![QQI logo] **QQI**
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training

Part 1 A

Provider name	DBS
Date of site visit	22nd May 2019
Date of report	20th August 2019
Is this a re-validation report (Yes/No)	Yes

Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Financial Services
	Award	Bachelor of Arts (Hons)
	Credit[1]	180
	Recommendation *Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions[2] OR Not Satisfactory*	Satisfactory

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[1] Specify the credit units because more than one system of units is in use. E.g. 20 (ECTS).

[2] Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude "Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions" where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

Further, in exceptional cases the 'special conditions' may be used to identify parts of the application that are considered satisfactory on a stand-alone basis. For example, an application might propose a programme to be provided at two locations but the independent evaluation report may find the application satisfactory on condition that it be provided only at one specified location and not at the other. These conditions will not however be used to recommend that QQI can be satisfied with a programme conditional on a different QQI award (e.g. at a lower NFQ level or having a different CAS award title) being sought than the one identified in the application.

Evaluators

Name	Role	Affiliation
Donna Bell	Chair	Independent Consultant
Mary Jennings	Secretary	Independent Consultant
Dr Fabrice Rousseau	Subject Expert	Head of Department, Economics, Finance and Accounting, NUI, Maynooth
Marie O Flynn	Subject Expert	Former Head of Dept of Finance TU Dublin (formerly DIT)
Enoyoze Obazee	Learner Representative	Student, MSc Griffith College, Dublin
David Walsh	Employer Representative	Senior Manager S&O Finance, Deloitte Consulting

Part 1 B.

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners *(per centre)*	Minimum number of learners
DBS Dublin Campus	240	10

Enrolment interval *(normally 5 years)*	**Date of first intake**	September 2019
	Date of last intake	August 2024
Maximum number of annual intakes	2, September and January	
Maximum total number of learners per intake (over all centres)	240	
Programme duration (<u>months</u> from start to completion)	Full-time: 3 years (6 semesters of 12 weeks each) Part-time: 4 years (8 semesters of 12 weeks each)	
Target learner groups	The BA (Hons) in Financial Services is aimed at learners with the following entry qualifications: • Applicants who have achieved 2 H5s + 4 O6/H7s, to include Mathematics and English or another language (under the new Common Points Scale for Leaving Certificate 2017). • Using the old pre-2017 grading scheme, applicants must have obtained a minimum of grade C3 in 2 higher level subjects and a minimum of grade D3 in 4 Ordinary Level subjects (to include Maths, English and a language. • Full Level 5 FETAC equivalent award with at least three distinctions. • RPL applicants will be considered on a case-by-case basis. • Learners are admitted to Stage 2 and 3 where they have previously completed prior study with equivalent learning at the previous stage. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis for individual students. • DBS also has a formal arrangement with various partner colleges to admit learners at advanced entry based on study with a partner institution.	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland	
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and part-time	
The teaching and learning modalities	1. Classroom lectures 2. Case-based learning 3. Practical skills sessions 4. Workshops 5. Tutorials	

	6. Individual and group work 7. Online synchronous and asynchronous learning
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	Innovation applied to financial services is creating a wave of disruptive activity that will change the shape of the global financial system – its participants, markets and regulation – over the foreseeable future. This has created a demand from graduates and employees for programmes specifically tailored to the skills required for a changing financial services industry. Therefore, this programme focuses upon the contemporary skills and attributes required by stakeholders in the financial services industry. The programme is designed to learners seeking to enhance their career prospects in the technologically driven financial services sector.
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Masters or PhD in the following areas: • Finance including treasury, research, trading, data analysis, lecturing on financial theory and practice • Finance and accounts postgraduate levels and professional levels. Banking postgraduate and professional levels. • Business administration in finance, HR, e-business, trustee, strategic planning. In modules where industry experience is desirable, holders of Level 8 honours degrees in the above disciplines, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience may also be considered.
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	1/120 classroom sessions 1/25 workshops 1/25 practical sessions 1/50 online class
Overall WTE staff/learner ratio.[3]	1.08/150 = 0.09:1

Programmes being replaced by the Principal Programme

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)	**Arrangement for enrolled learners**	**Date when replaced programme is planned to cease completely**

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[3] This is the total wholetime equivalent number of staff dedicated exclusively to this programme divided by the maximum number of learners that can be enrolled with that complement of staff.

