

Independent Panel Report on a Provider's Programme Review

Provider	Dublin Business School
Programme(s) Reviewed	Bachelor of Business, Level 7 Embedded Programme, Higher Certificate in Business, Level 6.

Independent Panel Members

Name	Role	Affiliation
Marian Duggan	Chair of Panel	Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar, Limerick Institute of Technology
Professor Barry Quinn	Subject Matter Expert	Professor of Retail Marketing, Business School, University of Ulster, Former Head of the Graduate School of Business.
Dr Timothy McNicols	Subject Matter Expert	Programme Chair for BSc (Hons) in Creative Computing, IADT Lecturer in E-Commerce (Dept of Technology & Psychology), IADT
Dr Deirdre Nuttall	Secretary to Panel	Professional Writer
Matthew O'Toole	Learner Representative	BA (Hons) Business, National College of Ireland
Barbara Mangan	Industry Representative	Former Associate Human Resources Director, IQVIA RDS Limited

All members of the independent panel declared their independence of Dublin Business School and that they have no conflict of interest

1 Introduction

The Panel met with representatives, lecturers, and learners of the Bachelor of Business programme at Dublin Business School on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 2nd and 3rd of July, for the purpose of assessing the suitability of the programme offered, proposed changes to the various modules, and the integrity and quality of the course, with a view to determining whether or not the programme should be revalidated for the following five years.

Dublin Business School engaged with the panel both before and during the evaluation in a thorough, professional, and courteous manner. All relevant documentation was provided in a timely manner, and all relevant members of staff were present at a Zoom meeting arranged over a two-day period, to accommodate the need for social distancing during the Covid-10 pandemic.

Full information about the meeting, the process, and the outcome follows:

2 Evaluation Process

2.1 Documents Supplied to the Panel

	Document Type	Document Name
1.	Draft agenda, supplied as Word document	Draft Agenda Programme Review Bachelor of Business
2.	PDF	Programme Review Report Bachelor of Business
3.	PDF	Programme Document Bachelor of Business
4.	PDF	Module and Assessment Document Bachelor of Business
5.	Word document	DBS Programme Review Role of Panel Members

2.2 Provider's Representatives Met

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Andrew Conlan-Trant	Executive Dean
2.	Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
3.	Rita Day	Course Director
4.	Lori Johnston	Registrar
5.	Seamus Coogan	Faculty Manager (on behalf of Emma Balfe, Acting Head of Faculty and School)
6.	Shane Mooney	Head of Learner Experience
7.	Darragh Breathnach	Head of Academic Operations

2.3 Description of evaluation process

The panel examined the documentation provided by Dublin Business School relevant to the review of the Bachelor of Business (Level 7) programme and its embedded award, Higher Certificate in Business. The panel found documentation supplied to be thorough and detailed, in that detail was provided of the process undertaken in conducting a review of programmes and resulting proposed changes. In addition, the documentation allowed the panel to identify areas for discussion, including elements for potential improvement, aspects that lacked clarity, and possible additional changes. All were discussed in a frank, open, and positive manner at the meeting of the panel with the relevant administrative and academic staff.

3 Panel Findings on Provider Programme Review Report

The following is the panel's commentary and recommendations on the provider's programme review report. It follows the section structure of the report in headings and in sequence. References to specific parts of the provider report will use the relevant report reference e.g. 2.2.4 Programme Management.

3.1 Section 1 - Context and Terms of Reference for the Programme Review

Commentary:

The objectives and approach to Programme Review were clearly outlined, with need to conform with QQI policies published since the last validation of the programme specifically stated, as including QQI Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (QQI, 2016), Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (QQI, 2016) and in accordance with the QQI Programme Review Manual 2018.

Detail of proposed programme changes and the rationale for same was provided.

The panel was favourably impressed by the level of detail and the professionalism of the documentation provided to them prior to the meeting.

Recommendations: None

3.2 Section 2 - Provider Information and Programme Context

Commentary:

A detailed commentary was provided by DBS of its Mission & Strategy. The panel noted that DBS's 2019 Strategy for Learning Assessment and Teaching Enhancement (SLATE) is a three-year plan driving DBS:

1. To be known as a learning-centred higher education institution (HEI)
2. To greater integrate educators, learners, and industry experts in the learning experience
3. To increase the flexibility of the learning environment

DBS's Research, Innovation and Enterprise (REI) strategy is currently under review by the Research Sub-Committee of the Academic Board. The panel noted that work on revising the research strategy is ongoing, with plans to publish the new DBS Research Strategy by September 2020.

A brief description was provided of the full resources available to learners on this programme including library, IT resources, Student Experience Department and Learner Support Services. The panel commends DBS for its clear sense of a duty of care to learners enrolled with the School.

The Bachelor of Business Level 7 programme, as proposed (incorporating the level 6 exit award, Higher Certificate in Business) will continue to enhance the DBS portfolio of programmes. DBS currently delivers separate Level 7 offerings in accounting, information technology, marketing, and general business. It is proposed to streamline offering such that only one Level 7 programme in Business delivered but allows students to specialise in chosen discipline in accounting, information technology, marketing, or general business through elective modules choices in final year. Therefore, the consolidated Bachelor of Business (180 ECTS) has been designed to provide the

practical knowledge and skills in a wide range of business areas for learners who wish to establish business careers in a global business context after their completion of the degree or further study with the opportunity for specialism in accounting, information technology, marketing and general business in their final year.

The programme aims to provide a grounding in fundamental business concepts, ideas, practices, and methodologies and to feature a rich learning environment that involves learners in the comprehensive analysis of business organisations, functions, processes, and management techniques.

Based on successful completion of the Bachelor of Business Level 7 programme, learners may progress to the final year of a Level 8 programme offered by DBS, dependent on elective module choices made in final stage of Level 7 programme i.e. into the final year of the BA (Hons) in Business, BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance, or BA (Hons) in Marketing.

Recommendations: None

3.3 Section 3 - Baseline qualitative and quantitative information

Programme Data Overview

This section will include the panel's views on any or all of the following topics covered in the provider's review report: Applications, Enrolment, Attrition Transfer and Progression, Award Classification and Graduate Destinations

Commentary:

The profile of learners on this programme tend to be school leavers who have completed their Leaving Certificate. Most learners (68%) are under 23 on starting the programme, and 29% of learners were aged between 23 and 30 years of age at commencement of the programme. 47% of learners overall are Irish, with 17% from other European backgrounds, particularly France.

