

**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

<b>Provider name</b>	Dublin Business School
<b>Date of site visit</b>	25 April 2019
<b>Date of report</b>	27 August 2019
<b>Is this a re-validation report (Yes/No)</b>	Yes

## Overall recommendations

<b>Principal programme</b>	<b>Title</b>	Master of Science in Information and Library Management
	<b>Award</b>	Master of Science
	<b>Credit<sup>1</sup></b>	90
	<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions<sup>2</sup> OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory, subject to proposed conditions

<b>Embedded programme<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Title</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Information and Library Management
	<b>Award</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Science

<sup>1</sup> Specify the credit units because more than one system of units is in use. E.g. 20 (ECTS).

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> Copy this panel for each embedded programme.

	<b>Exit award (Yes/No)</b>	60
	<b>Credit</b>	60
	<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

<b>Module<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Title</b>	N/a
	<b>Award</b>	
	<b>Credit</b>	
	<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	

## Evaluators

<b>Evaluators</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Principal occupation</b>
Dr Michael Hall	Chair	Head of Department of Health and Leisure Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee
Dr Diane Rasmussen Pennington	Academic in Subject area	Course Director for the MSc/PGDip in Information and Library Management in the Department of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Strathclyde
Jane Burns	Academic in Subject area	Lecturer, School of Information & Communication Studies at UCD Institute Librarian at Athlone IT
David Kane	Professional Member of Panel	Systems Librarian, Luke Wadding Library, Waterford Institute of Technology
Kate Kelly	Professional Member of Panel/ Industry Representative	Chair of the Library Association of Ireland's Professional Standards Committee Chief Librarian and Director of Library Services at RCSI Library
Dr Philip Cohen	Professional Member of Panel/ Industry Representative (Desk Reviewer)	President of the Library Association of Ireland, and former Head of Library Services, DIT
Linda Fennessy	Learner Rep on the Panel	University College Dublin
Mary Doyle	Secretary	Independent Academic QA Consultant

<sup>4</sup> A module leading to a QQI award is a special case of an embedded programme. Discrete modules are only validated on a stand-alone basis if they are to lead to a QQI award.

## Part 1 B

### Principal Programme: Master of Science in Information and Library Management

<b>Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided</b>	<b>Maximum number of learners(per centre)</b>	<b>Minimum number of learners</b>
DBS: Dublin Campus	100	8

<b>Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)</b>	<b>Date of first intake</b>	September 2019
	<b>Date of last intake</b>	August 2024 <i>(following advice from QQI re multiple intakes per year)</i>
<b>Maximum number of annual intakes</b>	2 intakes (September and January)	
<b>Maximum total number of learners per intake (over all centres)</b>	100	
<b>Programme duration (months from start to completion)</b>	Full-time: 3 semesters of 12 weeks each across 12 months Part-time: 5 semesters of 12 weeks each across 24 months	
<b>Target learner groups</b>	<p>This programme is aimed at learners with a minimum of second class second division (2.2) honours undergraduate/bachelor degree in any discipline, from a recognised third level institution, or equivalent qualification, who wish to pursue a career in information and library management at a professional level.</p> <p>The programme is also aimed at existing library personnel who wish to obtain a professional library qualification for entry into a professional role in the sector.</p> <p>On completion of this programme, learners will have the applied professional knowledge, research skills and competencies required of a manager within the information and library sector. Moreover, they will be able to identify and critically evaluate technological, political, social, regulatory and economic change and to solve practical and complex problems within a variety of information and library environments.</p>	
<b>Approved countries for provision</b>	Ireland	
<b>Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time</b>	Full-time and part-time	
<b>The teaching and learning modalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case-based learning</li> <li>• Practical skills workshops</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Classroom lectures</li> <li>• Guest lectures delivered by practitioners</li> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• Individual and group work</li> <li>• Online lectures</li> <li>• Online tutorials</li> <li>• Directed online activities</li> <li>• Supervised research</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-week work placement in a library/information management environment</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)</b></p>	<p>Given the transformative and increasingly diverse nature of the sector, information and library professionals need analytical, organisational, communicative and strategic skills built on a systematic understanding of the principles, theory and application of information and library management.</p> <p>The MSc in Information and Library Management provides that theoretical foundation and exposes learners to the necessary skills required for managing the retrieval, organisation and dissemination of information, whether for the general public, business or academia. In achieving those goals on the programme, learners will participate in classroom-based lectures, practical workshops, group work, presentations and online lectures and tutorials, notwithstanding the significant amount of independent study required at level nine, all of which will be supported by directed online content. Over one-year full-time or two-year part-time, the programme consists of nine taught modules of 65 ECTS and a research dissertation of 25 ECTS, leading to an award of MSc in Information and Library Management.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of <u>specifications</u> for teaching staff</b></p>	<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or Masters level qualification in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information management,</li> <li>• Information technology and librarianship</li> </ul> <p>In modules where industry experience is desirable, those who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of senior significant library management experience may also be considered.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</b></p>	Staff to learner ratio	Learning activity type
	1/50	Classroom sessions
	1/25	Workshops
	1/25	Practical sessions
<p><b>Overall WTE staff/learner ratio.<sup>5</sup></b></p>	<p>1.15/50 = 0.023</p>	

### Programmes being replaced by the Master of Science in Information and Library Management

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

<sup>5</sup> This is the total whole-time 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"	
PG21019	Master of Science in Information and Library Management	September 2018/ January 2019	Replacement	September 2019

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management<sup>6</sup>

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners(per centre)	Minimum number of learners
DBS: Dublin Campus	N/a	N/a