Code	Title	Last enrolment date	Indicate whether "Teach out" or "Transfer to replacement programme"	
PG19554	BA (Hons) in Financial Services	September 2018	Transfer to replacement programme	September 2019

Other noteworthy features of the application

The panel found that the proposed programme learning outcomes have been mapped to the QQI Business Award Standards and satisfy the QQI Award Standards for the Business Award at Level 8. it was stated that successful completion of the programme provided learners with the knowledge, skills and competencies required to progress in different areas of the accounting profession and financial services industry such as banking firms, investment companies, management consultants, aircraft leasing/finance companies and large-scale financial services firms.

A number of the modules on this programme have been mapped successfully to the Foundation (F) Papers on the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) global curriculum. Students who successfully complete these modules are then eligible to apply to ACCA for exemption from the corresponding paper(s). These professional bodies provide pathways to professional accreditation in accountancy. DBS stated that they will reapply for accreditation with ACCA following successful revalidation of the programme.

Learner Profile

The total number enrolled in the programme from 2014/15 to 2017/18 was 186. The panel noted that there are very low, full-time numbers in first year and high numbers in third year. This is as a consequence of the programme's low CAO numbers in first year and a high number of international direct entry students for the final year of their respective home programme in third year.

It was noted that the majority of learners were domestic, but this number is skewed by the reality that the part-time programme is almost 100% domestic. Overall, of those enrolled 35% were Asian, predominantly final year direct entry from one of DBS's partners in China, Xiamen University, with 20% from several of DBS's partner universities in Germany. It was noted that the majority of learners is male (75%).

Learner performance

A quantitative analysis was provided for programme covering the areas specified in the Programme Review Manual 2016/2017 Section 3.

- Enrolment analysis

As noted, enrolment in first year is low, with no enrolments in the second year. Full-time enrolment is exclusively direct/advanced entry. Part-time enrolments are also low but deemed to be sustainable in the context of a four-year part-time delivery programme.

- Attrition, transfer, progression and completion by stage

As a consequence of the low first year numbers, it was noted that learners primarily transferred to the BA (Hons) in Business or other comparable programmes offered by other providers.

- Analysis of grades and QQI award classifications

The average mark in 2017/2018 for Level 6 modules ranges from 50% to 65%. The average mark for Level 8 modules ranges from 65% to 85%. Across each module, marks are reasonably well spread. It was noted that learners perform much better in final year (Level 8) compared to first year (Level 6).

In 2014/15 to 2017/18, 60.26% graduated with First-Class Honours, a further 28.21 with an Upper Second-Class Honours. The panel was informed that the high percentage of First-Class Honours has more than tripled in the period 2014/15- 2017/18. The high rate of First-Class honours is 25% higher than the DBS average for DBS Level 8 programmes and 19% higher than comparable providers.

The panel was informed that the high rate of First-Class Honours is directly related to the performance of direct entry, full-time students, who are highly motivated and aim to transfer to a Level 9 degree in a high-profile university in Europe or USA. See Section 7.4 for commentary.

- Graduate destinations

Graduates of the programme are eligible to apply for a range of opportunities in IT, Business, Marketing, Finance and other business areas. Graduates of the 2017 programme were employed in a variety of areas including commercial banking, investment banking, fund and asset management, aircraft leasing, insurance companies and consultancy firms.

Modifications and overall programme

The review of the programme to date by the DBS Programme Team suggested that the programme's content required serious consideration. In this context the programme team has undertaken an extensive review of the existing programme's learning outcomes and modules. This review was conducted in conjunction with industry, peer-to-peer and student/graduate input. Several modules have been updated and new modules added. Overall, the total redistribution of old/new credits is 55 ECTS. This redistribution is based upon industry and student feedback, and reflects the evolving international/technological environment of the financial services industry. See Section 7.3 of this report for more detailed commentary.

It has been evident since the last validation of this programme that there have been very low number of full-time students entering the programme in Year One, with a consequent low progression to Year Two. The programme team also reflected upon the relative attractiveness of the programme to study abroad (final year) for students in Year Three.

For further commentary, see Criterion 3 and Criterion 4.

Part 2A Evaluation against the validation criteria

QQI's validation criteria and sub-criteria are copied here in grey panels.