In terms of gender, majority of enrolled learners were male (72%) over the period from 2014/15 to 2019/20. DBS explained the gender balance as reflecting the fact that a significant element of their intake are domestic learners consisting of secondary school leavers who may have done less well than their natural ability indicated because of issues they had with their learning experience at second level. In Ireland, these issues disproportionately affect male learners. DBS assured the panel that majority of these learners, however, are well able for the course and find it easier to apply themselves, with the appropriate supports, to third level education. Nonetheless, DBS is looking at ways in which it can ensure that the course is attractive to both female and male applicants.

The total number of learners enrolled on the programme from 2014/15 to 2019/20 is 172. The number of enrolled learners has decreased over time from 32 learners in 2014/15 to 28 learners in 2019/20. Most learners are not expected to present for interview, but in exceptional cases—such as mature learners with fewer academic qualifications but considerable industry experience—interviews are considered necessary.

In discussion with the panel, DBS outlined that they were very aware of the challenges to enrolment presented by the Covid-19 pandemic and expected to see a dramatic reduction in learner numbers, because of fewer international learners, in 2020. However, DBS anticipate that numbers will have returned to normal by 2021. In the meantime, they have been successfully providing education online, aided by the fact that they already had a well-developed system of providing lectures and

learning materials online. This has helped to mitigate attrition and issues with enrolment. Currently, they are anticipating approximately half online and half in-person education in the coming academic year, and they are taking measures to ensure learner safety that will reassure learners wishing to enrol on their programmes.

The panel queried whether all electives proposed to be offered in final year of the level 7 programme can run if the numbers of enrolment remain at low levels. DBS explained that the electives offered are common with other programmes delivered by DBS; therefore, numbers will be sufficient to run all electives, and learners will have a full choice of options.

The period 2014/15 to 2018/19 shows a global pass rate of 80.56%, a failure rate of 9.72%, and that 9.72% of learners were non-active. Over the period under discussion, on average two learners have withdrawn per year, generally stating as the reason that the programme did not suit their goals. For the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 there were 6 learners repeating the academic year, 50% of whom passed.

With respect to marking, there is considerable variation, with average marks across modules ranging from 45% to 75%. The percentage of Distinctions (17%), Merit 1s (35%), Merit 2s (31%) and Pass awards (17%) is consistent with both the DBS average and Private Providers average.

While a large cohort of graduates from the Level 7 programme progress to studying Business at level 8 (many at DBS and others at diverse colleges), DBS feels that it is important to retain the exit level 6 Higher Certificate in Business, as consistently a proportion of learners prefer to exit at this level. Of those who progress to further education from the Level 7 programme, 69% continue at DBS in a range of disciplines, including accounting and finance. Many learners leaving with the level 7 qualification often end up working in a field relating to accounting.

A small number of scholarships (academic and sports) are offered to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, who studied at local secondary schools.

For international learners, an internationally recognised standard qualification in English (for example IELTS or Cambridge Certificate) is required in order to enrol on the programme.

Recommendations:

It is recommended by the panel that

- Provision of the programme on a part-time basis to be encouraged to increase the number of learners enrolled.
- Consider an application to the relevant accounting bodies for recognition of the programme so that learners can gain some exemptions from some professional accounting exams on graduation. The panel noted that DBS has achieved such recognition for other programmes it offers. Such recognition would also be a marketing tool for attracting learners to the course.

Programme Delivery and Teaching & Learning Strategies

This section will include the panel's views on any or all of the following topics covered in the provider's review report: Physical Facilities and Resources, Timetabling, Learner Workload, Attendance, Teacher Learner Ratios, Community of Practice Learning, Teaching and Learning Strategies, Learning Outcomes achieved, Assessment Strategies.

Commentary:

Because the panel meeting was conducted virtually, it was not possible for Panel Members to tour the DBS premises. However, a virtual tour was presented which provided a good overview of physical facilities. The full resources of DBS are available to learners on this programme including the library, IT resources, Learner Experience Department and Learner Support Services. Due to the ongoing situation with Covid-19, these resources are currently available online to learners.

DBS has invested heavily in interactive learning environments, which include group work, interactive whiteboards, reflection spaces and presentation walls where learners can exhibit their work.

The library has a substantial print and e-book collection (via Dawsonera and EBSCO) and also subscribes to the databases Business Source Complete, Proquest Central (including ABI Inform), Mintel and Euromonitor's Passport. The Library's e-journal content includes a wide range of suitable titles.

DBS is dedicated to learner support and the learner experience, with a support service to ensure that programmes and facilities are accessible to learners with a disability or a specific learning difficulty and to help them to achieve their educational goals. The panel interviewed one learner who spoke very highly of the college's support of her and her educational goals when she experienced a sudden, serious health problem that required surgery and necessitated her missing a great deal of teaching time.

Timetables are reviewed by Academic Operations on a yearly basis to ensure that the week is appropriately balanced in terms of workload.

DBS accepted that an average attendance rate of 47% was rather low, and that a higher rate would be preferable. They outlined that one of the reasons why learners might not attend class is that most learning resources are available online, which can lead to learners feeling that their physical presence in class is not always necessary. However, DBS has systems in place to encourage higher attendance, including tracking attendance, and tracking learners' interactions with online resources (E.g. Moodle), the library, and so on. Learners who are identified as having few interactions are contacted and offered the appropriate supports.

The Teacher to Learner ratio on the Bachelor of Business programme is approximately 1:30. DBS states that this is notable advantage of their institute as compared to many others in terms of smaller class sizes, and that it allows for meaningful and useful feedback and the development of a positive relationship between the learner and lecturer.

While modules on the programme are delivered through a mix of lectures, workshops, tutorials and practical sessions, teaching and learning focuses on the learner applying problem-solving skills and undertaking critical reflection and critique. Lecturers make extensive use of technologies, including Moodle, support teaching and learning (with targeted training for lecturers provided).