<b>Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)</b>	<b>Date of first intake</b>	September 2019
	<b>Date of last intake</b>	August 2024 <i>(following advice from QQI re multiple intakes per year)</i>
<b>Maximum number of annual intakes</b>	2 intakes (September and January)	
<b>Maximum total number of learners per intake (over all centres)</b>	N/a	
<b>Programme duration (months from start to completion)</b>	Full-time: 2 semesters of 12 weeks each across 9 months Part-time: 4 semesters of 12 weeks each across 18 months	
<b>Target learner groups</b>	<p>This programme is aimed at learners with a minimum of second class second division (2.2) honours undergraduate/bachelor degree in any discipline, from a recognised third level institution, or equivalent qualification, who wish to pursue a career in information and library management at a professional level.</p> <p>The programme is also aimed at existing library personnel who wish to obtain a professional library qualification for entry into a professional role in the sector.</p> <p>On completion of this programme, learners will have the applied professional knowledge, research skills and competencies required of a manager within the information and library sector. Moreover, they will be able to identify and critically evaluate technological, political, social, regulatory and economic change and to solve practical and complex problems within a variety of information and library environments.</p>	
<b>Approved countries for provision</b>	Ireland	
<b>Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time</b>	Full-time and part-time	

<sup>6</sup>This only needs to be completed where embedded programmes may be offered independently of the principal programme. Add more subsections if there are more than one embedded programmes proposed to lead to QQI awards.

<p><b>The teaching and learning modalities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case-based learning</li> <li>• Practical skills workshops</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Classroom lectures</li> <li>• Guest lectures delivered by practitioners</li> <li>• Student presentations</li> <li>• Individual and group work</li> <li>• Online lectures</li> <li>• Online tutorials</li> <li>• Directed online activities</li> <li>• Supervised research</li> <li>• 3-week work placement in a library/information management environment</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)</b></p>	<p>Given the transformative and increasingly diverse nature of the sector, information and library professionals need analytical, organisational, communicative and strategic skills built on a systematic understanding of the principles, theory and application of information and library management.</p> <p>The MSc in Information and Library Management provides that theoretical foundation and exposes learners to the necessary skills required for managing the retrieval, organisation and dissemination of information, whether for the general public, business or academia. In achieving those goals on the programme, learners will participate in classroom-based lectures, practical workshops, group work, presentations and online lectures and tutorials, notwithstanding the significant amount of independent study required at level nine, all of which will be supported by directed online content. Over one-year full-time or two-year part-time, the programme consists of nine taught modules of 65 ECTS and a research dissertation of 25 ECTS, leading to an award of MSc in Information and Library Management.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of <u>specifications</u> for teaching staff</b></p>	<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or Masters level qualification in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information management,</li> <li>• Information technology and librarianship</li> </ul> <p>In modules where industry experience is desirable, those who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of senior significant library management experience may also be considered.</p>	
<p><b>Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</b></p>	<p><b>Staff to learner ratio</b></p>	<p><b>Learning activity type</b></p>
	<p>1/50</p>	<p>Classroom sessions</p>
	<p>1/25</p>	<p>Workshops</p>
	<p>1/25</p>	<p>Practical sessions</p>



Overall WTE staff/learner ratio. <sup>7</sup>	1.15/50 = 0.023
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### Programmes being replaced by the Postgraduate Diploma in Information and Library Management

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)			Arrangement for enrolled learners	Date when replaced programme is planned to cease completely
Code	Title	Last enrolment date	Indicate whether "Teach out" or "Transfer to replacement programme"	
N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a

### Other noteworthy features of the application

The panel evaluated the observations, comments and suggestions from internal and external stakeholders and these were duly factored into the review process. Internal stakeholders consisted of students and staff (academic, support and administrative).

In the review and design of the Master of Science in Information and Library Management for re-validation, the Programme Team, carried out consultations on the programme design and module content with relevant employers and a range of key industry stakeholders and utilised strategic as well as academic sources and comparator analysis. They have engaged with the professional bodies as well as within industry to ensure the programme is appropriate for graduates who wish to pursue a variety of paths. In addition, an extensive consultation with graduates of the programme was also carried out for the review.

The panel found that the consultation process had been comprehensive and it was concluded that the proposed programmes were fit for purpose. In general, the panel found that the documents provided were well structured, clear in the presentation of facts and easy to read.

A summary and quantitative analysis of the recruitment, learner enrolment, application and performance statistics for the existing programme over the past five years was provided for the existing programme covering the areas specified in the Programme Review Manual 2016/2017 Section 3. At the time of the review, enrolments and applications were at their highest level since 2014.

However, in terms of benchmarking grades and QQI Award Classifications the panel concluded that the analysis provided for the programme for review was not comprehensive. The panel now notes that QQI has recently produced a draft report on award classification distributions across higher education institutions and access to this will allow DBS to better address this piece of analysis going forward.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

Commentary was provided on the teaching strategy, the use of guest speakers, the use of Moodle as a virtual learning environment and the current and planned developments for the blended learning elements of the programme.

Programme-specific arrangements for monitoring progress and guiding, informing and caring for learners were also discussed. A tour, including a short presentation of the facilities and services, was provided, and the panel concluded that the learning environment was consistent with the needs of the learners.

The panel explored the staffing of the programme and the various roles held/ performed by staff engaging with learners on the programme, across the College.

Evidentiary documentation of the implementation of the programme quality assurance arrangements were provided for the panel in the documentation pack. The panel concluded that the quality assurance arrangements applied to the programmes are generally effective, however, the College needs to ensure that it is taking all the steps to close the quality assurance loop and address the issues identified through the application of the quality assurance feedback processes.