Criterion 1

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.	
b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.	
c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.[4]	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	**Comment**
Yes	

As an established provider of higher education programmes DBS has met the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of this programme. It was noted that DBS has in place procedures for access, transfer and progression. DBS has also established arrangements for the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) which have been approved by QQI. The panel was informed that DBS is currently taking part in the re-engagement process with QQI and has completed the Pilot Phase. As part of the re-engagement process, policies and procedures were being reviewed.

DBS has provided a copy of the letter to be submitted to QQI with the application for the revalidation of the programmes. The letter contained the signature and declaration required under sub-criteria 1b) and 1c).

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[4] This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Criterion 2

The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

  a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
  b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
      (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
  c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
  d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.*
  e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
  f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
      (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
      (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
  g) For each programme and embedded programme
      (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.[5]
      (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
  h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
  i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.
For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.[6]

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel found that the aims, objectives and rationale for the programme were expressed clearly and were comprehensive and consistent with a Level 8 award as set out in Section 2.1 and 2.2 of the Programme Document.

It was the view of the panel that it is ambitious to develop a critical understanding of the core principles of accounting, finance and quantitative analysis, which are set as objectives, while also enhancing a broad range of practical technical skills.

In conversation with staff, the panel was informed that the intention was to offer an ambitious programme, one that challenged learners and prepared them for employment in the ever-evolving and demanding industry of financial services.

It concluded that the programme and module learning outcomes have been clearly outlined and were appropriate to the level of the award. The title of the programme was deemed to be appropriate and in line with the QQI standard for the Major Award Type on the NFQ.

It was noted that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes for the proposed programme were informed by the QQI Business Award Standards and have been mapped against these standards.

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[5] Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.
[6] Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

Criterion 3

The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

  a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives.[7]
  b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
  - (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
  - (ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
  - (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
  - (iv) There is evidence[8] of learner demand for the programme.
  - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant[9].
  - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.[10]
  c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
  d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
  e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel concluded that the programme met genuine education and training needs in a sector that continued to provide employment opportunities for graduates both in Ireland and in the global financial services sector. The panel was informed of the consultation process undertaken for this review.

It was considered that the proposed changes to the programme, including the allocation of 25 ECTS of the Employability Pillar of the programme across the three years of the programme, facilitating the introduction of several new modules, including Introduction of Capital Markets (Year 1), Data Governance & Cybersecurity (Year 2) and a Capstone Project (Year 3) were appropriate and based on a detailed review, including mapping of MIPLOs to the QQI Business Award Standards and consultation with industry, professional bodies and learners. The introduction of a core Management module (Year 2) and core Data Analytics module was also considered to be an effective

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[7] Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.
[8] This might be predictive or indirect.
[9] It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
[10] There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

response to changing needs in financial services. The new module on Innovation in International Financial Services was also considered to be appropriate, given the pace of change in the sector.

The panel noted from meeting with staff that there was limited evidence of peer participation in the programme development process, bearing in mind the research interests of the academic staff that the panel met.

The panel concluded that there was no evidence of learner demand by full-time students and limited demand by part time students in Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme. In conversation with staff at the site visit, it was stated that this was in part due to a lack of understanding of the financial services industry by, in particular, CAO entrants, who were more familiar with the traditional career offered by the accounting profession. They were unaware of the opportunities that this dynamic industry, constantly looking to fulfil a variety of posts, offered to graduates.

It was further stated that DBS was working to re-position the programme through its marketing efforts to ensure that its content, relevance and potential were better understood by both full-time and part-time students. It was not clear to the panel what specific initiatives were planned by DBS in this regard and greater clarity was needed on how DBS planned to more actively engage in recruiting students to the programme.

It is recommended that DBS more actively engage in recruiting students to this programme.

In its response document the panel noted that DBS intended to develop a specific marketing plan focussed at overcoming the challenges of attracting students to this programme. Initiatives for recruiting full-time, part-time and international students were discussed. The recommendation is met.

The panel was informed that advanced entry onto Year 3 of the programme was attractive to many students, particularly those that came from DBS partner colleges in China and Europe.