The panel requested on many occasions for more detail to be provided on individual module assessment strategies due to the lack of information provided in module descriptions, especially in relation to Marketing and related modules on the programme. The panel noted that some joint assessment existed on the programme, i.e. in Year 1, but that there was a lack of such formative collaborative in later stages.

The panel expressed some concern that the programme is lacking a work placement, and that an equivalent project should be provided to address learning outcomes that would normally come from a work placement, ideally a substantial project that would incorporate looking at an issue in a real

company, and for students to give feedback and recommendations. DBS asserts that majority of level 7 learners are already working part-time, and that logistically a work placement would be very challenging for them, while attention is paid to ensuring that their capstone project in the final year addresses many of the same issues. Those who progress to level 8 do have the option of a work-placement year, which adds an additional year to their studies. The college uses a wide range of guest lecturers from industry, who provided learners with real-life insights that complement the topics they study.

The panel asked for clarification on how group work is assessed. Many modules emphasise the use of group work as an assessment tool, and clearly this can be challenging. DBS stressed that they feel the learning achieved from group work as invaluable, and therefore they intend to retain group work as one of the modes of assessment. Strategies are in place to deal with the typical problems that can emerge with group work, such as one member of the group not doing their fair share of the work. Groups keep minutes of meetings, in which each member's responsibilities are agreed upon and recorded. There are procedures in place to allow mediation before problems escalate and, in extreme cases, for groups to be disbanded and assessment to be carried out individually. However, DBS notes that extreme interventions like this are very rare; in most cases problems are dealt with quickly and are resolved.

The panel requests that DBS review the amount of group work given to learners, particularly in the final year of the level 7 course. While it accepts that group work can be a very useful learning tool, it feels that there is an excessive emphasis on this form of assessment and that, in particular in the final year, having a substantial portion of the final grade depend on group assessment may be unfair to some learners, notwithstanding the efforts by DBS to ensure that all learners are assessed fairly.

Feedback to learners on assignment is delivered quickly—typically within ten days of their handing in the assignment.

Recommendations:

It is recommended by the panel:

- Formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level. Good practice noted by the panel, but lack of a policy document caused concern.
- Review volume of group assessment in the final year of programme i.e. Year 3. There appears to be significant amount of group work versus individual assessment.
- Continue to review the 'preparation for work' ethos of the programme and the need not to include work placement as a module.
- Consider opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme. The panel identified one such possible opportunity in Year 3 across the modules on Management, Business Ethics and Research Practice.
- For all modules, need to review details provided in module descriptions about assessment to ensure sufficient information is made available to learner to understand clearly how learning outcomes linked to syllabus material is being assessed. This recommendation is particularly relevant to the Marketing and related modules on the programme.

3.4 Section 4 - Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders

Evaluation by current learners and graduates of the programme

Commentary:

DBS conducts an annual learner survey and these have been particularly valuable to DBS in review of the Bachelor of Business (Level 7) Programme. For programme under review, the survey is conducted during Week 10 of the programme. The items covered teaching on the programme, assessment and feedback, organisation and management, resources, and satisfaction with the module.

In relation to the Bachelor of Business programme at a global level, learners expressed satisfaction with all areas measured within the survey. However, a review of qualitative comments associated with each of the survey items indicated dissatisfaction by some students across a small number of areas with the most common relating to timeliness and quality of feedback, Moodle content not being available, useful and up to date.

Learners were also asked to reflect on the programme via Class Representative Meetings (CRM). CRM's take place at least twice per academic year, once per semester. A review of the CRM's (2015-16 to the present) for this programme indicates general learner satisfaction but as with the learner survey a number of issues were raised by some learners. There were two issues raised however, which are relevant for this programmatic review:

- There is an overlap in content between the 'employability' modules. In addition, employability modules are treated as 'secondary' and attendance at these modules as a result is poor.
- The IT module is overly theoretical. More practical content should be introduced in the module.

Other issues raised were generally local issues, mainly concerning facilities-related issues, issues concerning group work and distribution of assessment across the programme, issues concerning timetabling in general.

Upon completion of the Learns Surveys and CRM's, a summary report comprising an action plan is compiled by the Data Analytics and Reporting Manager which is circulated to all key stakeholders including the Student Council, Faculty, and Senior Leadership team for distribution to various functional Department Heads.

The panel met a number of learners and recent graduates of the Level 7 programme, many of whom had progressed to undertaking a Level 8 programme of study with DBS. In general, all spoke very highly of the Level 7 programme and the various staff members teaching on it. However, they also had the following feedback:

- The World of Work module was unpopular with many learners, who did not find it very relevant to their needs.
- The "jump" to Level 8 was deemed to be very demanding and learners identified academic writing and the need to provide references as most challenging. In addition, the learners considered the capstone project at level 7 to be most helpful in preparing for these requirements. However, students also noted that more training and support in terms of learning how to provide references would be useful, because although the topic was discussed in Year 1 of the level 7 programme, referencing was not expected by lecturers until final year.
- Learners are happy with how they are assessed, although they noted that group work can sometimes be problematic.

The panel brought to the attention of the learner that:

- Two x 5 ECTS modules, Personal Development and Learning to Learn, will be replaced by one x 10 ECTS module, Academic Skills, whereby the learning outcomes and assessment will be reviewed and consolidated to better support the development of personal skills and awareness of the professional work environment and development of the learner.
- Two x 5 ECTS modules, Communication for Success and The World of Work, will be replaced by one combined module of 10 ECTS in order to provide a continuation of the Academic Skills module from Stage 1, with the aim of developing both 'hard' and 'soft' skills for learners and supporting the transition to work or further study at the next level.
- Changes to the programme include fewer examinations and more ongoing assessment (including group work), to assess learners' progress in a more balanced way.

Recommendations:

Overall, DBS is to be commended for its duty of care to learners, who generally speak very highly of their learner experience.

It is recommended by the panel that:

- Formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level.
- Review volume of group assessment in the final year of programme i.e. Year 3. There appears to be significant amount of group work versus individual assessment.
- IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills.
- Consider title of the Management module in Year 3 to capture essence of module content and to reflect the capstone nature of the assessment for this module.