## Part 1C Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).

N/a

Comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme.

N/a

## Part 2A Evaluation against the validation criteria

### 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.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>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.



<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

### Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

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 these programmes. 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.

DBS participated in the Pilot Re-Engagement process for re-approval of QA procedures with QQI in 2017/18 and has submitted an application for full Re-Engagement to QQI in early 2019. Process, policies and procedures were reviewed as part of the re-engagement application and self-evaluation process.

Within the programme documentation provided, DBS 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).

## 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.

<p>g) For each programme and embedded programme</p> <p>(i) The <b>minimum intended programme learning outcomes</b> and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.<sup>9</sup></p> <p>(ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are <b>consistent with</b> the relevant QQI awards standards.</p> <p>h) Where applicable, the <b>minimum intended module learning outcomes</b> are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.</p> <p>i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.</p> <p>For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.<sup>10</sup></p>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel found that the aims, objectives and rationale for the programme were expressed clearly. It was noted that a 60 ECTS credit Postgraduate Diploma in Information and Library Management will be available to learners who have successfully completed the taught modules but are prevented from progressing with their studies, or do not wish to. In fact, 65 credits are to be delivered in the first two semesters.

The MIPLOs were informed by the QQI Generic Awards Standard and have been mapped against this standard. The panel concluded that the MIPLOs and MIMLOs have been clearly outlined and were appropriate to the level of the award.

In relation to the exit award the panel recommended that they ensure that **Research Methods module** (identified as the 5 credits over and above the 60 delivered in the first two semesters) is **adequately valued in light of the Exit Award** (i.e. based on the fact that its 5 ECTS credits does not contribute to the 60 ECTS credits required to achieve the exit award).

In considering the aims, objectives and rationale for the MSc programme, the panel were conscious that **Library Association of Ireland (LAI) accreditation must be secured before registration of students onto the post-programmatic reviewed/revalidated programme. The panel also agreed that LAI accreditation should be separately pursued for the new Postgraduate Diploma (exit award); and the LAI, DBS and student information must be clear on the professional implications for graduates of that exit award. Subsequent to the panel event, DBS completed its application to the LAI for re-accreditation of the MSc and accreditation of the new Postgraduate Diploma (in Information and Library Management), for a period of seven years.**

<sup>9</sup>Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

<sup>10</sup>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.

It was concluded that the programme and module learning outcomes (with the exception of those for the *Open Librarianship* module) have been clearly outlined and were appropriate to the level of the awards. The panel recommended that an opportunity is provided for the MIMLOs for the *Open Librarianship* module to be restated on appointment of the new staff member who will deliver this module. This module has been re-examined and the MIMLOs updated to reflect both the feedback from the Panel and further feedback from programme team meetings.

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.

### 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.<sup>11</sup>
- 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<sup>12</sup> of learner demand for the programme.
  - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant<sup>13</sup>.
  - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.<sup>14</sup>
- 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	Master of Science in Information and Library Management

<sup>11</sup>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.

<sup>12</sup> This might be predictive or indirect.

<sup>13</sup> It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

<sup>14</sup>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.

## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel was informed of the comprehensive consultation process undertaken for this review. Clarity was provided by the programme team on the stated graduate attributes versus potential graduate competencies on completion of the programme. The programme team described the programme as highly interdisciplinary with graduates developing technical hard skills, soft skills and attributes, information literacy and applied skills. The panel commended the team input to the review and their openness to engagement with the panel in particular to considering the elements of this discussion.

The panel was updated around the issues with regard to re-accreditation of the programme with the Library Association of Ireland (LAI). Consultations have been ongoing as part of the programme's re-structure, and related correspondence was included in the documentation pack.

It was clear from the feedback, from academic and College library staff, that DBS has been proactive in keeping abreast of developments in the sector, contributing to discussions, and developing professional networks. There have been some challenges in scheduling and managing between full-time and part-time modes, which is mitigated through the same MIPLOs, commonality of teaching staff, and the same T&L methods used.

The changing demographic for the programme (growth in younger cohort, those entering straight from undergraduate studies, and early career learners versus mature) means that enrolled students have changing needs – including distance learning options, and programme delivery in part-time mode. The College is well-placed to cater for this differing profile of students.

While the three-week work placement provided a vital insight for learners on the programme, **the panel recommended that a more formal sign-off for placement organisation personnel to support the quality assurance of the placement experience.** Post panel, the programme team has worked with stakeholders to better capture the process and assessment strategy with standardised evidentiary documentation- the Work Placement Handbook is designed to supplement the programme documentation, and will be reviewed and maintained through the programme board and Board of Studies.

Students with whom the panel met indicated that the programme was useful in enabling them to broaden their perspective on the potential career paths which might suit graduates of the programme– across the broad scope of the library profession within public bodies, academic institutions and business organisations. A graduate of this programme is expected to be able to move seamlessly across these professional areas.

## Criterion 4

<b>The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are</b>
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## 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<sup>15</sup>.
- 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 (CEFR<sup>16</sup>) 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	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

Information on access, transfer and progression is provided for students through DBS website, promotional material and the Student Handbooks. The panel was satisfied that the programmes' access, transfer and progression arrangements are clearly articulated and working in practice. Open evenings support consultation and management of experience with the prospective learner, which includes information on EU and non-EU entry requirements and information for students with disabilities.

<sup>15</sup> 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

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf) (accessed 26/09/2015)

The admission process was discussed with the programme team. The concept of a non-cognate discipline was explored in the context of the minimum of a L8 requirement, versus how RPL consideration works. The team confirmed that RPL is implemented using mapping of applicant's prior learning against the L8 generic award standards, plus an interview.

