

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cailíochta agus Cailíochtaí Éireann

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

## Part 1 A

<b>Provider name</b>	DBS
<b>Date of site visit</b>	27.06.2019
<b>Date of report</b>	03.09.2019
<b>Is this a re-validation report (Yes/No)</b>	Yes

## Overall recommendations

<b>Principal programme</b>	<b>Title</b>	Master of Business Administration (MBA)
	<b>Award</b>	MBA
	<b>Credit<sup>1</sup></b>	90 ECTS
	<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions<sup>2</sup> OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

<b>Embedded programme<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Title</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration
	<b>Award</b>	Postgraduate Diploma
	<b>Exit award (Yes/No)</b>	Yes
	<b>Credit</b>	60 ECTS

<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>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>	n/a
	<b>Credit</b>	n/a
	<b>Recommendation</b> <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	n/a

## Evaluators

<b>Evaluators</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Principal occupation</b>
Dr Philip Owende	Chair	Academic Quality Manager, TU Dublin Blanchardstown Campus
Dr Deirdre Nuttall	Secretary	Adverbage Ltd
Jacqui Tracy	Academic Panellist	Griffith College Dublin
Paul McGuckin	Academic Panellist	Letterkenny IT
Prof. David Gwynn Morgan	Academic Panellist	Kuwait International Law School and University College Cork
Marie O'Flynn	Academic Panellist	TU Dublin, City Campus
Barbara Mangan	Industry Representative	Independent Management Consultant
Stephen Fitzgerald	Student Rep. (BA)	BA Business Student, IT Carlow
Brian Power	Student Rep. (MBA)	MBA Student, Trinity College Dublin

<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

### Master's in Business Administration

<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>
Dublin Business School	600	10

<b>Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)</b>	<b>Date of first intake</b>	September 2019
	<b>Date of last intake</b>	August 2024
<b>Maximum number of annual intakes</b>	3 intakes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September intake</li> <li>• January intake</li> <li>• April intake</li> </ul>	
<b>Maximum total number of learners per intake (over all centres)</b>	600	
<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 week each across 24 months	
<b>Target learner groups</b>	The MBA is aimed at learners with any of the following entry qualifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 8 primary undergraduate honours bachelor degree with a minimum second class second division classification (2.2) in any discipline from a recognised third level institution (or equivalent); or</li> <li>• An equivalent professional qualification such as ACCA or CIMA.</li> <li>• In exceptional cases, individuals with expansive relevant industry experience.</li> </ul>	
<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>• Classroom lectures</li> <li>• Case-based learning</li> <li>• Practical skills sessions</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Individual and group work</li> <li>• Online synchronous and asynchronous learning</li> </ul>	
<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>	The programme is aimed at learners who wish to specialise in business administration with a view to entering industry, to progress professionally or to undertake further business studies. Learners will achieve the business expertise to inform strategic decision-making to optimise return on investment across each department. Learners will be capable of dealing with diverse intrinsic and extrinsic business realities in a creative manner to ensure sustainability and growth. Through the research dissertation, learners will develop independent research and problem-solving skills reflective of their expansion of	

	management competencies and contribute to their chosen field of enquiry, which will be valuable in a variety of contexts in the workplace.	
<b>Summary of specifications for teaching staff</b>	Faculty will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or Master’s Degree, with relevant and significant industry experience and/or PhD. Holders of level 8 honours degrees in a relevant discipline, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience, will also be considered. Specific qualifications for each individual module have been provided by DBS; research modules 1 and 2 require staff to have experience of academic research as well as the qualifications outlined above, and research module 2 requires staff to have a minimum of a Level 9 Master’s Degree.  DBS has provided detailed Curriculum Vitae information for all of the lecturing staff, itemising the qualifications compatible with their teaching assignment.	
<b>Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</b>	Staff to learner ratio	Learning activity type
	1/150	Classroom sessions
	1/40	Workshops/Tutorials
	1/40	Practical sessions
	1/150	Online class (live)
	1/25	Online tutorial (interactive)
	1/150	Classroom sessions
	1/40	Workshops/Tutorials
<b>Overall WTE staff/learner ratio.<sup>5</sup></b>	864 contact hours 864/500 = 1.73 1.73 x 1.64 = 2.84	

Programmes being replaced by the Masters in Business Administration— N/A

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”	
PG19605	Master of Business Administration	April 2019	Teach out	2020

<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.

## Embedded programme<sup>6</sup>

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
DBS	600	10

	<b>Date of first intake</b>	September 2019
	<b>Date of last intake</b>	August 2024
<b>Maximum number of annual intakes</b>	3 intakes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September intake</li> <li>• January intake</li> <li>• April intake</li> </ul>	
<b>Maximum total number of learners per intake</b>	600	
<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 20 months	
<b>Target learner groups</b>	The programme is aimed at learners who wish to specialise in business administration with a view to entering industry, to progress professionally or to undertake further business studies. Learners will achieve the business expertise to inform strategic decision-making to optimise return on investment across each department. Learners will be capable of dealing with diverse intrinsic and extrinsic business realities in a creative manner to ensure sustainability and growth. Students will include those who originally planned to undertake an MBA but who, for one reason or another, opt instead to exit with a post-graduate diploma.	
<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>• Classroom lectures</li> <li>• Case-based learning</li> <li>• Practical skills sessions</li> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Tutorials</li> <li>• Individual and group work</li> <li>• Online synchronous and asynchronous learning</li> </ul>	
<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>The Postgraduate Diploma in Business is aimed at learners with any of the following entry qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 8 primary undergraduate honours bachelor's degree with a minimum second class second division (2.2) classification in any discipline from a recognised third level institution (or equivalent); or</li> </ul>	

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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An equivalent professional qualification such as ACCA or CIMA.</li> </ul>	
<b>Summary of specifications for teaching staff</b>	<p>Faculty lecturing this module will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or Master’s Degree in HR or a related area, with relevant and significant industry experience and/or PhD.</p> <p>Holders of Level 8 honours degrees in a relevant discipline, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience, will also be considered.</p> <p>DBS has provided detailed Curriculum Vitae information for all of the lecturing staff, itemising their qualifications for each module taught by them.</p>	
<b>Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</b>	1/150	Classroom sessions
	1/40	Workshops/Tutorials
	1/40	Practical Sessions
	1/150	Online class (live)
	1/25	Online tutorial (interactive)
	1/150	Classroom sessions
	1/40	Workshops/Tutorials
<b>Overall WTE staff/learner ratio.</b>	<p>864 contact hours</p> <p><math>864/500 = 1.73</math></p> <p><math>1.73 \times 1.64 = 2.84</math></p>	

Programmes being replaced by the embedded programme— N/A

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”	

Module<sup>7</sup>—Not Applicable (n/a)

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
n/a		

<sup>7</sup> This only needs to be completed where modules may be offered independently. Add more subsections if there are more than one modules proposed to lead to QQI awards.