Evaluation of the programme by Staff

Commentary:

The panel met a full complement of managerial and lecturing staff directly involved with the BA in Business, Level 7, as follows:

- Dr Kerry McCall Magan, Head of Academic Programmes
- Dr Tony Murphy, Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning
- Rita Day, Course Director Business and Marketing
- Richard O'Callaghan, Course Director, Accounting and Finance
- Mary Nolan, Undergraduate Level Manager
- Seamus Coogan, Faculty Manager
- Sarah Sharkey, Learner Engagement Officer
- Lori Johnston, Registrar
- Darina Reilly, Lecturer Business Environment, Lecturer Organisational Behaviour
- Bernadette Higgins, Lecturer IT Skills for Business, Lecturer IT Applications for Business
- Niamh Hickey, Lecturer Fundamental of Marketing
- Lynn Monaghan, Lecturer Business Maths
- Paul Hollywood, Lecturer Academic Skills
- Organisational Behaviour Darina Reilly

- Paul Walsh, Lecturer Managerial Accounting
- Niamh Cullen, Lecturer Marketing Communications
- Dermot Gallagher, Lecturer Business Economics
- Damien Lennon , Lecturer Critical Thinking Skills
- Ann Masterson, Lecturer Management
- Bernie Lyon, Lecturer Business Information Systems
- David Duff, Lecturer Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Ray McDonnell, Lecturer Selling and Sales
- Georgina Skehan, Lecturer Financial Accounting
- Paul Walsh, Lecturer Cost Accounting
- John Noble, Lecturer Digital Marketing Planning and Management
- Chantal Ladias, Lecturer International Marketing Practice
- Claire Caulfield, Lecturer Data Design and Cloud Technologies
- Rory O'Donnell, Lecturer Programming for Business
- Dr Aneta Hamzaorlinsk, DBS note-taker

The panel explored each of the modules in Bachelor of Business programme, including those which will undergo no significant changes under the programme review, and those which are being changed, modified, added/eliminated ahead of revalidation.

The panel noted that all staff had engaged thoughtfully with the process of examining each module to ensure that it is fit for purpose, consulting with both learner and industry stakeholders, as well as considering external examiner feedback. In addition, modules are reviewed by lecturers at the end of each delivery, which is collated by Course Directors and discussed at programme team meetings and any refinements brought to the Board of Studies.

Recommendations:

The panel is satisfied that DBS has undergone a thorough process of examination of the programme and the modules contained therein.

It is recommended by the panel with reference to a number of the modules that:

- IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills.
- Consider title of the Management module in Year 3 to capture essence of module content and to reflect the capstone nature of the assessment for this module.
- Consider swapping module titles of Managerial Accounting in Year 2 with Cost Accounting in Year 3 to better reflect progression of knowledge in this subject area.
- Review and eliminate duplication of syllabus material covered in modules on Managerial Accounting in Year 2 and on Cost Accounting in Year 3 to provide more space for inclusion of other subject areas such as Taxation and Law.
- Consider inclusion of one or two learning outcomes and related relevant content across modules on project management, which would be particularly relevant to preparing learners for the Capstone Project in Year 3.

External Examiner Feedback

Commentary:

DBS outlined that their external examiners have consistently determined that module assessments are linked to and meet the relevant module learning outcomes and in turn the programme learning outcomes; that learning outcomes for the programme and modules are appropriate to the stage and level of the award; that learners who successfully completed this module have demonstrated that they have achieved the stated learning outcomes; that learner attainment is comparable with relevant awards standards, the National Framework of Qualifications and with other programmes in the same discipline in other higher education institutions in Ireland and beyond; that learners had exposure to a range of assessment methods (written and oral, individual and group, practical and academic) which were aligned with learning outcomes; that examination boards are conducted properly and in accordance with published procedures, with appropriate management of administrative delays resulting in improvements in subsequent examination boards; that sufficient information regarding the programme such as learning outcomes and module descriptors are provided and that there was a high standard of teaching and assessment practices, and internal and external moderation processes. External examiners also gave positive feedback on the issue of innovation in continuous assessment and clear and consistent marking. DBS also indicated that, where constructive criticisms was offered, it has taken firm and proactive measures to address the issues raised.

Dublin Business School provided the following details with regards to the external examiners with whom they have engaged since the last review of the programme under consideration:

Name	Subject	Year
Audrey Stenson	Information Technologies	2018-2021
Bernadette Naughton	Information Technologies	2014-2018
Jennifer Mullally	Management/ Financial Accounting/ Business Maths	2017-2020
Russell Higgs	Business Maths	2013-2017
Gillian Ormonde	Economics	2017-2020
Cathal Kearney	Accounting & Economics	2013-2017
Hilda Burton	Marketing & Event Management	2017-2020
Aileen Kennedy	Marketing	2013-2017
Rosemary Deneher	Project Management	2018-2019
Meadbh Ruane	Project Management, IT	2015-2018
Tomas Dwyer	Management	2015-2018

Bob Champion	Management	2013-2015
Susan Leahy	Law	2018-2021
Deirdre McHugh	Law	2014-2018
Noel McGrath	Law	2013-2017

In general, feedback from external examiners for the Bachelor of Business programme has been positive. Constructive feedback included the suggestions that assessment should be more varied, more choice might be offered via continuous assessment projects, that there should be more consistency across modules with regard to assessment, and that interdisciplinary assessments and cross modular assessments would be useful for learners.

Recommendations:

The panel is satisfied that Dublin Business School engages in a positive and proactive manner with external examiners but recommends that opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme be considered. The panel identified one such possible opportunity in Year 3 across the modules on Management, Business Ethics and Research Practice.

3.5 Section 5 - Programme Quality Assurance

Complaints, appeals and commendations

Commentary:

With respect to complaints, the following information, provided by Dublin Business School, is pertinent:

- All procedures and policies are available to each learner through the DBS website.
- Learners will be provided with information on lodging complaints through approved procedures on module web pages and in designated sections of the College website (e.g. Regis)
- Information on appeals and complaints procedures is available in the Quality Assurance Handbook which is available on the DBS website and in Moodle. Specific appeals and complaints forms are individually and prominently available on the website and also from DBS reception. Programme Coordinators are first line of contact for learners and advice on Appeals and Complaints procedures.

Between 2015/16 and February 2020, one formal request (Appeal) was received, and this was dismissed as lacking valid grounds.