Discussions with students confirmed that current enrolled students present with a diverse range of undergraduate qualifications, from DBS and other providers.

The programme team provided an overview of the graduate outcomes, i.e. the likely attributes and competencies of the graduate of the programme and how these are reflected by the objectives identified in the programme documentation provided. The panel commended the team's positivity and focus on student experience at DBS.

## Criterion 5

<b>The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes.</li> <li>d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.</li> <li>e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles<sup>17</sup>.</li> <li>f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.</li> <li>g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.</li> <li>h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.</li> <li>i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.</li> <li>j) The programme <b>duration</b> (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its <b>fulltime equivalent contact time</b> (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.<sup>18</sup></li> </ul>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</sup> If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified



## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

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*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel commended the documentation generated and presented, and the process of the review undertaken within the College as outlined both in the documents and to the panel, and panel was generally satisfied that the programmes and their modules were appropriately structured and scheduled, with the exceptions identified for specific modules (below).

The panel commended the Team input to the review and their openness to engagement with the panel, and **recommended that the programme team consider a meeting to review the totality of the programme to ensure optimal cohesiveness of the programme.**

In reviewing the structure the panel explored the concept of independent learning versus directed-learning (the college supports scaffolded learning through Moodle, online, in-class). eLearning resources (and recorded lectures) may be used to facilitate students' engagement with programme material. The overall allocation of hours for self/e-/directed learning needs to be reflected more accurately. DBS have recently recruited a Learning Technologist and are intending to recruit an Instructional Designer to support lecturers' teaching and learning strategies. **The panel recommends that the programme team define the e-learning element of each module within its module descriptor for clarity. This need not be identical for each module.**

**The panel recommended that the programme team consider giving each student ownership of/access to a web-based library application (developmental sandbox) early in the programme.**

The purpose of sandbox would be to host instances of key library applications, which would support students' academic development across different modules.

**The panel commended the programme team for their positivity and focus on student experience at DBS.**

**The panel also recommended that the programme team would create an assessment schedule and consider clarifying re-assessment strategy into clearly articulated forms, for each (all) module(s) within the programmes.**

When reviewing the individual module descriptors, **the panel recommended that the programme team rationalise the text book list to clarify Essential Texts versus Recommended Texts, to identify a key/primary text, and supplementary reading.**

In addition the panel made the following module-specific comments and recommendations:

Module	Comment/Recommendation
• <i>Records Management and Information Law</i>	The Irish Statute Book/Relevant Legislation could be included in reference material listing.
• <i>Open Librarianship</i>	<b>The panel recommended that the programme team should take the opportunity to restate of MIMLOs for appropriateness to L9 [and update the programme schedule, if/as required].</b>
• <i>Information Organisation</i>	<b>The panel recommended that the assessment strategies for this module should be amended where it is currently not as intended [and update the programme schedule, if/as required].</b>

<b>Module</b>	<b>Comment/Recommendation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Research Methods</i></li> </ul>	<p>The panel recommended that the programme team ensure <b>Research Methods</b> module (identified as the 5 credits over and above the 60 delivered in the first two semesters) is adequately valued in light of the Exit Award.</p> <p>With regard to the outcomes of this <i>Research Methods</i> module– the panel recommended that the programme team agree an approach to this module which would support autonomous research in graduates' careers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Information Architecture</i></li> </ul>	<p>The panel recommended that the assessment strategies for this module should be amended where it is currently not as intended [and update the programme schedule, if/as required].</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Information Technologies</i></li> </ul>	<p>The panel recommended that, possibility, in delivery that this is re-sequenced to semester 1 as it provides the ground work for other modules, including information architecture [and update the programme schedule, if/as required].</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Professional Development and Organisational Awareness</i></li> </ul>	<p>This module includes the facility for a three-week work placement. The panel recommended that the programme team clarify the process, and go-to person, for assisting students in securing their work placement.</p> <p>The panel recommended that the College also needs to implement a <i>pro forma</i> checklist for employer sign-off to support confirmation of student engagement with, and the quality assurance of, this work placement.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dissertation/ Applied Research Project</i></li> </ul>	<p>The panel recommended that DBS encourage learners to contribute to the DBS Business Review peer-reviewed journal.</p> <p>The panel recommended that the Programme management team were advised to consider the staff requirements for supervision if the programme ever enrolled the maximum number of students proposed in the programme documentation.</p>

The recommendations for development of the individual modules were addressed in the programme team's response to the panel, and evidenced in the accompanying programme documents.

## Criterion 6

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

- 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).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) The programme has an identified complement of staff<sup>19</sup> (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>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<sup>20</sup> opportunities<sup>21</sup>.</li> <li>e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel was advised that teaching staff are qualified to a minimum of NFQ Level 9 with a number qualified to doctoral level. The panel noted that a cohort of experienced library practitioners (current DBS library staff and others) is involved in the delivery of the programme.

The panel was advised that the WTE/Learner ratio for this programme is 1:25 (for workshop/practical) and 1:50 for classroom sessions, and this was deemed to be appropriate. In considering the dual roles that a number of library staff hold in the delivery of the programme, **the panel recommended that the programme management team ensure that appropriate expertise exists for each module as stated in proposed documentation, particularly where inconsistency exists. The College should further seek to distinguish between the role and person in role. This would facilitate the College to mitigate against risk with regard to roles in relation to academic, support and pastoral activities by defining and demarcating relevant roles.**

<sup>19</sup> 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.

<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> 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.

In addition, with the recent departure of the Head Librarian from the College, who acted as the previous subject lead for this programme, the panel required that the programme team clarify the process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement and the Librarians' input to teaching and supporting students on this programme.