The panel noted the outcomes of a comparator analysis undertaken by DBS. Two similar programmes at UCD/Institute of Banking and Coventry University were evaluated using the minimum intended programme learning outcomes as a benchmark. It was concluded that the UCD programme centred on the fundamentals of macroeconomics, financial accounting, banking, risk management and portfolio management, while the Coventry programme was similar but offered a placement year. The significant difference, it was stated, was that the DBS programme retains the core pillars of traditional financial services programme, but differentiates itself with an industry-driven focus on the technologically driving innovation impacting the future of the financial services industry.

Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied[11].

b) Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.

c) If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL[12]) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.

d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).

e) The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the **recognition of prior learning** for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.

f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
   (i) Reflects the core *intended programme learning outcomes*, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es).
   (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
   (iii) Has long-lasting significance.

g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was satisfied that the programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are clearly articulated and working in practice. Information on access, transfer and progression is available through DBS website, promotional material and the Student Handbooks. This includes information on EU and non-EU entry requirements and information for students with disabilities.

The panel observed that, according to the module descriptors, modules at Stage 1 are at Level 6 on the NQF, modules at Stage 2 are at Level 7 and modules at Stage 3 are at Level 8. The progression policy through from year 1 to year 3, whereby students successfully passing each year may progress to the next level is noted. The panel concluded that the delineation of the stages, through different levels, reflects an unusual progression policy. The panel found that the CAO offers this programme at Level 8, without reference to the other levels and that this may be misleading for some potential

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[11] Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings
   - Progression and transfer routes
   - Entry arrangements
   - Information provision

[12] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

entrants. The panel noted, for instance, that there was no intake of student through the CAO process for the BA (Hons).

It is recommended that consideration is given to the realignment of modules at appropriate Levels.

In its response document, DBS provided evidence to the panel that the alignment of modules at appropriate levels is within QQI policy as it was accepted elsewhere. The recommendation is met.

The panel was also informed that with low numbers enrolled in the first year, students tended to transfer to BA (Hons) in Business or to comparable programmes with other providers. It was further indicated that the programme was more attractive to part-time students.

It was noted that 100% of the learners in Year 3 are advanced entry learners. The panel reviewed the documentation provided at the site visit showing that DBS has formal, long-standing arrangements with international partner colleges, including Xiamen University in China and various institutions in Germany to admit learners at advanced entry (Year 3) based on a course of study that has been appropriately mapped to the DBS programme.

The panel was informed that QQI intends to review direct entry arrangements across the sector as part of the re-engagement process and welcomed this intention.

The panel noted that in the period 2014/15 to 2017/18, 60.26% these advanced entry learners graduated with a First-Class Honours and a further 28.21% with Upper Second-Class Honours. In discussion with staff, the panel was informed that this unusually high percentage of First- and Second-Class Honours was due to the highly motivated, able learners who were seeking to progress to Level 9 at high profile UK, European or USA universities in order to progress their career prospects in the global financial services industry.

Criterion 5

The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.

b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.

c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.

d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.

e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles[13].

f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.

g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.

i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.

j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.[14]

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was generally satisfied that the programme curriculum was appropriately structured and fit for purpose. The rational has been set out in Section 5.2 of the Programme Document. The significant proposed changes to the programme as discussed were deemed to be appropriate for a dynamic and changing industry. The panel noted that the programme is now mapped to the QQI Business Award Standards.

See Criterion 4 of this report for further commentary on the progression from stages 1-3 and the alignment of modules at the appropriate level.

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[13] This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.
In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.

[14] If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

Criterion 6

There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

a) The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to-practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).

b) The programme has an identified complement of staff[15] (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.

c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.

d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development[16] opportunities[17].

e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.

f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel noted that teaching staff on the programme were experienced module leaders, with most qualified to Masters level or holding a professional qualification. Section 7 of the Programme Document contained further details and the CVs of the teaching staff were provided in Appendix 2 of the document.

The panel supports the initiative of DBS to allocate a mentor to newly appointed academic staff. The panel was informed that programme leaders are readily accessible to part-time staff and this provides a welcome measure of peer support to this cohort of lecturers.

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[15] Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme's provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

[16] Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

[17] Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff's professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

The panel noted that DBS is implementing a Research, Innovation and Enterprise (REI) Strategy which had set out key objectives in these areas including partnership with industry and employers, being innovative in approach and global as well as local in outlook.

In terms of promoting a research culture, the panel was advised that DBS provides 15 scholarships for staff each year and holds an annual Research Day to facilitate teaching staff to showcase their current research. In addition, the DBS Library publishes journals for each School, including a Business Journal.