<b>Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)</b>	<b>Date of first intake</b>	n/a
	<b>Date of last intake</b>	n/a
<b>Maximum number of annual intakes</b>	n/a	
<b>Maximum total number of learners per intake</b>	n/a	
<b>Programme duration (months from start to completion)</b>	n/a	
<b>Target learner groups</b>	n/a	
<b>Approved countries for provision</b>	n/a	
<b>Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time</b>	n/a	
<b>The teaching and learning modalities</b>	n/a	
<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>	n/a	
<b>Summary of specifications for teaching staff</b>	n/a	
<b>Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</b>	n/a	
<b>Overall WTE staff/learner ratio.</b>	n/a	

<b>Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)</b>		
<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Last enrolment date</b>
n/a		

Programmes being replaced by the Post-graduate Diploma in Business n/a

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

## Other noteworthy features of the application

1. DBS Senior Management Team, Academic and Support Staff, and samples of both continuing students and graduates interviewed as part of the review, engaged fully with the process. The Review Panel is most grateful for the comprehensive review programme schedule, cooperation through pre-visit communications and during the on-site sessions, and the overall hospitality accorded throughout the visit on June 26, 2019.
2. DBS has systems in place to support students with a wide variety of learning needs and challenges, including students from non-traditional backgrounds, students with dyslexia etc. Beyond academic support for students, a wide range of practical supports is also in place, including assistance with accommodation and other practical matters, which are especially important in facilitating smooth transitions, particularly for the international students.
3. The MBA curriculum (Aims and Objectives, Objective 4) provides for developing learners knowledge of the 'complexities of cross- cultural management', which is an increasingly important part of business, but it is equally important to students who are placed in an intense, highly structured environment for the MBA programme durations of one to two years. The cognisance of this importance and fostering of cultural awareness in student experience within DBS is commendable as a positive intervention that can help address potential pressure points before impact, particularly in the academic environment constituting teamwork assignment with prescribed deadlines.
4. The review application included the DBS's own comprehensive Quality Assurance Handbook (2016/17 Edition). The handbook provides relevant information and guidance on Academic Quality matters to the management team and academic staff and those involved in curriculum design/development, programme delivery, and oversight on academic quality assurance and enhancement across different modules. The handbook contains approved DBS quality assurance policies and procedures intended to be easily accessible to staff, learners, and other stakeholders. Associated regulations or policies relating to the use of services such as the library, facilities or IT are only referenced in the handbook, but are accessible through the DBS web pages. The approach to management of quality matters is through both the DBS governance structures and various academic committee structure as assigned.
5. There was evidence of a high level of interest in the wellbeing of students, with clear support structures provided.
6. There was evidence that DBS responds to recommendations of its External Examiners. For example, a new module on Report Writing for Graduate Students was introduced because of such feedback.

## 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.

--

## Part 2A Evaluation against the validation criteria

### Criterion 1

<b>The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.</li><li>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.</li><li>c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.<sup>8</sup></li></ul>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b> Yes, the provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme.

#### Master of Business Administration

1. The relevant programme submission documents meet all of the prerequisites to apply for the programme validation.
2. At the initial meeting with DBS Senior Management Team, the panel inquired and was duly assured that the information provided was truthful, and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed, and all relevant supporting declarations of compliance were satisfied.

#### Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration<sup>9</sup>

As the proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 1 for the MBA Award will apply.

---

<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.

<sup>9</sup> Add more subsections if there are more than one embedded programmes.

## Criterion 2

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

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
  - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
  - (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
  - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
  - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.<sup>10</sup>
  - (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
- h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
- i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.<sup>11</sup>

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
	Yes. The programme's aims and objectives are clearly expressed with respect to both the principal programme and the embedded programme.

### Master of Business Administration

1. The MBA includes a range of modules that are designed to prepare students for the workplace, and in particular for managerial roles. The compatible array of electives permits them to select a study/career pathway—for example, by focusing on HR or IT components of the course.
2. The range of modules on offer are suitable and fit for purpose, and the minimum intended module learning outcomes are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
3. The module learning outcomes are objectively mapped to the QQI Award Standards for Business at Level 9 of the NFQ.

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

DBS has proposed re-introducing the Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration as an exit award. This is in recognition of the fact that some students who enrol on the MBA programme, and having successfully completed various modules, may realise that they do not wish to do a dissertation, or decide to leave for another reason after accruing the requisite credits. The Diploma recognises the skills that they have acquired and ensures that their efforts are recognised.

As the proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 2 for the MBA Award will apply.

<sup>10</sup>Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

<sup>11</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.

## 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>12</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>13</sup> of learner demand for the programme.
  - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant<sup>14</sup>.
  - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.<sup>15</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.

<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b>
	Yes. The programme concept, implementation strategy, and interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based. In particular, DBS shows good evidence of engagement with industry.

### Master of Business Administration

1. DBS provided robust evidence of engagement with a range of stakeholders, including learner focus groups, class representatives, graduates, staff, and members of industry, including employers of former DBS students. Monthly meetings are held with class representatives, and DBS is actively engaged with graduates of the college. DBS staff regularly attend seminars and events for professional development and are actively engaged with the peers in similar colleges in Ireland and overseas.
2. There is a very clear demand for graduates from MBA programmes, with employers particularly interested in skills that include communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork skills, etc.
3. The course successfully attracts students from both within Ireland and overseas.
4. However, some of the students interviewed by the panel commented that they felt that their peers on similar MBA programmes in competing colleges were being challenged more, raising some concern that possibly some of the modules are not sufficiently demanding, particularly for students who have already acquired several years' experience in industry (See item 1 under Summary of recommended special conditions of validation).

<sup>12</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>13</sup> This might be predictive or indirect.

<sup>14</sup> It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

<sup>15</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.

## Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award; therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 3 for the MBA Award will apply.

## Criterion 4

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

- a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied<sup>16</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>17</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:
	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements were found to be satisfactory. However, a deficit related to Criterion 4 (d) was noted in respect to the admission of recent graduates to the MBA programme. While the noted deficit has since been addressed via response from DBS, a requirement for monitoring process has been suggested.</p>

## Master of Business Administration

1. Should students wish to transfer from another institution to DBS, the relevant academic transcripts are produced. Should students wish to transfer from DBS to another institution, the academic transcripts are similarly provided.
2. The manual provided to students is comprehensive. DBS is aware that students do not always read all of the data relevant to them, so various mechanisms are in place to help them to access the information. There may be some scope for streamlining and simplifying this material. DBS also uses Moodle VLE.
3. International applicants whose first language is not English and who have not previously undertaken a degree taught in English must provide evidence of proficiency in English language equivalent to B2+ or above on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This must be evidenced through a recognised English Language test such as IELTS, Cambridge Certificate or DBS English Assessment. Test certificates should be dated within the last two years to be considered valid.
4. The recognition and evaluation of experiential learning (RPL) will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Applicants who do not have a Level 8 qualification may also be considered through the College's normal

<sup>16</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>17</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)

RPL procedures. In such instances, an interview of the candidate may be required. The interview assessment criteria will include education record, motivation to take the programme, ability to demonstrate knowledge of the cognate area through work experience, applicant's career plan, how the programme will support their career path, and their understanding of the challenges and demands of taking a Level 9 programme. Applicants will be required to complete the application form and provide written evidence as to their application for acceptance onto the programme with prior experiential learning. Therefore, in exceptional circumstances, candidates with level 7 qualifications can access the MBA course.