The recent appointment of Learning Technologist and plan for recruitment of Instructional Designer to support the college's ambitions in relation to blended and e-learning, and support staff in its implementation, was commended by the Panel.

The Student supports available within DBS, and the commitment of module leaders to academic process and student development, were particularly remarked upon.

The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned.

## Criterion 7

<b>There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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).</li> <li>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:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(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)</li> <li>(ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)</li> <li>(iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>(iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable</li> <li>(v) technical support</li> <li>(vi) administrative support</li> <li>(vii) company placements/internships – if applicable</li> </ul> </li> <li>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).</li> <li>d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Planned intake (first five years) and</li> <li>(ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.</li> </ul> </li> <li>e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.</li> </ul>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

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*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel noted that a five year plan had been provided for the programme under review.

A tour of the library facilities in the Aungier Street Campus was undertaken, and the open meeting and study areas throughout the campus to facilitate group work and peer study support was acknowledged.

It was noted that the library facilities deploy a wide range of technology resources to support learners and staff. The library is engaged in publishing the DBS journals for the School of Business, featuring peer-reviewed research by both staff and students. This is in line with a core pillar of DBS's strategy on achieving academic excellence.

Work placement –all students are required to complete work experience, which may be completed before, during, or after the programme. **The panel recommended that the programme team clarifies the process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement, and create an appropriate *pro forma* for placement host sign-off on completion.**

To support their course work, each learner is provided with their own cloud space. **The panel recommends that the programme team would consider providing students with a web-based library application (developmental sandbox) on which to support their academic development.**

## 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	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management



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*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review. With the variance on projected numbers, the feasibility of this plan was not particularly clear, however the programme team clarified that the programme was a flagship programme in the College's programme portfolio.

The panel also noted the recent update of the DBS strategic plan, and were advised that the development of eLearning/blended learning programmes is a strategic objective of the College.

A description of the learning environment in place to support students is provided in Section 3.5 of this report. A tour of the physical facilities in the Aungier Street Campus, particularly the library, was undertaken. The library is engaged in publishing the DBS Review - a journal featuring peer-reviewed research by both staff and students. This is in line with a core pillar of DBS's strategy on achieving academic excellence.

To support their course work, each learner is provided with their own cloud space. **The panel recommends that the programme team would consider providing students with a web-based library application (developmental sandbox) on which to support their academic development.**

The (3-week) work placement needs to be formalised in relation to the sign-off by the host organisation in relation to the students' experience. **The panel recommended that the programme team would implement a *pro forma* checklist for employer sign-off to support confirmation of student engagement with the work placement.**

## Criterion 9

<b>There are sound teaching and learning strategies</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.</li><li>b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.</li><li>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).</li><li>d) Learning is monitored/supervised.</li><li>e) Individualised guidance, support<sup>22</sup> and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.</li></ul>
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management

<sup>22</sup> 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.



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*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The College has developed a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy which was provided in the documentation pack for the panel, and appropriate extracts and references were included in the programme documentation. The purpose of this strategy is to support the enhancement of learning and teaching at DBS by establishing a framework, aligned with the overall College Strategy.

The recent appointment of a Learning Technologist and plan for recruitment of Instructional Designer will support the college's ambitions in relation to blended and e-learning, as outlined in the Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy and to support staff in its implementation. However, in relation to this MSc programme, **the panel recommended that the programme team define the e-learning element of each module within the module descriptor for clarity. This need not be identical for each module.**

In meetings with the students and graduates, the panel found that they were very positive about the level of support received from lecturers and other staff. They appreciated the small class sizes and the easy access to teaching staff who were generally very responsive to requests for support, clarification or feedback, which was delivered in a timely manner. **The panel recommended that the programme team consider meeting to review the totality of the programme to ensure optimal cohesiveness of the programme.**

**The panel recommended that the College ensure that appropriate expertise exists for each module as stated in proposed documentation, particularly where inconsistency exists. This is critical where a module covers very specialised subject matter. The College should further seek to distinguish between the role and person in role.**

**The panel recommended that the programme team clarify listings of Essential Texts versus Recommended Texts within the module descriptors.**

The strategy for the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU) is also aligned with this teaching and learning strategy. The establishment of the SESU, as a multidisciplinary intervention to support non-engaging students, was considered a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression.

Feedback from students and graduates also confirmed that the workload for the MSc programme was appropriate but that more structure around this workload was required. **The panel were of the opinion that this could be further supported by the creation of an assessment schedule, which would be visible/accessible to all.**

**The panel recommended that the programme team mitigate against risk with regard to roles in relation to academic, support and pastoral activities by defining and demarcating the relevant roles.**

The panel further noted the feedback from students confirmed the willingness of teaching staff to address any issues brought to them. The employment focus of the programme, and engagement

with professional networks to support programme development and graduate employment. However, the panel recommended that the programme team clarify process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement. In addition, the panel recommended that the programme team implements a *pro forma* checklist for employer sign-off to support confirmation of student engagement with their work placement.

The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned.

## Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i><sup>23</sup></li> <li>b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.</li> <li>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.<sup>24</sup></li> <li>d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.</li> <li>e) There is a satisfactory written <b>programme assessment strategy</b> for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.<sup>25</sup></li> <li>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.</li> <li>g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.</li> <li>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.<sup>26</sup></li> </ul>	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

### Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

<sup>23</sup> See the section on transitional arrangements.

<sup>24</sup> This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

<sup>25</sup> 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.

<sup>26</sup> 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).