In conversation with staff, it was evident that progress is being made in opening up opportunities for academic staff to pursue CPD and research activities. There was evidence that staff were involved in continuous professional development with professional bodies and several were also active members of committees on professional bodies such as ACCA. They were actively involved in industry forums concerned with understanding the impact of new technology on financial services and brought fresh insights into the continuous development of the programme content and programme development. See also Section 7.3 for further comment on research-led interests of staff.

At the site meeting, it was noted that several staff conveyed to the panel that they were actively engaged in pursuing interests in pedagogy and innovative teaching methods, for instance, and were supported to do so. It was evident that staff were aware of how to apply for attendance at events, seminars or short courses and stated that, in recent times, the time and resources available for CPD had significantly improved.

It was noted that some staff were pursuing PhDs and were supported through flexible scheduling in continuing their studies and that such support would be important in the future.

The panel was informed that a strategic objective of DBS is to achieve Delegated Authority. It was concluded that in order to achieve this objective there will be a requirement for higher qualifications and advanced research capability among academic staff. This will raise the profile of DBS and can be achieved through academic research and research-led teaching.

It is recommended that supports be put in place for staff to pursue PhD, academic research and CPD.

In its response document, the panel noted that DBS is committed to enhancing the supports in place to pursue PhD, academic research and CPD. Further detail on the initiatives planned were outlined in the document R03 Staff Academic Research Supports and CPD provided to the panel. The recommendation is met.

The panel was informed that the WTE is 1.08/150 = 0.09:1 and deemed this to be appropriate.

Criterion 7

There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).

b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
   (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
   (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
   (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
   (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
   (v) technical support
   (vi) administrative support
   (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable

c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).

d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
   (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
   (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.

e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was generally satisfied that there are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned. It was noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review. Further details were set out in Section 8 of the Programme Document.

A tour of the physical facilities in the Aungier St and Castle House Campuses was undertaken by the panel. The on-going development and upgrading of common meeting and study areas throughout the campus to facilitate group work and peer study support was acknowledged. In conversation with students and graduates, the panel noted however that even with these developments, finding available places to study and meet often proved difficult.

Students reported that there were constraints in terms of infrastructure available for social interaction and achieving a sense a campus life experience. The panel observed that the recreational space in the Castle House campus was limited in size for the number of students enrolled.

The panel welcomed a number of initiatives being considered by DBS including opening up the 5th floor of Castle House for classrooms and other student spaces in the short term. In the longer term, it was noted that DBS is considering other ways to increase its overall capacity in the city centre for staff and students. It was noted that, as it is a key strategic objective of DBS to grow, the identification of additional space is an on-going process. There was evidence that DBS's Senior

Management Team had been active in pursuing suitable premises within the constraints of finance, urban zoning and competitive market conditions for office-type space.

The panel found that the library uses technology effectively to support learners and staff, including access to an assignment planner, Kindle lending facilities, a Registrar of Scholarly Activity as well as a user-friendly search engine to enable ease of search for books and academic journals. It was noted that specialist library staff are employed to assist students to develop their research capabilities. The library is engaged in publishing the DBS journals for the School of Arts and the School of Business featuring peer-reviewed research by both staff and students. This initiative is in line with a core pillar of DBS's strategy on achieving academic excellence.

Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

a) The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.

b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.

c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was generally satisfied that the learning environment is consistent with the needs of learners. Sections 5.8 and 5.9 contained further details on this point.

The panel was advised that DBS uses a number of mechanisms to develop and implement supports for students including:

- Learner surveys
- Peer Mentoring Support (with training provided for mentors)
- Student representation on the Academic Board and Board of Studies
- Support for, and engagement with, an elected Student Union
- Student services for:
    - Accommodation
    - Counselling and referral services, including specific contact with the provider of mental health for young people, *Jigsaw*
    - Sports and societies, with many student-led events
    - Entertainment
    - Study and meeting spaces within the campus
    - Careers office, providing advice and information on employment opportunities and professional development

The panel concluded that the staff with responsibility for support services were proactive in responding to student feedback for improvements in facilities which was undertaken on a continuous basis, within the constraints of the physical facilities available. The panel visited the central student hub which had been created and was satisfied that this provided the basis for an integrated approach to providing accessible services.