5. DBS documentation is clear about entry requirements.
6. However, concern was raised at student interview, which has a strong bearing on the admission criteria to the MBA programme. The programme admits recent graduates. As such, a concern was expressed that, in specific cases, students with more industry experience prior to enrolment felt insufficiently challenged in coursework and assessments as compared to students enrolled in similar programmes in other colleges (See item 1 under Summary of recommended special conditions of validation).

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 4 for the MBA Award will apply.

## Criterion 5

<b>The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose</b>	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes.</p> <p>d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.</p> <p>e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles<sup>18</sup>.</p> <p>f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.</p> <p>g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.</p> <p>i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.</p> <p>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>19</sup></p>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment:</b> Yes. In general, the programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose. However, there was a deficit in respect of Criterion 5 (e)(g). The noted deficit has since been comprehensively addressed via DBS response to the draft panel report.

### Master of Business Administration

- Generally, the programme's curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose. The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented; i.e., course and constituent module contents are well described with clear programme learning outcomes and module learning outcomes pitched at appropriate NFQ level. They align well with assessment strategies to meet the designated outcomes.
- Students can choose from a range of electives that guide their educational path, in accordance with their career goals.
- However, the panel notes that the same module "Reinventing Performance Management" scheduled in Semester 2 (FT) and Semester 4 (PT) is also replicated in the undergraduate BA programme. While DBS has provided assurances that the courses are not actually taught in an identical manner, it was unclear how any distinction could be achieved in practice (See item 2 under Summary of recommended special conditions of validation).
- DBS course management process has noted the relatively high failure rates in subjects with a high maths component, and therefore additional supports are available for such modules.
- The panel noted that specific module titles should be reassessed to gain clarity of coverage. For example, consider revising the module titled "Marketing Management" to "Strategic Marketing" for more accurate description of contents.

<sup>18</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>19</sup> If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

## Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 5 for the MBA Award will apply.

## Criterion 6

<p><b>There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned</b></p> <p>a) The specification of the programme’s staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).</p> <p>b) The programme has an identified complement of staff<sup>20</sup> (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>21</sup> opportunities<sup>22</sup>.</p> <p>e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b></p>	<p><b>Comment:</b> Yes, DBS has a full complement of suitably qualified, capable and engaged staff.</p>

### Master of Business Administration

1. Staff/student ratios compare reasonably well with similar programmes elsewhere at the designated level of the award, both for purposes of course delivery and for provision of student support such as pastoral care.
2. The programme is supported by a good complement of suitably qualified teaching and support staff. DBS also shows great initiative in bringing in a large number of guest lecturers, notably from industry, who can provide the students with fascinating and educational insights. The students interviewed by the panel themselves commented on the usefulness of this approach.
3. However, the curriculum vitae for a number of staff were thin on relevant information, primarily focusing on current teaching roles and not how they qualify for the same, therefore incongruent to the declared staff specification. It is recommended that DBS adopt a standard CV format to clearly reflect the relevant qualifications and experience against staff teaching and supervision assignments.
4. Given the heavy teaching workload, the opportunity for staff to engage in research and professional development is limited, despite the fact that DBS does have systems in place to facilitate staff development. In cases of staff who do not yet hold doctorates, where appropriate for respective areas of specialisation, staff members are encouraged to pursue PhD studies.
5. There is a high dependency on hiring part-time academic staff. While this is understandable on an MBA programme where specialist knowledge is required from time to time, or even academics with specialist skills for integrating group work, such staffing regime imposes vulnerability in continuity and consistency in the programme.

<sup>20</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>21</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>22</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.

## Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 6 for the MBA Award will apply.

## 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, the physical resources provided by DBS to implement the programme as planned are adequate. Minimum provisions are prescribed under quality framework.

### Master of Business Administration

1. DBS has suitable accommodation for meeting the learning and human needs of its students. The review panel visited a range of teaching spaces and IT labs and noted that the learning spaces were well-equipped and provided comfortable working environment.
2. DBS library was noted to be an exceptionally well-run facility supported by qualified, engaged, helpful staff. Students have access to a wide range of printed and online resources.
3. DBS uses Moodle Virtual Learning Environment to support course delivery.
4. DBS has a detailed five-year plan, incorporating all necessary elements and criteria.
5. Programme controls include programme agreement as part of the Quality process and considers a range of operations aspects including intellectual property rights (see DBS Quality Handbook, pp. 73)

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Higher Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 7 for the MBA Award will apply.

## Criterion 8

<b>The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners</b>	
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.	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment</b> Yes. There was evidence of an embedded sense of duty of care by staff to DBS students, which was confirmed in the interview with both ongoing students and recent graduates.

### Master of Business Administration

1. The programme admits both local and international students, and there was evidence of adequate considerations of both social and cultural supports to learners.
2. Supports for student engagement included provision for peer learning, assigned project supervision, and invited guest lecturers to reinforce contextual aspects of the programme.
3. DBS has adopted Moodle as its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which complements and supports the onsite face-to-face delivery of programmes.

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 8 for the MBA Award will apply.

## 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>23</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. Generally, the teaching and learning strategies are adjudged to be sound. However, interaction with students yielded some concerns that should be addressed in respect of admission criteria to the programme.

### Master of Business Administration

1. The course documents reviewed showed evidence of comprehensive teaching strategies capable of meeting programme outcomes and learning outcomes of the designated award.
2. There was general evidence that learning is monitored and supervised, including the provisions for individual guidance, support and timely formative feedback.
3. The deficit noted under Criterion 10 (item 6) is relevant to meeting the requirements for sound teaching and learning strategies (Criterion 9).

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 9 for the MBA Award will apply.

---

<sup>23</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.