Recommendations: None

Quality Assurance Systems and Processes

Commentary:

There are programme team meetings every four to six weeks that are chaired by the Course Director. Attendees include faculty, faculty manager, and programme coordinator as well as faculty relevant to the programme, full and part-time. Programme Team Meetings deal specifically with matters such as staffing update, progression, attrition, modules outcomes, admissions, learner service update, exams, programme review and academic quality of modules which comprise the Bachelor of Business programme.

Dublin Business School has a robust system in place for quality assurance. Their dedicated QA Officer takes a lead in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of QA procedures. The QA Officer is responsible for ensuring the administration and accurate and appropriate recording and storage of QA records and associated documentation, including a record of all approved Programme Schedules and dates in which they are due for their next review.

The QA Officer coordinates and oversees the process for learners with Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC), learner appeals or complaints and Academic Impropriety, ensuring correct processes are implemented in this regard in line with the DBS Quality Assurance protocols. The QA Officer also manages administration associated with New Programme Validations and Programme Reviews.

Dublin Business School has a Quality Assurance Handbook which undergoes regular review, and which includes comprehensive information on assessment and protocol for complaints.

Programme specific quality assurance is ensured through the structure of the programme, academic management and administrative structures which are primarily led by the Course Director who is responsible for programme quality and governance, driving programme development, ensuring programmes are academically robust in construct, providing oversight to programme teams to ensure quality is assured in programme teaching and assessment.

Learners can access the procedures and processes within the Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) such as applying for a Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) for a deferral for an exam by contacting the programme coordinator who provides the relevant form, as contained on the QAH, and which is approved or rejected by the Course Director. Should the learner wish to appeal a grade they again contact the programme coordinator who signposts them to the Regulations and Assessments Manager and/or the Quality Assurance Officer.

Recommendations: None

Additional Quality Assurance Systems and Processes required (e.g. online delivery / assessment)

Commentary:

Clearly, the current pandemic situation, which has essentially forced all learners to become online learners, and removed all face-to-face teaching on a temporary basis, has been a challenge to all education providers, and certainly Dublin Business School is no exception.

However, as Dublin Business School already has a systematic approach to online learning, it has managed to transition to remote teaching. With respect to assessments, the lecturers interviewed commented that whereas there were challenges in ensuring that learners were able to carry out projects, etc., remotely, there were also some unexpected benefits. For example, one assessment project involves creating a poster. Usually, these posters are displayed on the premises of Dublin Business School. Clearly, with the pandemic and the college having to close, this was not possible. Instead, learners were asked to provide a digital version of the poster. A benefit of this is that the learner can now retain an example of their work, which may be of use to them in the future. Thus, some of the lessons learned during the pandemic may be of use when the educational environment returns to normal.

Recommendations: None

3.6 Section 6 - Summary Analysis of the programme

Commentary:

The proposed programme is a Bachelor of Business (NFQ Level 7, 180 ECTS) programme developed in accordance with the QQI Award Standards for Business. There is one embedded award, the Higher Certificate in Business (120 ECTS) located at NFQ Level 6.

The programme covers a wide range of relevant and useful topics, and provides learners with a general grounding in business studies, whether they choose to progress to further study, or prefer to enter the world of work, either on completion of the level 7 degree, or on exiting with a Higher Certificate in Business, a level 6 qualification.

Recommendations:

In general, the panel is satisfied that the programme for the Bachelor of Business, level 7, offers a well-designed, appropriate range of obligatory and elective modules, that these modules are offered by suitably qualified staff, and that learners were well-prepared for employment or future study.

However, the panel stipulated that Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms.

3.7 Section 7 - Revision of the programme

In this section the panel will respond to any proposals made by the provider in respect of changes to the programme arising from the review. The revised programme's readiness for validation will be reported on in more detail in the Independent Evaluation Report for Validation.

Commentary:

DBS provided the following summary of proposed changes to the Bachelor of Business Programme:

- Programme learning outcomes are mapped to the Business Award Standards and not the Generic Award Standards, informed by the Business Standards, as previously. This will enable a more aligned translation of the domain into the field of business.

- Minimum Intended Programme Learning Outcomes have been redrafted and rationalised, ensuring constructive alignment with the Business Award Standards, graduate attributes, and the overall construct of the programme.
- It is proposed to re-name several modules in order to reflect updates more accurately in content and stakeholder feedback.
- It is proposed to update the programme to provide a clearer specialisation pathway and progression opportunities for learners. The existing programme is comprised of core mandatory modules at Stages 1 and 2, with four mandatory modules totalling 30 ECTS at Stage 3 and five x 10 ECTS electives, of which learners can choose any combination to make up the balance of credits. In updating the programme, it is proposed to restructure the final stage into five mandatory modules equalling 40 ECTS, and to introduce additional electives to allow for four clearly defined specialisations: (1) general business; (2) accounting and finance; (3) information technology; (4) marketing. It is then proposed that learners who wish to do so could progress into the final year (Level 8) of the BA (Hons) in Business, BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance, or BA (Hons) in Marketing.

Details of proposed changes to modules and content are as follows:

Stage 1:

- It is proposed to review and refresh five of the seven modules of the existing programme: Business Environment; IT Skills for Business; Fundamental of Accounting; Fundamental of Marketing; and Business Maths.
- Two x 5 ECTS modules, Personal Development and Learning to Learn, will be replaced by one x 10 ECTS module, Academic Skills, whereby the learning outcomes and assessment will be reviewed and consolidated to better support the development of personal skills and awareness of the professional work environment and development of the learner.

Stage 2:

- Three out of seven modules of the existing programme will be reviewed and refreshed to ensure they remain up-to-date: Organisational Behaviour; IT Applications for Business; and Economics. Consideration will be given to updating the titles of the modules slightly to better reflect the content (e.g. Economics will become Business Economics and the ICT title may be updated to make it more contemporary).
- It is proposed that two x 5 ECTS modules, Communication for Success and The World of Work, will be replaced by one combined module of 10 ECTS in order to provide a continuation of the Academic Skills module from Stage 1, with the aim of developing both 'hard' and 'soft' skills for learners and supporting the transition to work or further study at the next level both for learners who choose to exit with the Higher Certificate in Business Studies (Level 6) or those who continue with the final year (Level 7) of their studies.
- It is proposed that the two remaining modules, Effective Selling for Business and Cost Accounting, will be replaced by new modules in Marketing Communication Skills and Managerial Accounting. These proposed updates reflect feedback and the aim to strengthen the accounting and finance and marketing discipline areas of the programme to scaffold possible electives in the final stage of the programme.