Criterion 9

There are sound teaching and learning strategies
a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.
b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.
c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload).
d) Learning is monitored/supervised.
e) Individualised guidance, support[18] and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was satisfied that there are sound teaching and learning strategies in place for the programme overall. Further details were outlined in the Programme document, Section 5.5, 5.6 and 5.9

In conversation with teaching staff, the panel noted that there was a balance between the use of interactive classroom techniques, use of guest lecturers from business as well as regulatory bodies and on-line resources to encourage effective learning. It was further stated that every effort was made to ensure that practical, fresh content was delivered, based on current events and new developments in the financial services sector as well as core principles and theories.

The panel found that students and graduates appreciated the support and access to lecturers on the programme, including smaller tutorial groups and additional support via the library on academic writing seminars. It was considered that the programme represents a good product and in terms of the modifications to proposed programmes they considered these to be enhancing and augmenting what was already in place. The panel noted the comment made by students and graduates that it was evident that their feedback had been reflected in the design of the proposed programme

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[18] Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies
a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*[19]
b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.[20]
d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
e) There is a satisfactory written **programme assessment strategy** for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.[21]
f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.
g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.[22]

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was advised that all assessment for the programme conforms to the DBS Assessment Regulations which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013

The panel noted the high level of first-class honours attained. See Section 7.4 for further comment.

As noted, some part-time students reported on the difficulty in coordinating group projects with students on other programmes and that DBS should consider this particular challenge in the design of assessments

The panel concluded that workload is deemed to be appropriate and it was reported by students and graduates that academic staff are responsive and flexible in terms of scheduling continuous assessment.

The panel concluded that there was a good balance between formative and summative assessment. In conversation with teaching staff, the panel was informed that the balance in assessment type was kept under review and reported that teaching staff and library staff provided students with support in refining and developing their Capstone research projects, which they considered to be an important part of the overall programme.

Students and graduates reported to the panel that there were inconsistencies in the amount of feedback provided on assessments which varied according to individual lecturers. They indicated

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[19] See the section on transitional arrangements.

[20] This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

[21] The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

[22] If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

that as feedback is useful in assisting them to learn and identifying areas for improvement that this was an area of specific concern for many.

It is recommended that DBS put in place standard feedback procedures across all modules.

In its response document, the panel noted It that the timing and nature of feedback is being examined as part of the review of DBS's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. The initiative to map the Assessment Strategy to enhance the consistency of the feedback process and to avoid over-assessment is welcomed. Further details were provided to the panel in the documents entitled R04a Feedback Procedures and R04b BA (Hons) in Financial Services Indicative Assessment Strategy.

Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.

b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.

c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.

d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.

e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.

f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.

g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.

h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities[23].

i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*[24] and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.

j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

An overview of the support services available to students is outlined is provided in Sections 5.9,8.2 of the Programme Document. The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website contained relevant information in relation to the supports and services available to students.

Students and graduates reported that lecturers and staff were generally responsive to requests for support and information. They were aware of the appeals and complaints procedures.

It was stated that complaints had been resolved speedily, fairly and at an informal level where possible.

The panel noted that learners were particularly appreciative of the assistance provided with finding accommodation, and was informed that DBS has 50 accommodation units for international students within a reasonable distance of the DBS campus. It was added that the student support services were helpful with regard to dealing with immigration issues such as securing visas. The induction

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[23] For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

[24] See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

process and general support prior to coming to DBS as well as during the course of their studies was highly valued by them.

The panel commends DBS on the high standard of support provided for international students.

Criterion 12

The programme is well managed

    a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.

    b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.

    c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.

    d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.

    e) Quality assurance[25] is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.

    f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.

    g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.

    h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	

The panel was satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programme under review. The QAH contains the governance structures for the College and procedures for access, transfer and progression, learner assessments and supports, and teaching and learning. It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines.

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[25] See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Part 2B Overall recommendation to QQI

Select one	
Satisfactory	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (**minor**) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);[26]
	Not satisfactory.

The panel is satisfied that all criteria have been met.

The panel carried out a comprehensive review of the BA (Hons) in Financial Servicesand between May 2019 and August 2019.

The programme is due for review under the QQI requirement for periodic monitoring and review, and also requires review to conform with recent policies, including QQI *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training* (QQI, 2016), *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines* (QQI, 2016), and in accordance with the QQI *Programme Review Manual 2016/2017*. As advised by QQI, the proposed programme has been mapped to the Science Award Standards.