## Criterion 10

<b>There are sound assessment strategies</b>	
	<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>24</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>25</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>26</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>27</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<p><b>Comment:</b> Yes. Assessment is undertaken consistently with assessment guidelines, conventions and protocols for programmes leading to QQI awards. Specific areas of concern to the panel were highlighted and discussed with programme team. The noted deficit has since been comprehensively addressed via DBS response to the draft panel report.</p>

### Master of Business Administration

1. The assessment strategies used in the programme were generally consistent with assessment guidelines, conventions, and protocols for programmes leading to QQI awards. This was evidenced from individual module descriptors, examination papers and student scripts and direct interactions with academic staff during the panel visit.
2. A substantial portion of assessment strategy is via continuous assessments, encompassing presentations, teamwork and other modes of formative opportunities for learning. The submission and course documents reviewed included sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence to indicate that the assessments were likely to be valid/reliable.
3. The programme teams are aware of the necessity for maintaining academic integrity in assessments, vis-à-vis the challenges posed by the internet with respect to plagiarism and/or contract cheating in the educational environment. The college employs Urkund plagiarism detection software for counterchecking of academic integrity of assignments submitted by students. Assessment strategies also encompass individual student presentations and interviews for course elements requiring group and/or teamwork.
4. External examiners are appointed and retained for defined periods as sound bases for moderation of summative assessments and assessment results. However, a substantial proportion of modules are assessed through 100% continuous assessment weighting. Currently, the course descriptors do not contain enough detail on the assessment instruments employed in such modules, to enable review and/or determination of the rigour of related assessment; hence, there seems to be no provision for

<sup>24</sup> See the section on transitional arrangements.

<sup>25</sup> This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

<sup>26</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>27</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).

moderation of such modules (See item 3 under Summary of recommended special conditions of validation).

5. From a number of external examiner feedback reports seen, it is the panel's considered opinion that DBS needs to be more transparent and timely in its interactions with designated external examiners to its programmes. For example, an external examiner's report (GG 2017-2018), noted a specific case where there was evidence of possible plagiarism, but two examiners proceeded to award marks for the noted assessment. Whereas the panel was accorded with sufficient evidence that the specific case had been evaluated and discounted, the external examiner's report emanated from lack of communication regarding the investigation and closure of the specific case.
6. Whereas there was evidence that, in most part, assessments were returned in a timely manner to enable achievement of the formative objectives, there were reported cases of learner dissatisfaction with the speed and quality of feedback including at panel interview with ongoing students (See item 5 under Summary of recommendations to the provider).

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 10 for the MBA Award will apply.

## Criterion 11

<b>Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>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.</li><li>b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.</li><li>c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.</li><li>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.</li><li>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.</li><li>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.</li><li>g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.</li><li>h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities<sup>28</sup>.</li><li>i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i><sup>29</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.</li><li>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).</li></ul>	
<b>Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)</b>	<b>Comment:</b> Yes, there were multiple evidences that enrolled learners are well informed, guided and cared for.

### Master of Business Administration

1. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure that the most at-risk students are quickly identified and supported. DBS formally encourages peer support and peer mentoring. It was noted that the majority of part-time MBA students are Irish, while most full-time students are from overseas. This has provided a unique cohort combination to foster peer-support to overseas students when required.
2. There are provisions to accommodate students with a variety of particular educational needs, e.g.: provisions for students with a variety of disabilities; provisions for language support etc (see Learning Support in DBS incorporating promotion of inclusion in DBS Quality Assurance Handbook, section 9.3.1).
3. There is strong support for student well-being and pastoral care. For example, international students are assisted in identifying suitable accommodation and settling into life in Ireland.
4. At programme level, students may be assisted to tailor their MBA to match their personal and career goals.
5. There is a transparent and fair procedure for appeals complaints (see section 6.12 in DBS Quality Assurance Handbook).

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award, therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 11 for the MBA Award will apply.

<sup>28</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>29</sup> See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

## Criterion 12

<b>The programme is well managed</b>	
	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.</p> <p>e) Quality assurance<sup>30</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. Generally, there was evidence that the programme is well-managed. However, Annual Programme Review (APR) is critical to ensure consistent learning experience (item (e), (g) above). The noted deficit has since been comprehensively addressed via DBS response to the draft panel report.

### Master of Business Administration

1. The programme has a comprehensive quality assurance framework defining relevant policies and procedures,<sup>31</sup> and which was available to the panel. Among other aspects, the QA manual defines intrinsic governance strictures and processes, protocols for course development, monitoring and review, and teaching, learning and compatible assessment frameworks.
2. The programme governance structure include the following posts (among others): An Executive Dean; Registrar; Discipline-specific Course Directors for covering the thematic subjects on offer at DBS; Head of Academic Programmes; Head of Faculty and School; Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning; Head of Student Experience; Admissions Manager; Student Engagement Officer. These posts ensure that their jurisdictions functionally interface with the general institutional procedures.
3. While the overall assessment of programme management was deemed satisfactory, a systematic Annual Programme Review (APR) is critical to ensuring that any problems /issues identified in the programme are dealt with conclusively, and do not spill into the next academic year. Such a strategy and accompanying reporting can be informed by learner feedback, lecturer performance feedback, and External Examiners feedback, which are all collated by DBS in each academic year.

### Postgraduate Diploma in Business

The proposed Postgraduate Diploma in Business Award of DBS is an exit award; therefore, the recommendation under Criterion 12 for the MBA Award will apply.

<sup>30</sup> See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

<sup>31</sup> DBS Quality Assurance Handbook 2016-17 Edition, 359 pp.

## Part 2B Overall recommendation to QQI

### Embedded programme

Select one	
√	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;
	<del>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>32</sup></del>
	<del>Not satisfactory.</del>

### Principal programme

Select one	
√	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;
	<del>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>32</sup></del>
	<del>Not satisfactory.</del>

### Reasons<sup>34</sup> for the overall recommendation

Subject to the response outlined below, the panel was satisfied that the criteria have been met and requires that DBS continue to monitor all of the issues of concern raised by the panel and to take the relevant necessary steps.

<sup>32</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>33</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>34</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.

## Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

1. It is the panel's considered opinion that the primary function of an MBA programme is to provide a rigorous academic training to participants with prior work/industry experience. With the current student cohorts that include recent graduates lacking in work/industry experience, this inevitably has a negative impact on the learning experience; evidence collected from the graduate interview session indicated that students with work/industry experience at enrolment felt insufficiently challenged in elements of coursework and assessments as compared to students enrolled in similar programmes in equivalent institutions. Therefore:
  - 1.1 The panel recommends entry qualification of 2 to 3 years' minimum industry experience, or for DBS to rationalise how the lack of experience can be practicably bridged to enable candidates to achieve the designated award standard.
  - 1.2 DBS should consider amending relevant modules in the programme, with sole purposes of integrating contemporary case studies to enhance the learning experience, and as best practice in MBA programme offering.

## **DBS RESPONSE (1.1):**

Since the current MBA programme was validated DBS has not accepted brand new graduates onto the programme. Specifically, the information available to applicants states that *'Newly graduated applicants will not be accepted onto the programme.'*

However, DBS appreciates that there will be a diverse range of experience in the classroom as witnessed by the panel and that comparatively some learners will have more experience than others on admission. The observations of the panel that influenced Condition 1 are noted and accepted by DBS.

Therefore, DBS will follow the panel's recommendation by ensuring that practical bridging supports are in place for students with less experience on admission. The purpose of such supports is to give **exposure to learners** and provide insights to the world of work and business, so as to enhance the learning experience and enable learners to achieve the best academic outcome.