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

In relation to areas for improvement, following feedback from students, the panel recommended that the programme team consider meeting to review the totality of the programme to ensure optimal cohesiveness of the programme, and to create an assessment schedule, visible to all.

In addition, the panel recommended that the programme team consider clarifying the re-assessment strategy for the modules in the programme into clearly articulated and standard format.

## 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<sup>27</sup>.
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students*<sup>28</sup> 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	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

<sup>27</sup>For more information on making reasonable accommodations see [www.AHEAD.ie](http://www.AHEAD.ie) and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

<sup>28</sup>See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

## Master of Science in Information and Library Management

### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website contain information on the supports and services available to students. The panel stated that **renewed Library Association of Ireland (LAI) accreditation for the MSc programme, must be secured before registration of students onto the post-programmatic reviewed/revalidated programme** (if this is what programme promotional literature is to say). In addition, **LAI accreditation for the new Postgraduate Diploma should be separately pursued, and student information is to be clear on the professional implications for graduates of that programme.**

The composition and role of the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU) was outlined to the panel. The panel considered this a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression. Further to this, **the panel recommended that the programme team**

- **define e-learning element of each module within the module descriptor for clarity. This need not be identical for each module,**
- **Provide students with a web-based library application (developmental sandbox) on which to support students' academic development, and**
- **Consider clarifying module re-assessment strategy in the programme into a more clearly articulated and standard format.**

The students that met with the panel were positive about their initial engagements with the programme; however, it was noted that there may be some communication gaps as a result of the resignation of a key member of programme staff during the year. **The panel recommends that the College, in seeking to redress this situation, ensures that expertise exists for each module, and distinguishes between role and person in role to support communication to learners.** This would also require clarification of the process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement. **The panel required the programme team to clarify and demonstrate roles and responsibilities around work placement and Librarians' input to teaching and supporting students on this programme.**

## 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



<p>meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.</p> <p>e) Quality assurance<sup>29</sup> is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.</p> <p>h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.</p>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

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### Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management

*The panel has evaluated the programme having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.*

The panel were satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programmes 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. **The panel recommended that the programme team consider meeting to review the totality of the programme to ensure optimal cohesiveness of the programme.**

**The panel recommended that the programme team also clarify the composition of the Board of Studies within the College, particularly to indicate if it includes library staff.**

**In addition, the panel recommended that the programme team considered it important that a more formal sign-off for placement organisation personnel to support the quality assurance of the placement experience.**

**In balancing the recent loss of key staff *vis a vis* future plans for the programme, and future-proofing it, the panel recommends that the programme management team ensure expertise continues to exist for each module as stated in proposed documentation, particularly where/if inconsistency exists and to distinguish between role and person in role. In addition, the panel recommended that the College should mitigate against risk with regard to roles in relation to academic, support and pastoral activities by defining and demarcating the relevant roles.**

The establishment of the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU), as a multidisciplinary intervention to support non-engaging students, was considered a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression. The student supports available within DBS, and the commitment of module leaders to academic process and student development were particularly remarked upon. **The panel recommended that the programme team consider clarifying**

<sup>29</sup>See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

**re-assessment strategy for the modules in the programme into clearly articulated and standard format.**

The recent appointment of Learning Technologist and plan for recruitment of Instructional Designer to support the college's ambitions in relation to blended and e-learning, and support staff in its implementation, was commended by the Panel.

The employment focus of the programme, and engagement with professional networks to support programme development and graduate employment was commended, however, **the panel recommended that the programme team clarify process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement.**

The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned.

It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines, and that DBS have submitted an application to QQI for reengagement. The process for interim programme change was outlined to the panel by the programme team.



## Part 2B Overall recommendation to QQI

### Master of Science in Information and Library Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management (Embedded EXIT Award)

Select one	
X	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 ( <b>minor</b> ) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination); <sup>30</sup>
	Not satisfactory.

#### Reasons<sup>31</sup> for the overall recommendation

The panel carried out a comprehensive review of the Master of Science in Information and Library Management, with its embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management EXIT award, between April and August 2019.

The MSc programme was due for review under the QQI requirement for periodic monitoring and review, and also require 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. The Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management is a newly developed award.

The review comprised six 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/ revised proposed Master of Science in Information and Library Management programme documentation to be submitted for revalidation.
- A site visit on 25 April 2019 involving a series of meeting with academic staff and administrative staff engaged in programme delivery and support, a meeting with recent graduates and current

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<sup>30</sup>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.

<sup>31</sup>Give precise reasons for the conclusions organised under each of the 12 criteria (for the programme and each embedded programme and any modules proposed to lead to QQI awards) citing supporting evidence. If any criteria or sub-criteria are not met by the application this must be stated explicitly giving precise reasons with evidence. A "Not Satisfactory" recommendation may be justified if any one of the applicable criteria or sub-criteria are not demonstrated to be satisfied.

learners on the programme, and a tour of the DBS campus (and College Library) to review facilities.

- The preparation of a panel report, outlining the process and evidence pursued, and a series of conditions and recommendations.
- A follow-up desk review of revised documentation provided by DBS addressing the panel's conditions and recommendations.
- Further feedback from the panel to DBS in relation to necessary action required to close-out on the identified conditions.
- A follow-up desk review of further revised and developed documentation provided by DBS which address the panel's conditions.