Stage 3:

- It is proposed that the following modules in Stage three will be reviewed and refreshed: Management; Business Information Systems; Financial Management; and Innovation and Entrepreneurship. These will all now be mandatory modules.
- A new module, Business Ethics and Research Practice will provide business ethics education and research skills awareness for learners in their final year.
- The modules Employability Skills and Business Project will be retired, as it is proposed that these skills will be embedded across the programme.
- Electives will be consolidated to offer clear specialisation pathways to students as follows. Each of the following elective specialisations consists of two x 10 ECTS modules.
 - General Business: Learners who choose the general Business discipline will take Selling and Sales (new module) and one module from any of the other disciplines.
 - Accounting: Learners who choose the Accounting specialisation will take Financial Accounting and Cost Accounting. Both modules are reviewed version of existing Level 6 modules which will be rewritten at Level 7.
 - Marketing: Learners who choose the Marketing specialisation will take Digital Marketing and International Marketing Practice. Both modules are reviewed versions of existing modules.
 - Information Technology: Learners who choose the IT specialisation will take Database Design and Cloud Technologies and Programming for Business. Both modules are reviewed versions of existing modules.

The Panel noted that

- Minor changes were made to the IT Skills in Business module, with the introduction of more practical elements, and the reduction in number of assignments from three to six. Following feedback from external examiners, learners are now encouraged to decide for themselves what they would like to research for this module. The panel was pleased to see the practical elements of the module, as many young people entering employment still do not have very high level of skills in this area, despite having technology integrated into their daily lives.
- No major changes were made to Principles of Accounting, but DBS intends to make greater use of guest lecturers, which the panel agrees is a good approach.
- Fundamentals of Marketing remains essentially the same in terms of content, but assessment will now be 100% continuous assessment, rather than partly continuous assessment and partly exam-based. At the end of module, learners will have created an ebook that showcases their work, and that they can take with them as part of their portfolio.
- The Academic Skills module is intended to help learners with the transition from second level to third level education. The emphasis will be on self-directed learning and the gradual acquisition of the skills they need to present their work in a manner appropriate for third level learning. While this module is important for all learners, learners with learning disabilities such as dyslexia can also use this time, together with the available supports, to learn systems to manage the difficulties they are dealing with.
- The panel queried whether there was some overlap between Managerial Accounting in Stage 2 and Cost Accounting in Stage 3, and enquired if some of the syllabus topics proposed for Managerial Accounting were actually more suited for inclusion in the module on Cost Accounting in Stage 3 of the programme.
- Critical Thinking Skills in Stage 2 is a new module that will develops a learner's critical thinking skills, so the learner has an opportunity to develop those skills among their peers. Assessment includes a debate (40%) and a portfolio (60%), which they can take away from the programme.

- The Management Module in the Final Year of the programme is now the capstone module. As well as the traditional pillars, some new content has been added, including ethics, supply chain, management of change and entrepreneurship. The approach to assessment has been changed, and now it is 100% continuous assessment, including an assignment worth 80% (incorporating four discrete sections of 20% each) and a 20% individual poster presentation that brings in IT and web skills. The assignment involves doing research on a real work situation, incorporating an interview with a manager.
- Selling and Sales is a new elective module with a particular emphasis on business to business sales, and on the online marketplace.

Recommendations:

See next section for summary of all recommendations on programme revisions.

4 Overall Findings

In this section the panel will give its overall feedback on the conduct of the review and the findings therein. This feedback will inform future provider review processes and will also contribute to the refinement of any programmes being proposed for revalidation following this review process.

Commentary on review process:

Dublin Business School provided comprehensive documentation with respect to the programme review process and the programme under review.

Despite the challenges posed by having to meet remotely, the Panel's meeting with various members of management and the teaching staff at DBS was efficient, with all involved providing pertinent information in a thorough, positive, and constructive manner.

Recommendations on review process:

The panel is satisfied that DBS engaged with current learners, graduates, staff and industry representatives in conducting a review of this programme, Bachelor of Business (Level 7) and its embedded award, Higher Certificate in Business (Level 6), treated feedback received as an opportunity for growth and learning and in doing so, responded to that feedback accordingly.

Commentary on programme revisions:

In general, the panel is satisfied that the programme revisions for the Bachelor of Business (level 7) have been carefully considered and derived from feedback from various stakeholders.

Recommendations on programme revisions:

The panel stipulates that Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms.

It is recommended by the panel that

- Formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level. Good practice noted by the panel, but lack of a policy document caused concern.
- Review volume of group assessment in the final year of programme i.e. Year 3. There appears to be significant amount of group work versus individual assessment.
- Provision of the programme on a part-time basis to be encouraged to increase the number of learners enrolled.
- Continue to review the 'preparation for work' ethos of the programme and the need not to include work placement as a module.
- Consider an application to the relevant accounting bodies for recognition of the programme so that learners can gain some exemptions from some professional accounting exams on graduation. The panel noted that DBS has achieved such recognition for other programmes it offers. Such recognition would also be a marketing tool for attracting learners to the course.
- IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills.
- Consider title of the Management module in Year 3 to capture essence of module content and to reflect the capstone nature of the assessment for this module.

- Consider swapping module titles of Managerial Accounting in Year 2 with Cost Accounting in Year 3 to better reflect progression of knowledge in this subject area.
- Review and eliminate duplication of syllabus material covered in modules on Managerial Accounting in Year 2 and on Cost Accounting in Year 3 to provide more space for inclusion of other subject areas such as Taxation and Law.
- Consider inclusion of one or two learning outcomes and related relevant content across modules on project management, which would be particularly relevant to preparing learners for the Capstone Project in Year 3.
- Consider opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme. The panel identified one such possible opportunity in Year 3 across the modules on Management, Business Ethics and Research Practice.
- For all modules, need to review details provided in module descriptions about assessment to ensure sufficient information is made available to learner to understand clearly how learning outcomes linked to syllabus material is being assessed. This recommendation is particularly relevant to the Marketing and related modules on the programme.