We plan to do this through a number of measures, which will commence with the next intake in September 2019:

Firstly, DBS has established an institutional Employer Engagement Board, and Industry Advisory Boards for each discipline area, with the following objectives:

### **Objectives**

- Ensure an appropriate level of industry input into the development, validation and delivery of academic programmes.
- Support the industry ecosystem with cultivation of a strong 'talent' pillar of learners and graduates.
- Develop industry driven research from both an academic and real world problem solving perspective.
- Promote and evolve the network of support for all participants in the industry ecosystem.
- Create employment and career opportunities for learners and graduates.

The first of these industry boards, comprised of senior business leaders in industry, has already been established in the Department of Accounting and Finance for finance-focused programmes, and this model is now being rolled out across all departments under the Course Directors, including the Course Director for Business and Law. The intent is to bring real-world industry insights into the programmes and to provide research, networking and career opportunities for learners through industry engagement with the programmes.

Secondly, in addition to the above, DBS will continue to utilise and incorporate high quality guest lecturers from industry in order to ensure learners are regularly exposed to real-world issues and concerns and that their programme of study is contextualised. However, DBS will keep this constantly under review and seek to increase the quantity, quality and range of industry speakers where appropriate to student learning. In addition to this, DBS is in discussion with its sister college, Kaplan Business School, Australia, who has very successfully incorporated industry speakers in an engaged way into faculty (for example, every 6 weeks a focussed class is led by an industry expert on a designated topic). DBS is actively exploring which initiatives may be replicable and/or tailored to the DBS MBA.

Thirdly, in order to bridge the learning experience for a range of learners, DBS is formalising a range of learner supports which have been in existence across different departments in order to develop a coherent package of supports for learners at Level 9. Additional teaching contact hours have been made available to provide such supports. Students are made aware of these resources through, Moodle, class reps and direct marketing method internally. Please see the various supports available for domestic and international learners available through support functions in DBS in the supporting documentation.

Fourthly, the Programme Team currently uses a range of live cases and scenarios to capture the dynamic business environment in which we operate, and we welcome this condition to encourage increased use of cases designed specifically for MBA studies throughout the programme. For more on this, see below.

**DBS RESPONSE (1.2):**

In the newly designed Reinventing Performance Management module it is envisaged to use a variety of such cases in the HR arena. Currently within the '(Strategic) Marketing Management' module, all case studies are selected through INSEAD database and The Case Center for Level 9 discussions. In the Applied Strategic Management module cases are drawn from the Johnson Whittington and Scholes collection.

DBS Library gives access to Sage Business Cases, among others (see link attached): which is designed to engage students in applying core concepts to practice through the use of examples from the global business environment. This collection of 2500 cases brings together cases selected from a variety of sources, including key university and association partnerships, to meet the needs of business faculty and students internationally. It is anticipated that programme team members will use this source, and others, to enhance the learning experience and as best practice in the MBA programme offering.

2. It was noted that the module "Reinventing Performance Management" in the MBA programme is replicated as "Contemporary Performance Management" module in the BA programme at DBS. While DBS asserted at the panel interviews that the courses are not actually taught in an identical manner, it was unclear how any distinction could be achieved in practice when the defined content is the same, while the designated award standards are distinctively different. The "Reinventing Performance Management" module should be re-written, i.e., Module Aims, Learning Outcomes, Syllabus Contents, and supporting resources per the NFQ Level 9 Award Standard.

**DBS RESPONSE (2):**

DBS welcomes this condition and the Course Director / Module leader has reviewed and rewritten the "Reinventing Performance Management" module accordingly. Greater emphasis has been placed on the NFQ level-appropriateness of this module. This rewrite therefore includes new module aims, learning outcomes, indicative syllabus and resources. At all times, the NFQ Level 9 Generic and Business Award Standards have been considered and incorporated.

3. A substantial proportion of modules (ca. 60% or 11/18, including mandatory and electives) are weighted at 100% Continuous Assessment. For 100% CA weighting, it is recommended that:

- 3.1 DBS to provide rationale or basis for the assignment the weighting;

**DBS RESPONSE (3.1):**

The assessment strategy has been reviewed by the programme team to ensure it has been fully researched and appropriately designed. Where possible, and appropriate, DBS endeavours to provide continuous assessments for learners in the assessment of, and for, learning. The departmental Teaching and Learning Strategy document is designed to supplement the information provided in the Programme Document sections 5.6 Programme teaching and learning (including formative assessment) strategy and 5.10 Programme summative assessment strategy. The rationale and details of the programme teaching, learning and assessment strategy are attached with this response.

3.2 The individual module descriptors to include enough detail on the assessment instruments/briefs employed in such modules, to enable review and/or determination of the rigour of related assessment;

**DBS RESPONSE (3.2):**

All module descriptors have been reviewed and amended to provide more detail on the assessment instruments employed, while also being cognisant of any future restrictions this may have on innovative practices in this domain. An assessment schedule is mapped out for each module and for each of the programme's components in order to provide an overview of assessments and the submission deadlines which recognises an academic practice that includes a balance of commitments for both academic staff and learners. The assessment schedule and strategy will be provided by the Course Director to all lecturers in advance of commencement of the academic year, and the schedule reviewed accordingly. It will also be incorporated in a revised version of the Learner Handbook which is currently being developed and which will be provided to all enrolled learners on commencement of the programme. This Handbook will provide greater detail to learners on assessments (details, briefs, schedules and reassessment mechanisms). This is currently in development and not just yet ready for review.

3.3 DBS to provide clear guidelines for External Examiner moderation of such modules. Adduced evidence indicates that, currently, the external examiners can only see the outcome of the assessment and do not contribute in any way in the peer-review and/or moderation of contents and process to instil best practice for the formative intents.

**DBS RESPONSE (3.3):**

DBS recognises this condition as an opportunity to improve the QA function in the College.

A meeting has taken place with the Registrar, Course Director and Exams Office (which is currently responsible for collating and sending out exam papers and sample exam scripts to External Examiners for review).

It has been agreed that the College will make a commitment to ensure that a substantive sample of CAs from the MBA programme, to comprise a sample of CAs from at least half of the modules in each semester, are collated by the faculty/programme team through the Course Director and submitted to the External Examiner. This will be facilitated either through a face-to-face introductory meeting with the External Examiner at the commencement of the academic year, or by providing the CAs securely through Google Drive.

This immediate undertaking for the MBA programme will then inform the practicalities of further formalising this practice for all programmes across the College. Due to the volumes of programmes and modules, this may require additional resourcing to allow this to happen in an efficient and timely manner, and further the Exams Office may not have easy and timely access to continuous assessments in advance in the same way that exam papers are submitted in advance. The Assessment and Regulations Manager is currently looking at the resourcing implications regarding this generally.

The College further notes that while best practice entails advance provision of CAs to External Examiners, feedback from annual reporting is acted upon in the following academic year. Additionally all CAs are moderated by an internal moderator assigned by the Course Director.

