / work experience should be considered and a plan presented describing how this will be incorporated when the Institute is in a position to resource this activity.
- Internationalization should feature more strongly throughout this programme. The content and title of some modules could easily be realigned to achieve this, consider for example, incorporating the word 'Global' in the title of some modules. Please refer to the sub-section below on '**Further recommendations relating to the programme and its development**' for additional information on internationalization.
- Learning outcomes need to be at the appropriate level for the award.
- Include a capstone module at the end (stage 4) of the programme.
- Titles of the modules should be reviewed for appropriateness and relevance.
- The assessment weighting and diversity of assessment methods should be reviewed to consider the balance and appropriateness between CA and final examinations.
- A strategy for the coordination of the 5 Data modules should be incorporated in the AQA2 document to address the complexity of module ownership in the Institute:
 - Business analytics
 - Data science and analytics
 - Digital business
 - Quantitative 1 and 2
- The possibility of developing minor awards targeting particular industry sectors should be considered.

Special conditions attaching to approval (if any):

- A minimum of 60 credits in the area of finance and economics should be clearly identifiable over the four years of the programme.
- The programme requires a discipline specific capstone module.

- Include new elective modules to facilitate deeper specialisation in either finance or economics.
- The panel recommend that the same award title should be available for the Ordinary and Honours degree. This will necessitate a rebalancing of the economics modules in the final two years of the programme.
- Reconsider module titles to better articulate module content and ethos.
- A graphic / flowchart should be included to explain transfer and progression opportunities.

Further recommendations relating to the programme and its development:

Internationalisation

The panel acknowledge the importance of internationalisation in higher education institutions and equally educational programmes.

The panel would like to recommend that the programme documents should include a clear strategy on internationalisation with extra details on the approach used.

Modules in different programmes have to include international contexts in their contents and also in their titles as appropriate.

For the Attention of Academic Council:

The panel commend the proposers on the significant body of work in the development of this integrated suite of programmes.

The two programmes listed at the beginning of this section, namely:

- a. Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Finance and Economics
- b. Bachelor of Business in Finance

are recommended for approval subject to the conditions and recommendations listed being satisfactorily addressed.

The proposing team may bring revised documentation to the Registrar describing how the recommendations / conditions were addressed and the Registrar will obtain sign-off from the panel chair on behalf of the External Validation Panel.

Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved subject to recommended changes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not approved at this time	<input type="checkbox"/>