Marian Duggan

Signed: _____
Panel Chairperson:

Date: 17/08/2020

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

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

Part 1

Provider name	Dublin Business School
Date of site visit	30 th June and 1 st July, 2020 – visit conducted on Zoom because of Covid-19 pandemic
Date of report	19 th August, 2020

Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Bachelor of Business
	Award	Level 7
	Credit	180 ECTS
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory subject to one condition

Embedded programme	Title	Higher Certificate in Business
	Award	Level 6
	Credit	120 ECTS
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory subject to one condition

Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Marian Duggan	Chair of Panel	Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar, Limerick Institute of Technology
Professor Barry Quinn	Subject Matter Expert	Professor of Retail Marketing, Business School, University of Ulster, Former Head of the Graduate School of Business.
Dr Timothy McNicols	Subject Matter Expert	Programme Chair for BSc (Hons) in Creative Computing, IADT Lecturer in E-Commerce (Dept of Technology & Psychology), IADT
Dr Deirdre Nuttall	Secretary to Panel	Professional Writer
Matthew O'Toole	Learner Representative	BA (Hons) Business, National College of Ireland
Barbara Mangan	Industry Representative	Former Associate Human Resources Director, IQVIA RDS Limited

Principal Programme – Bachelor of Business Level 7

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)	Minimum number of learners
Dublin Business School	250	7

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	September 2020
Maximum number of annual intakes	Two
Maximum total number of learners per intake	250 per annum
Programme duration (<i>months from start to completion</i>)	Full-time: 3 years (6 semesters of 12 weeks each) Part-time: 4 years (8 semesters of 12 weeks each)
Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment: The panel noted the significant difference between the minimum intake number of 7 and that of the maximum of 250. Assurances provided to the panel that the college would be able to accommodate the maximum number of learners as stated as this would be over two intakes within the one academic year not just one intake.	
Target learner groups	
This programme is aimed at learners wishing to undertake a Level 7 undergraduate programme in business studies on a full-time basis with a view to entering industry, progressing professionally, or to undertaking Level 8 studies in a related field. The programme is targeted at the following learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent school-leavers who wish to gain an undergraduate education in business studies. Learners who are seeking career advancement by obtaining a business education, including both those currently seeking employment and those working wishing to upskill in the area of business. To be eligible to apply for a place on this programme applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements of 5 O6/H7s, to include Maths, English or another language of full Level 5 FETAC Award (i.e. 8 modules) or equivalent. Applications without this will be considered on the basis of the recognition of prior learning (RPL). Such applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis. 	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full time and part time
The teaching and learning modalities	
Various, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom-lectures Case-based learning 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical skills sessions • Workshops • Tutorials • Individual and group work • Blended Learning 	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	
<p>The Bachelor of Business programme provides a solid understanding of general business theory and practice and engages learners in a comprehensive analysis of business organisations, functions, processes and management techniques. Learners will benefit from gaining knowledge and understanding the vital role that effective leadership and communication have in business along with acquiring insights into human resource management, economics, innovation and entrepreneurship. Additionally, learners will gain transversal skills such as communication, presentation and written ability along with numerical and digital literacy. These skills are not related to any business area but are useful across a variety of disciplines. In their final year, learners have the opportunity to continue on the general Bachelor of Business programme or specialise in accounting and finance, marketing or information technology. Through this programme, learners will acquire skills that will prepare them for the challenges posed by the dynamic nature of the modern business environment and enable them to make an effective contribution to the resolution of business problems.</p> <p>The Bachelor of Business is a three-year full-time or four-year part-time programme (180 ECTS) credits. In this ordinary bachelor's degree programme, learners study common subjects in first year and second year, followed by flexibility and specialism in third year subject choice. This allows learners in year three to orientate their studies towards preferred subjects or to choose disciplines in which they have demonstrated strength in years one and two.</p> <p>Graduates will be eligible for junior management or higher administrative roles within a business environment. Those who successfully complete the Bachelor of Business may be eligible for transfer to the final year of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business programme (Level 8 award) or related Level 8 undergraduate programmes. Graduates may also be in a position to take up further Level 8 conversion programmes such as a Higher Diploma.</p> <p>Each module aims to stimulate intellectual curiosity and inquiry through delivery in a theoretical and experiential context through case studies, traditional lectures, group work and individual assessment to ensure learners acquire a systematic understanding of the core concepts and practical application of business administration. Furthermore, the Bachelor of Business Specialism Pathway encourages self-awareness and academic independence by allowing the learner to identify and build on their own individual attributes and competencies.</p>	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	
Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 8 Honours undergraduate degree or a Level 8 Higher Diploma. Lecturing staff may also have a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or master's qualifications in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Human Resource Management • Law • Accounting and/or Finance • Management 	WTE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Digital Marketing • Economics • ICT <p>Individuals with Level 7 bachelor's degrees in the above disciplines, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience may also be considered.</p> <p>Staff will be subject to current DBS staff appraisal procedures and will be expected to engage in appropriate continuous professional development as required.</p>	
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Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Classroom sessions	1:50
Workshops	1:25
Practical lab sessions	1:35
Online tutorial (live, interactive)	1:25
Online class (live, broadcast)	1:50
Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing: Dublin Business School has a full complement of suitably qualified staff to deliver programme.	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG21045	Bachelor of Business (Level 7)	Academic Year 2019/2020

Other noteworthy features of the application

N/A

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable). Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

The Expert Panel recommends extending DBS's Approved Scope of Provision for the Bachelor of Business Level 7 programme as DBS provides a strong offering in this programme, with relevant modules taught by suitably qualified lecturers, outstanding learner care, and good levels of progression to further education and employment.