4. The DBS should adopt a systematic Annual Programme Review (APR) process that will ensure that any problems /issues identified in the programme are dealt with conclusively by the end of each academic year, and that such do not spill into the next academic year (see extended comment under Criterion 12).

**DBS RESPONSE (4):**

DBS has been engaged in a process of drafting annual programme/departmental review templates for use by Course Directors and faculty. Reports will be collated from qualitative and quantitative data from Learner feedback, faculty feedback, admission, progression, retention and attrition data and other available information. The reports will be submitted to the Head of Academic Programmes and presented at Academic Board. A sample report template is provided.

As any problems or issues are identified in the programme Course Directors and Programme Teams deal with these as they arise. A number of mechanisms formal and informal exist in DBS to support this. Please see the documents provided which detail the Terms of Reference for the Board of Studies, Programme Team Meetings and Programme Boards (proposed in a revised QAH to be signed off by Academic Board in July 2019).

## Summary of recommendations to the provider

1. Whereas the application includes DBS's own comprehensive Quality Assurance Handbook (2016/17 Edition), it is the considered view of the panel that an objective QA framework must be communicated to all DBS staff who are required to use or implement different aspect of quality assurance and quality enhancement; 356 pages is a tome does not easily lend itself to such a requirement. Therefore, it is recommended that DBS consider electronic publication of the independent sections to provide for more focused access. While the handbook is still useful in the consolidated form, a smaller, pithy and more targeted user-friendly Course Design & Delivery Handbook would be a more pragmatic approach to ensuring that the manual is communicative.

### **DBS RESPONSE (1):**

Through the Pilot Re-Engagement (voluntary) and full Re-Engagement process with QQI, DBS has substantially reviewed and updated its Quality Assurance Handbook. This has included restructuring the Handbook into sections for increased ease of use and access as follows:

Part A: Governance and Policy

Part B: The Learner Journey

Part C: Programme Quality

A key focus of the restructuring was to better sign-post the main areas of the QAH to stakeholders.

The panel site visit for Re-Engagement took place on Friday 5 July 2019 and only 3 updates (not relating to structure or presentation) were required upon fulfilment of which the updated QAH and associated policies and procedures should be approved by QQI.

In developing the updated QAH and the application to QQI for Re-Engagement, stakeholders across the College, including over 50 Faculty members, were involved in consultation focus groups and familiarisations sessions.

In addition to the sectioning of the QAH DBS is working on developing a dynamic interactive menu for the QAH to also facilitate access.

2. The panel recognises that, as a private college, DBS may have challenges to enhancing scholarship of its staff not shared by HE institutions in the public sector. However, to ensure currency of competence and scholarship, it is recommended that DBS encourage its staff to participate in relevant networks and communities of practice in order to maintain appropriate qualifications and capability to implement the programme as planned (Refer Criterion 6). Scholarship work and CPD are the hallmarks of any designated areas of staff specialisation; it was notable and discussed with the programme team that some of the staff CVs submitted were thin on detail.

**DBS RESPONSE (2):**

DBS strives to encourage its staff to participate in relevant works and communities of practice into the future.

The newly appointed Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning, is working closely with the Head of Faculty and School Operations and the Head of Academic Programmes to review current faculty workload, teaching and learning qualifications and scholarship profile.

A major part of this review looks at how DBS supports continuing professional development (CPD) for learning, teaching and assessment and also scholarship. There are a number of isolated CPD initiatives within DBS that range from individual faculty availing of external training, informal discipline-based and programme-based knowledge sharing through to college-wide, one-off workshops on, for example, peer-to-peer classroom observation and assessment approaches.

Key to an informed Staff Continuing Professional Development and support for Research and Scholarship is achieving the balance between accredited and informal, online and face-to-face and personal and group learning. Therefore, the conversations and planning for academic CPD is being informed by the National Forum's Professional Development Framework, which through its focus on Domains and Typology of Professional Development Activities offers direction on achieving that balance. In the initial stages of the review, it has become clear that the focus on academic CPD is on assessment and feedback and enhancing the in-class learning experience. What has also become clear is the need to coordinate academic CPD at programme and institutional level to ensure that the two complement and support each other. As part of its review of faculty workload, DBS is also clarifying its commitment to both formal and informal academic CPD.

3. Section 2.4, p.11, of the MBA programme document recognises that, ‘Research, Innovation and Enterprise (RIE) is integral to teaching and learning and essential to the growth of knowledge and its transference. It underpins the educational process, benefitting learners and academic staff by enhancing and enriching the teaching and learning experience’. The panel was unable to find any evidence of the research strategy documents (vide, ‘The current research strategy is available as a separate document’) and/or a systematic support implementation, if they exist.

**DBS RESPONSE (3):**

The newly appointed (October 2018) Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning is responsible for monitoring, driving and implementing the Research Strategy, as well as Chairing the Research Committee.

The Research Strategy and Terms of Reference for the Research Committee are provided with this response, but it should be noted that the Terms of Reference for the Research Committee are currently under review by the Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning and the Registrar. Any updates to the current strategy will seek to emphasise the commitment to supporting staff in undertaking research and CPD (as mentioned above).

DBS’s current Research Strategy was approved through the Academic Board at its June 2018 meeting. In addition, ten research scholarships are offered annually; these are open to both full- and part-time lecturing staff. To be eligible, part-time lecturing staff are required to have a minimum commitment of 150 teaching hours. The

4. Concerns have previously been raised by external examiners (2013/14; 2017/18) requiring internal examiners to desist from repeating examination questions from the first sitting in the repeat examination. Whereas the evidenced scale was not rampant as to attract sanction in this review, it is recommended that DBS implement a more rigorous internal review process for all draft examination papers to ensure that such do not repeat or escalate.

**DBS RESPONSE (4):**

Since June 2018, when a new Assessment and Regulations Manager was appointed, there have been changes to systems within the Exams Office whereby faculty submitting exam papers are required to confirm that papers have been moderated, otherwise papers are not accepted by the Exams Office and are returned to the author. In addition, new systems for provision of exam papers to External Examiners electronically have been put in place. This allows for more timely and efficient checks of papers to mitigate against such issues and allow appropriate action to be taken if an issue is identified, well ahead of the time of the exams. The Exams Office has presented such process improvements to the Academic Board, and the Board has made note officially of significant improvements in this administration thus feeding into and supporting academic best practice. While the Exams Office is committed to continuous improvement, there is also a recognised onus of responsibility on faculty in setting papers, and this will continue to be monitored. From September 2019 External Examiners will be invited to an introductory meeting at the commencement of the academic year to meet the programme teams and support staff, and to follow up on any issues from previous years. It is also envisaged that the appointment of a new Course Director for Business and Law will facilitate the monitoring of this within the department.

5. Module specific recommendations include:

- 5.1 The panel came across evidence of unsatisfactory feedback to learners specifically touching on both the speed of return and quality of such feedback. It is important that such issues are comprehensively addressed in periodic course reviews.