The revised documentation provided consisted of:

- DBS Programme Review Document for the Master of Science in Information and Library Management (and embedded Postgraduate Diploma programme) – referred to as Programme Document hereafter
- DBS Appendix 5 Module Descriptors for the Master of Science in Information and Library Management (and embedded Postgraduate Diploma programme) – referred to as Module Descriptors hereafter
- Programme Team's response to the Independent Programme Review Report – referred to as Team Response hereafter
- Proposed Assessment Schedule for the programme
- Supporting documentation which included details of the LAI Accreditation - DBS Master of Science in Information and Library Management (and PGDip); Terms of Reference for the Programme Board and Programme Team meetings; Work Placement Handbook; and Guidelines for Staff in Academic and Support Roles Interacting with Learners.

Based on the site visit and the revised documentation received, the panel concluded that the Master of Science in Information and Library Management, as presented to QQI for revalidation, satisfies the core policies and criteria for revalidation by QQI of programmes of education and training, specifically as follows:

**Criterion1:** 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 current DBS Quality Assurance Handbook.

The panel noted that DBS has arrangements in place for Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL), documentation for which is provided to QQI with every submission for revalidation of a programme.

**Criterion2:** the programme objectives and programme outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI award sought. They are set out in Sections 2.1 and 2.4 of the Programme Document. The Interpretation of the awards standards and research supporting the programme's aims, objectives and the MIPLOs is provided in section 3.6. MIPLOs are mapped against the QQI Generic Awards Standards as set out in Section 13 of the Programme Document, and are compared with those of comparable programmes in section 2.7.

The panel required that renewed Library Association of Ireland (LAI) accreditation be secured for the MSc before registration of students onto the post-programmatic reviewed/revalidated programme

(if this is what programme promotional literature is to say). In addition, LAI accreditation for the new Postgraduate Diploma should be separately pursued, and student information to be clear on the professional implications for graduates of that programme. This was completed and the LAI correspondence provided to the panel as part of the DBS response.

The panel recommended that the MIPLOs for the Open Librarianship module be restated (in conjunction with the syllabus 'flesh-out', and assessment instrument re-design) on appointment of the new staff member [and programme schedule updated if/as required]. This was completed in the programme documentation prior to the programme team's response to the panel.

**Criterion3:** the panel found that the programme concept, implementation strategy and interpretation of QQI awards are well informed, taking into consideration social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives. Extensive consultation with legal stakeholders, as well as students and graduates, was evidenced in Section 3.4 and 3.7 of the Programme Document and had informed the evolution of the programme.

The panel considered it important that a more formal (*pro forma*) sign-off for placement organisation personnel be introduced to support the quality assurance of the placement experience, and an updated Student Placement Handbook was provided with the response documentation.

**Criterion4:** the programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory. Entry criteria and progression options, including the concept of how a non-cognate primary discipline in the context of the minimum of a L8 requirement, versus how RPL consideration works, are clearly documented, as per section 3.2 and chapter 4 of the Programme Document, in relation to the specification of learning that target learners are expected to possess before enrolment.

The extension of the last permitted intake date, to include the full academic year, has been implemented in the programme documentation under guidance from QQI.

**Criterion5:** the programme's written curriculum and modules are well structured and fit-for-purpose. The panel recommended that the programme team meet to conduct the overall annual oversight, evaluation and review of the programme, to enhance overall programme cohesiveness. In its response the programme team took the recommendation on board and provided evidence of greater clarity and cohesion in the structure and the terms of reference for the course boards and programme team meetings. The panel is satisfied with these responses have addressed the recommendations.

Specific comments were identified in relation to a number of Modules on the programme (as identified under criterion 5 of this report). The issues identified have been closed out as identified in the programme team response to the panel.

**Criterion 6:** there are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned. The panel noted that teaching staff are qualified to a minimum of NFQ Level 9 with a number qualified to doctoral level, and that a cohort of experienced library practitioners (current DBS library staff and others) is involved in the delivery of the programme. This is evidenced in the suite of staff CVs [Appendix 2 Programme Staff CVs] which set out the qualifications of staff. Other staffing matters are set out in section 1.2 and chapter 7 of the Programme Document. In considering the dual roles that some library staff hold in the delivery of the programme, the panel recommended that the programme management team ensure that appropriate expertise exists for each module and that DSB should distinguish between the role and person in role. This would facilitate the College to mitigate against risk with regard to roles in relation to academic, support and

pastoral activities by defining and demarcating relevant roles. The College has developed Guidelines for Staff in Academic and Support Roles Interacting with Learners to overcome any possible challenges in this area, and will monitor its effectiveness through the year.

**Criterion7:** there are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned, as set out in chapter 8 of the Programme Document. The wide range of resources utilised to support learners, and support their progression and retention, was noted.

The panel noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review as evidenced in Section 3.13 of the Programme Document, however, the variation in projected learner numbers makes it very difficult to interpret the proposed programme's viability. The extension of the last intake to include the full academic year has been implemented in programme documentation under guidance from QQI.

The programme team has clarified the process and go-to person for assisting students in securing work placement, in the Student Placement Handbook which includes a *pro forma* checklist for employer sign-off to support confirmation of student engagement with their work placement. In addition, for future intakes, students will be provided with access to a developmental sandbox to be utilised in support of their academic development on three modules on the programme.

**Criterion8:** the learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners. The panel was advised that DBS uses a number of mechanisms to develop and implement supports for students as set out in sections 5.8 and 5.9 of the Programme Document.

The processes and procedures for the student's work placement have been clarified in the Student Placement Handbook, which also includes a *pro forma* checklist for employer sign-off to support confirmation of student engagement with their work placement.

**Criterion9:** there are sound teaching and learning strategies. These are outlined in chapter 5 of the Programme Document. In meetings with students and graduates at the site visit, the panel noted that they were very positive about the support they received from staff.

The panel recommended that the e-learning element of each module is defined within the module descriptor for clarity. This is being implemented in conjunction with the College's developing Teaching and Learning Strategy.