The review comprised four stages:

- A desk review by the panel of the self-evaluation report on the internal programme review prepared by the Programme Leaders and Programme Team and a review of the initial proposed revised programmes to be submitted for revalidation of the programmes.
- A site visit on 22nd May involving a series of meeting with academic staff and administrative staff engaged in programme delivery and support, a meeting with recent graduates and current learners on the programmes and a tour of the DBS campus to review facilities
- The preparation of a panel report, outlining the process and evidence pursued and proposing three recommendations.
- A follow-up desk review of revised documentation provided by DBS addressing the panel's recommendations.

The revised documentation consisted of:

- DBS's updated Programme Document (referred to as Programme Document hereafter)
- The Programme Team's response to the Independent Programme Review Report (referred to as Team Response hereafter) including the following documents related to the recommendations made:

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[26] Normally an application that fails to meet the criteria in any of its aspects will be considered as not satisfactory. Nevertheless, so as to ensure that the validation process will not be implemented unreasonably, if an independent evaluation finds that a programme virtually meets the validation criteria but needs some minor modifications, the independent evaluation could conclude "Satisfactory subject to recommended special conditions" where the special conditions prescribe the defects that require to be corrected.

- R01 Staff Academic Research Supports and CPD.
- R02a Feedback Procedures
- R04b BA (Hons) in Financial Services Indicative Assessment Strategy
- Panel reports in relation to alignment of modules at appropriate levels:
  https://www.qqi.ie//sites/docs/PanelReportsLibrary/ProgID-39785_Panel_Reports_14.02.2018_Final_report_SIGNED.pdf

Based on the site visit and the revised documentation received, the panel concluded that the BA (Hons) in Financial Services as presented to QQI for revalidation, satisfies the core policies and criteria for revalidation by QQI of programmes of education and training.

Detailed commentary relating to the Core Validation Criteria is included in Part 2A of this report.

Specifically, in relation to the panel is satisfied that:

Under **Criterion 1:** DBS meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of these programmes. The panel was informed DBS is currently taking part in the re-engagement process with QQI. QA policies and procedures are therefore under review. Access, transfer and progression procedures are detailed in Section 4 of Programme Document and Chapter 6 of the DBS Quality Assurance Handbook. The panel noted that DBS has in place arrangements for Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL), documentation for which is provided to QQI with every submission for revalidation of a programme.

Under **Criterion 2:** the programme objectives and programme outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI award sought. They are outlined in Sections 2.1 and 2.4 of the Programme Document. It was noted that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes for the proposed programme were informed by the QQI Business Award Standards and have been mapped against these standards. The mapping is set out in Section 10 of the Programme Document.

Under **Criterion 3**: the panel found that the programme concept, implementation strategy and interpretation of the QQI award is well informed taking into consideration social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives. The panel was satisfied that a comprehensive consultation process had been undertaken and the feedback obtained had been factored into the review process. Further details were provided in Section 3 of the Programme Document and at the site visit.

It was considered that the proposed changes to the programme were appropriate and based on a detailed review.

The panel concluded that there was no evidence of learner demand by full-time students and limited demand by part time students in Year 1 and Year 2 of the programme.

It is recommended that DBS more actively engage in recruiting students to this programme.

In its response document the panel noted that DBS intended to develop a specific marketing plan focussed at overcoming the challenges of attracting students to this programme. Initiatives for recruiting full-time, part-time and international students were discussed. The recommendation is met.

Under **Criterion 4:** the programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory. Detailed information is set out in Section 4.2 of the Programme Document.

The panel observed that, according to the module descriptors, modules at Stage 1 are at Level 6 on the NQF, modules at Stage 2 are at Level 7 and modules at Stage 3 are at Level 8. The panel concluded that the delineation of the stages reflects an unusual progression policy.

It is recommended that consideration is given to the realignment of modules at appropriate Levels.

In its response document, DBS provided evidence to the panel that the alignment of modules at appropriate levels is within QQI policy as it was accepted elsewhere. The recommendation is met. The panel was informed that QQI intends to review direct entry arrangements across the sector as part of the re-engagement process and welcomed this intention.