**DBS RESPONSE (5.1):**

DBS endeavours at all times to give timely feedback in a learner centred way across all its programmes. We do however recognise that at times this may not happen due to exigencies such as learner absence or faculty delay.

As part of the review of Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy, DBS is examining the timing and nature of feedback. What has come clearly through from our learner feedback mechanisms is that learners do seek timely, comprehensive and consistent feedback. With that in mind, the strategy review is looking at updating the DBS standardised rubrics based on a combination of discipline, assessment type and level, whereby learners can expect there to be a consistent rubric for, for example, a group presentation at Level 7 in ICT or research proposals at Level 9 in psychology. This work builds on DBS's existing *Guide to Generic Grading Descriptors Level 6-9* from 2014 and takes into consideration the issues raised by QQI's recent Green Paper on Assessment. DBS faculty commit to providing feedback within two weeks of submission, and we are increasing efforts to ensure that that metric is met for all learners. Tools on the VLE are being utilised to streamline and automate notifications for timely feedback that meets our commitment to students. Bringing this work together to ensure timely, comprehensive and consistent feedback is a major objective for DBS's Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategic planning.

- 5.2 "Marketing Management" as a module title seems basic for a Level 9 programme, and it also does not reflect contents therein.

**DBS RESPONSE (5.2):**

The team and module leader accept this recommendation and has re-titled the module *Strategic Marketing Analysis* and updated the content accordingly in the module documentation.

6. The noted potential vulnerability in continuity and consistency in the programmes due to DBS's high dependency on part-time academic staff (see comment Criterion 6) is a risk, therefore, requires comprehensive mitigation arrangements.

**DBS RESPONSE (6):**

It is proposed that the Master of Business Administration is delivered by the existing team of lecturers with additional staff members being appointed as required. An indicative allocation of programme lecturers to the constituent modules has been outlined in Section 7 of the Programme Document with qualification requirements for teaching staff also detailed in the individual module descriptors.

New hires from the subject area will be added to the complement of staff prior to commencement of the programme along with any additional current DBS business faculty as required. Procedures for recruitment of staff are detailed in the Quality Assurance Handbook (Appendix 4). Of particular importance is the role of the Academic Appointments Sub-Committee of the Academic Board, which takes a view of and approves all new academic staff, and periodically reviews all appointments.

Applicants for new posts will be interviewed and appointments subject to relevant DBS procedures and approved by the Academic Appointments Subcommittee. The AASC reviews qualifications and professional experience of proposed academic staff appointments, including lecturers and tutors, and approve as appropriate where the candidate is found to be suitable. Where appropriate, the AASC may set conditions on an approval, such as the appointment of a Teaching Mentor, or an Assessment Mentor, or a specific limitation to a particular role or subject area, depending on the candidate's academic and professional experience, to ensure the quality of the teaching is maintained.

A recruitment drive will continue with a view to hiring suitable individuals as required to teach on the Master of Business Administration and supervise dissertations on this programme.

Staff will be subject to current DBS staff appraisal procedures and will be expected to engage in appropriate continuous professional development as required.

Lastly, as an overarching comment on the panel's experience with the review process as a whole: A Criterion-Specific Summary Report, incorporating pointers to *How*, *Who* and *Where*, an institutions under review deems to satisfy all the prescribed QQI Criteria 1 through 12 should accompany the documents provided to the QQI Review Panels. In this case, the core programme handbook as presented did not interface well with the criteria for review of programme. As such (and to effectively review and engage with the programme team), the review team members had to root through a lot of information, much of which was secondary to the criteria and/or repetitious. This was more challenging and obstructive to the review process, as the panel had to consider both the BA and MBA programmes of DBS in a day's sitting. This is not to say that the core programme handbook should never have been provided, but a concise criteria-oriented synopsis, and appropriately formulated to guide to the relevant parts of the core programme document(s) should have considerably enhances the panel's efficacy towards completion of review tasks.

**DBS RESPONSE:**

DBS would like to note that the documents provided to the panel were as follows:

1. Programme Review Report
2. Programme Document
3. Modules Document
4. Supporting documents (such as exam papers, External Examiner reports, etc.)

In the case of items 1-3 the documents provided in the format of the current QQI templates.

DBS notes that it would have been helpful to the panel to clearly signpost the Terms of Reference for Programme Review, which lay out the proposed modifications and changes to the programmes, and provide a helpful summary for the panel.

A mapping as per the 12 Criteria is provided in Section 12 of the main programme documents, as per the QQI HET Programme Validation Manual 2018 (see link).

The volume of documentation is recognised and DBS is very thankful to the panel for its undertaking and thorough engagement with the programmes under review. DBS has been part of a Working Group with QQI and other private providers to further rationalise and streamline documentation required for Programme Review and Re-Validation, and it is hoped that a revised template will be approved in due course through QQI and which can be utilised going forward.

## Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

No interests have been declared.

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

Panel chairperson: Dr Philip Owende

Date: September 3, 2019



Signed:

## Addendum

Here address any amendments to the application forwarded to the panel by QQI to address any proposed special conditions of validation.

## 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.



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

**Revalidation of the Master of Business Administration with the embedded exit award  
Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration provided by Dublin Business School - 2019**

In its original independent evaluation report dated 30th August 2019, the independent panel specified 4 conditions and 6 recommendations regarding the above programmes. Dublin Business School formally responded to the report on 1st September 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 Business Administration programme with the embedded exit award Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration 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

## Part 3: Proposed programme schedules

### 3.1 Course Schedule for Master of Business Administration (Full-time Mode)

<b>Name of Provider:</b>		Dublin Business School													
<b>Programme Title</b>		Master of Business Administration													
<b>Award Title</b>		Master of Business Administration													
<b>Stage Exit Award Title<sup>3</sup></b>		Postgraduate Diploma in Business													
<b>Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):</b>		Full-time													
<b>Teaching and learning modalities</b>		As per module descriptors													
<b>Award Class<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Award NFQ level</b>	<b>Award EQF Level</b>	<b>Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):</b>	<b>Stage NFQ Level<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>Stage EQF Level<sup>2</sup></b>			<b>Stage Credit (ECTS)</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>		<b>ISCED Subject code</b>			
Major	9	7	Award	9		7			90	September 2019		0413			
<b>Module Title</b> (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		<b>Semester no where applicable</b> <b>(Semester 1 or Semester 2)</b>	<b>Module</b>		<b>Credit Number<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Total Student Effort Module (hours)</b>					<b>Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)</b>				

			where specified	HET Credits		Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	learning effort			demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Global Issues for Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		50			50
Marketing Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Managerial Financial Analysis	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Research Methods 1	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Marketing Innovations	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Strategies for Human Resource Management	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Strategic Information Systems	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Project Management Frameworks	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Corporate Financial Management	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		40			60

Cloud Technologies for Business	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Applied Strategic Management	2	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Dynamic Leadership Development	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Research Methods 2	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Integrated Marketing Communications	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Reinventing Performance Management	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Innovation and Disruptive Technologies	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			
Project Management Practices	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			
Global Financial Markets	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50