The panel found that the lists of texts within the programme documentation required a review to reflect on essential vs recommended. The reading lists have been updated in the Module Descriptor document provided.

**Criterion 10:** there are sound assessment strategies. The panel was advised that all assessment for the programmes conform to the DBS Assessment Regulations which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013 as set out in section 5.10 of the Programme Document, and within the individual modules.

The panel recommended that an assessment schedule be prepared for the programme and that a hardcopy be provided to learners at the commencement of the semester/stage., and are satisfied that appropriate measures have been put in place to provide this. The programme team has also clarified the re-assessment strategy for each of the modules within the programme.

**Criterion 11:** learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for. The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website reviewed contained relevant information in relation to the supports and services available to students. Library Association of Ireland (LAI) accreditation has been secured for the post-programmatic review programmes (both MSc and PgD).

Students and graduates with whom the panel met confirmed that support services are well publicised. Supports for learners are detailed in sections 5.9 and 8.2 of the programme document.

**Criterion 12:** the programme is well managed. The panel were satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programmes under review. The College is enhancing its processes to ensure that the part-time practice-based lecturers on the programme are more closely involved in the overall annual oversight, evaluation and review of the programme.

The Quality Assurance Handbook (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, and have been redrafted as part of DBS's reengagement process with QQI.

## Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

The proposed conditions identified by the panel are as follows:

1. Renewed Library Association of Ireland (LAI) accreditation to be secured before registration of students onto the post-programmatic reviewed/revalidated programme (if this is what programme promotional literature is to say).
2. LAI accreditation for the new Postgraduate Diploma to be separately pursued, and student information to be clear on the professional implications for graduates of that programme.
3. Clarify and demonstrate roles and responsibilities around work placement and Librarians' input to teaching and supporting students on this programme.

The panel required that these conditions would be implemented before learners register for the programme in September 2019.

## Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. The panel recommended that the programme team ensure that Research Methods module is adequately valued in light of the Exit Award
2. Re the Open Librarianship module - The panel recommended that an opportunity is provided for the MIMLOs for the Open Librarianship module to be restated (in conjunction with the syllabus 'flesh-out', and assessment instrument re-design) on appointment of the new staff member [and programme schedule updated if/as required].
3. The panel considered it important that a more formal (pro forma) sign-off for placement organisation personnel be introduced to support the quality assurance of the placement experience.
4. The panel recommended that the programme team amend assessment strategies in modules where this is currently not as intended (e.g. Information Organisation and Information Architecture) [and update programme schedule if/as required].

5. With regard to the outcomes of the Research Methods module– the panel recommended that the programme team agree an approach to this module which would support autonomous research in graduates’ careers.
6. The panel recommended that in its delivery the Information Technologies module is re-sequenced to semester 1 (as it provides the ground work for other modules, including information architecture)[and programme schedule updated if/as required].
7. The programme team should clarify the process, and go-to person, for assisting students in securing their work placement.
8. The College should ensure expertise exists for each module as stated in proposed documentation, particularly where inconsistency exists. This is critical where a module covers very specialised subject matter. Distinguish between role and person in role.
9. The panel recommended that the programme team consider providing students with a web-based library application (developmental sandbox) on which to support students academic development.
10. The panel recommended that the programme team clarify listings of Essential Texts versus Recommended Texts within the module descriptors.
11. The panel recommended that the programme team mitigate against risk with regard to roles in relation to academic, support and pastoral activities by defining and demarking relevant roles
12. The panel recommended that the programme team consider organising a team meeting to review the totality of the programme to ensure optimal cohesiveness of the programme.
13. The panel recommended that the programme team define e-learning element of each module within the module descriptor for clarity. This need not be identical for each module.
14. The panel recommended that the programme team consider creating an assessment schedule for the full programme, visible to all.
15. The panel recommended that the programme team consider clarifying re-assessment strategy for the modules in the programme into clearly articulated and standard format.
16. The panel recommended that the programme team clarify composition of Board of Studies within the College, particularly to indicate if it includes library staff?

## Declarations of Evaluators’ Interests

Panel secretary, Mary Doyle has previously held the role of position of Registrar at Dublin Business School. Since leaving this role, in 2009, she has not engaged in any professional relationship with the College and/or its staff. In addition, there have been extensive changes at senior/middle management within DBS in the interim and Ms Doyle has not had any professional relationship with the incumbents, during or prior to their taking up their roles at DBS.

Panel members Jane Burns and Kate Kelly have given occasional guest lectures at DBS.


Panel members Jane Burns and David Kane sit on the Editorial Team of the DBS Business Review alongside 20 other academics/business professionals from across Ireland.



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

Panel chairperson: Dr Michael C. Hall

Date: 27 August 2019

Signed: 

## Addendum

N/a

## Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While QQI has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will QQI be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Part 4: Appendices



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

**Revalidation of the Master of Science in Information and Library Management with the embedded exit award Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management provided by Dublin Business School - 2019**

In its original independent evaluation report dated 17th May 2019, the independent panel specified 3 conditions and 16 recommendations regarding the above programmes. Dublin Business School formally responded to the report on 19th August 2019 and has addressed each of the conditions and recommendations to the satisfaction of the independent panel members.

The panel confirmed that it recommended the Master of Science in Information and Library Management programme with the embedded exit award Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Information and Library Management to QQI for revalidation.

QQI is satisfied that each condition made by the independent panel has been met and each recommendation has been taken on board and the recommended action has been taken or is scheduled to be taken.

Signed:

Carmel Kelly - Validation Manager, Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Date: 18 November 2019