Under **Criterion 5:** The panel was generally satisfied that the programme curriculum was appropriately structured and fit for purpose. The significant proposed changes to the programme as discussed were deemed to be appropriate for a dynamic and changing industry. The panel noted that the programme is now mapped to the QQI Business Award Standards.

Under Criterion 6: The panel noted that teaching staff on the programme were experienced module leaders, with most qualified to Masters level or holding a professional qualification. Section 7 of the Programme Document provided relevant details of the staff and Appendix 2 contains the CVs of the teaching staff.

It was evident that progress is being made in opening up opportunities for academic staff to pursue CPD, further studies to PhD level as well as research activities. There was evidence that staff were involved in continuous professional development with professional bodies and industry forums. Newly appointed staff were supported by peers through a mentoring initiative.

It is recommended that supports be put in place for staff to pursue PhD, academic research and CPD.

In its response document, the panel was informed that a number of initiatives are already in place. Examples of these were detailed in the document provided, entitled R01 Staff Academic Research Supports and CPD. The panel is satisfied that this response has met the recommendation.

The panel was informed that the WTE is $1.08/150 = 0.09:1$ and deemed this to be appropriate.

Under **Criterion 7:** The panel was generally satisfied that there are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned. Further details were provided in Section 8 of the Programme Document. It was noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review.

A tour of the physical facilities in the Aungier St and Castle House Campuses was undertaken by the panel. It was noted that DBS is considering many ways to increase its overall capacity in the city centre for staff and students.

The panel found that the library uses technology effectively to support learners and staff.

Under **Criterion 8:** The panel was generally satisfied that the learning environment is consistent with the needs of learners. The panel was advised that DBS uses a number of effective mechanisms to develop and implement supports for students.

The panel concluded that the staff with responsibility for support services were proactive in responding to student feedback for improvements in facilities. The panel visited the central student

hub which had been created and was satisfied that this provided the basis for an integrated approach to providing accessible services.

Under **Criterion 9:** The panel was satisfied that there are sound teaching and learning strategies in place for the programme overall as detailed in Sections 5.5, 5.6 and 5.9 of the Programme Document.

The panel noted that there was a balance between the use of interactive classroom techniques, use of guest lecturers from business as well as regulatory bodies and on-line resources to encourage effective learning in a fast-paced financial services sector.

The panel found that students and graduates appreciated the support and access to lecturers on the programme. It was considered that the modifications to the propose programmes would enhance what was already in place.

Under **Criterion 10:** The panel was advised that all assessment for the programme conforms to the DBS Assessment Regulations which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013. Further information is set out in the Programme Document Section 5.10.

The panel concluded that workload is deemed to be appropriate.

Students and graduates reported to the panel that there were inconsistencies in the amount of feedback provided on assessments which varied according to individual lecturers.

It is recommended that DBS put in place standard feedback procedures across all modules.

In its response document, the panel noted DBS's commitment that the timing and nature of feedback is to be examined as part of the review of DBS's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy. The panel also noted DBS's initiative to map the Assessment Strategy to enhance the consistency of the feedback process and to avoid over-assessment and welcomed this development.

The panel is satisfied that this recommendation has been met.

Under **Criterion 11:** An overview of the support services available to students was outlined in Section 5.9 of the Programme Document and at the site visit. The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website contained relevant information in relation to the supports and services available to students.

Students and graduates reported that lecturers and staff were generally responsive to requests for support and information and in resolving complaints.

The panel noted that learners were appreciative of the assistance provided with finding accommodation and assistance in to dealing with securing visas.

The panel commends DBS on the high standard of support provided for international students.

Under **Criterion 12:** The panel was satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programme under review. Further detail was available in Sections 7 and 8 of the Programme Document. The QAH contains the governance structures for the College and procedures for access, transfer and progression, learner assessments and supports, and teaching and learning. It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. It is recommended that DBS more actively engage in recruiting students to this programme.
2. It is recommended that consideration is given to the realignment of modules at appropriate Levels.
3. It is recommended that supports be put in place for staff to pursue PhD, academic research and CPD.
4. It is recommended that DBS put in place standard feedback procedures across all modules.

Summary of commendations to the provider

1. The panel commends DBS on the high standard of support provided for international students.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

 No interests have been declared.

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Date: 20 August 2019

Donna Bell

Signed:

D. Bell

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