Cloud Application Management	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Dissertation	3	M	9	30 ECTS	750	6		744		100			-
<b>Special Regulations</b> (Up to 280 characters)	* Students will not progress to Dissertation unless all taught modules have been passed i.e. 60 ECTS * *Learners take 30 ECTS per semester												

### 3.2 Course Schedule for Master of Business Administration (Part-time Mode)

<b>Name of Provider:</b>		Dublin Business School												
<b>Programme Title</b>		Master of Business Administration												
<b>Award Title</b>		Master of Business Administration												
<b>Stage Exit Award Title<sup>3</sup></b>		Postgraduate Diploma in Business												
<b>Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):</b>		Part-time												
<b>Teaching and learning modalities</b>		As per module descriptors												
<b>Award Class<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Award NFQ level</b>	<b>Award EQF Level</b>	<b>Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):</b>	<b>Stage NFQ Level<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Stage EQF Level<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Stage Credit (ECTS)</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>	<b>ISCED Subject code</b>						
Major	9	7	Award	9	7	90	September 2019	0413						
<b>Module Title</b> (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		<b>Semester no where applicable</b>  (Semester 1 or	<b>Module</b>		<b>Credit Number<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Total Student Effort Module (hours)</b>					<b>Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)</b>			
			<b>Status</b>	<b>NFQ Level<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Credit Units</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Class (or</b>			<b>Work-based</b>	<b>C.A. %</b>	<b>Supervised Project %</b>	<b>Proctored practical</b>	<b>Proctored written exam %</b>

	Semester 2)		where specified	HET Credits		equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e- learning	Hours of Independent Learning	learning effort			demonstration %	
Global Issues for Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		50			50
Marketing Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Managerial Financial Analysis	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Research Methods 1	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Dynamic Leadership Development	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Integrated Marketing Communications	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Strategies for Human Resource Management	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Strategic Information Systems	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50

Project Management Frameworks	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Corporate Financial Management	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		40			60
Cloud Technologies for Business	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Applied Strategic Management	3	M	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Research Methods 2	4	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Marketing Innovations	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Reinventing Performance Management	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Innovation and Disruptive Technologies	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			
Project Management Practices	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			
Global Financial Markets	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50

Cloud Application Management	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Dissertation	5	M	9	30 ECTS	750	6		744		100			-
<b>Special Regulations</b> (Up to 280 characters)	* Students will not progress to Dissertation unless all taught modules have been passed i.e. 60 ECTS * *Learners take 30 ECTS per semester												

### 3.3 Course Schedule for Postgraduate Diploma of Business Administration (Full-time Mode)

<b>Name of Provider:</b>		Dublin Business School												
<b>Programme Title</b>		Postgraduate Diploma in Business												
<b>Award Title</b>		Postgraduate Diploma in Business												
<b>Stage Exit Award Title<sup>3</sup></b>		N/A												
<b>Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):</b>		Full-time												
<b>Teaching and learning modalities</b>		As per module descriptors												
<b>Award Class<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Award NFQ level</b>	<b>Award EQF Level</b>	<b>Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):</b>	<b>Stage NFQ Level<sup>2</sup></b>		<b>Stage EQF Level<sup>2</sup></b>			<b>Stage Credit (ECTS)</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>	<b>ISCED Subject code</b>			
Major	9	7	Award	9		7			90	September 2019	0413			
<b>Module Title</b> (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		<b>Semester no where applicable</b>  (Semester 1 or Semester 2)	<b>Module</b>		<b>Credit Number<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Total Student Effort Module (hours)</b>					<b>Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)</b>			
			<b>Status</b>	<b>NFQ Level<sup>1</sup> where specified</b>	<b>Credit Units</b> HET Credits	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Class (or equiv) Contact Hours</b>	<b>Directed e-learning</b>	<b>Hours of Independent Learning</b>	<b>Work-based learning effort</b>	<b>C.A. %</b>	<b>Supervised Project %</b>	<b>Proctored practical demonstration %</b>	<b>Proctored written exam %</b>

Global Issues for Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		50			50
Marketing Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Managerial Financial Analysis	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Research Methods 1	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100			-
Marketing Innovations	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Strategies for Human Resource Management	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Strategic Information Systems	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50
Project Management Frameworks	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100			-
Corporate Financial Management	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		40			60
Cloud Technologies for Business	1	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50			50

Applied Strategic Management	2	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100				-
Dynamic Leadership Development	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100				-
Research Methods 2	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	50	51		100				-
Integrated Marketing Communications	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100				-
Reinventing Performance Management	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50				50
Innovation and Disruptive Technologies	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100				
Project Management Practices	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100				
Global Financial Markets	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		50				50
Cloud Application Management	2	E	9	10 ECTS	250	48	50	152		100				-

**Special  
Regulations (Up to  
280 characters)**

\* \*Learners take 30 ECTS per semester

### 3.4 Course Schedule for Postgraduate Diploma of Business Administration (Part-time Mode)

<b>Name of Provider:</b>	Dublin Business School												
<b>Programme Title</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Business												
<b>Award Title</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Business												
<b>Stage Exit Award Title<sup>3</sup></b>	N/A												
<b>Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):</b>	Part-time												
<b>Teaching and learning modalities</b>	As per module descriptors												
<b>Award Class<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Award NFQ level</b>	<b>Award EQF Level</b>	<b>Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):</b>	<b>Stage NFQ Level<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Stage EQF Level<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Stage Credit (ECTS)</b>	<b>Date Effective</b>	<b>ISCED Subject code</b>					
Major	9	7	Award	9	7	90	September 2019	0413					
<b>Module Title</b> (Up to 70 characters including spaces)	<b>Semester no where applicable</b>  (Semester 1 or	<b>Module</b>	<b>Credit Number<sup>5</sup></b>		<b>Total Student Effort Module (hours)</b>					<b>Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)</b>			
			<b>Status</b>	<b>NFQ Level<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Credit Units</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Class (or</b>				<b>C.A. %</b>	<b>Supervised Project %</b>	

	Semester 2)		where specified	HET Credits		equiv) Contact- Hours	Directed e- learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort			Proctored practical demonstration %	
Global Issues for Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		50			50
Marketing Management	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Managerial Financial Analysis	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Research Methods 1	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Dynamic Leadership Development	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57	100				-
Integrated Marketing Communications	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Strategies for Human Resource Management	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Strategic Information Systems	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50

Project Management Frameworks	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Corporate Financial Management	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		40			60
Cloud Technologies for Business	3	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Applied Strategic Management	3	M	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Research Methods 2	4	M	9	5 ECTS	125	18	50	57		100			-
Marketing Innovations	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
Reinventing Performance Management	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Innovation and Disruptive Technologies	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			
Project Management Practices	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			

Global Financial Markets	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		50			50
Cloud Application Management	4	E	9	10 ECTS	250	36	50	164		100			-
<b>Special Regulations</b> (Up to 280 characters)	* *Learners take 30 ECTS per semester												