Embedded Programme – Higher Certificate in Business Level 6

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)	Minimum number of learners
Dublin Business School	250	7

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	September 2020
Maximum number of annual intakes	Two
Maximum total number of learners per intake	250 per annum
Programme duration (<i>months from start to completion</i>)	Full-time: 2 years (4 semesters of 12 weeks each) Part-time: 3 years (6 semesters of 12 weeks each)
Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment: The panel noted the significant difference between the minimum intake number of 7 and that of the maximum of 250. Assurances provided to the panel that the college would be able to accommodate the maximum number of learners as stated as this would be over two intakes within the one academic year not just one intake.	
Target learner groups	
The programme provides learners with the fundamental skills of business administration and is aimed at learners with a variety of educational objectives, including those who wish to play an active role in the management, sustainability and development of commercial enterprise. The programme is targeted at the following learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent school-leavers who wish to gain an undergraduate education in business studies. Learners who are seeking career advancement by obtaining a business education, including both those currently seeking employment and those working wishing to upskill in the area of business. To be eligible to apply for a place on this programme applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements of 5 O6/H7s, to include Maths, English or another language of full Level 5 FETAC Award (i.e. 8 modules) or equivalent. Applications without this will be considered on the basis of the recognition of prior learning (RPL). Such applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis. 	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full time and part time
The teaching and learning modalities	
Various, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom-lectures 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case-based learning • Practical skills sessions • Workshops • Tutorials • Individual and group work • Blended Learning 	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what it is for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	
<p>The Higher Certificate in Business (120 ECTS) programme is designed to give a clearly structured, entry-level, business education that provides a solid foundation for a business career. The programme provides a grounding in fundamental business concepts, ideas, practices and methodologies and features a rich learning environment that involves students in the analysis of business organisations, functions, processes and management techniques. Learners will acquire core business knowledge and skills along with a transversal skill such as communication, presentation and written ability along with numerical and digital literacy. These skills are not related to any business area but are useful across a variety of disciplines. Learners on this programme will benefit from foundational knowledge and skills fundamental to business in management, informational technology, accounting, organisational behaviour and marketing. In addition, learners will benefit from gaining knowledge and understanding in the vital role that business holds along with acquiring insights into human resource management, economics, innovation and entrepreneurship. The Higher Certificate programme has been designed to enable learners to have the necessary academic skills to prepare them for progression to further study at degree level. In addition, graduates will be eligible for junior administrative roles within a business environment. The Higher Certificate in Business is a two-year full-time or three-year part-time programme (120 ECTS) and is an exit award from the Bachelor of Business (180 ECTS, NFQ L7) award. In this programme, learners study common subjects in first year and second year.</p>	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE
<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 8 Honours undergraduate degree or a Level 8 Higher Diploma. Lecturing staff may also have a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or master's qualifications in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Human Resource Management • Law • Accounting and/or Finance • Management • Marketing • Digital Marketing • Economics • ICT <p>Individuals with Level 7 bachelor's degrees in the above disciplines, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience may also be considered.</p> <p>Staff will be subject to current DBS staff appraisal procedures and will be expected to engage in appropriate continuous professional development as required.</p>	

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Classroom sessions	1:50
Workshops	1:25
Practical lab sessions	1:35
Online tutorial (live, interactive)	1:25
Online class (live, broadcast)	1:50
Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing: Dublin Business School has a full complement of suitably qualified staff to deliver programme.	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG21052	Higher Certificate in Business (Level 6)	Academic Year 2019/2020

Other noteworthy features of the application

N/A

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable). Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

The Expert Panel recommends extending DBS's Approved Scope of Provision for the Higher Certificate in Business (Level 6) as an Embedded programme of the Bachelor of Business Level 7 programme. DBS provides a strong offering in these programmes, with relevant modules taught by suitably qualified lecturers, outstanding learner care, and good levels of progression to further education and employment.

Part 2 Evaluation against the validation criteria

Criterion 1: The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme		
a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme. b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed. c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. ¹		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	DBS Executive Dean confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed. DBS has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory, and professional body requirements.

¹This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Criterion 2: The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
 - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's *Policy and Criteria for Making Awards*.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are
 - (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
 - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct, and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
 - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.²
 - (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.³

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Partially	<p>The aims and objectives of the programme were stated clearly both in the programme material provided by DBS to the panel and in meetings with the staff. The programme's minimum learning outcomes have been matched against QQI Business Award Standards. However, it is stipulated by the panel that Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms.</p> <p>Minimum module learning outcomes are stated and are matched against minimum programme learning outcomes.</p>

² Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

³ 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.⁴
- 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 evidence⁵ of learner demand for the programme.
 - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant⁶.
 - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.⁷
- c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
- e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	DBS has engaged with relevant stakeholders (both internal and external) to obtain feedback in the review of this programme. DBS conducts learner surveys each year, typically two weeks after commencement of each module, and two weeks before the end of each module. DBS carried out consultations on the programme design and module content with a range of industry stakeholders such as Facebook, AON, Cabrini Health, EF Education First, Spitex, Infront Sports, Eir, Fries Management Consulting, SWISS EXCELLENCE FORUM, Schindler Group. This review process confirmed a continued need for the programme in industry and to learners as graduates are eligible for progression to a Level 8 programme offered by DBS or to employment within a specific subfield of business complementing their previous experience and learning.

⁴ 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.

⁵ This might be predictive or indirect.

⁶ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

⁷ 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.

		<p>To improve student enrolment on the programme, it is recommended by the panel that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of the programme on a part-time basis be considered • Application to the relevant accounting bodies for recognition of the programme be made so that learners can gain some exemptions from professional accounting exams on graduation. The panel noted that DBS has achieved such recognition for other programmes it offers. Such recognition would also be a marketing tool for attracting learners to the course.
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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 satisfied⁸.
- 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 (CEFR⁹) 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
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>Minimum entry requirements are stated and are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) policies and procedures are clearly outlined.</p> <p>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 (CEFR⁹). 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</p>

⁸ 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

⁹ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

		<p>valid. Equivalence of overseas awards will be assessed via the NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications Database.</p> <p>Based on successful completion of the Bachelor of Business programme, learners may progress to the final year of a Level 8 programme offered by DBS, dependent on elective module choices made in final stage of Level 7 programme i.e. into the final year of the BA (Hons) in Business, BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance, or BA (Hons) in Marketing.</p>
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Criterion 5: The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

- a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.
- b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.
- c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended *programme* learning outcomes.
- d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.
- e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles¹⁰.
- f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
- g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
- h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
- i) Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
- j) The programme **duration** (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its **fulltime equivalent contact time** (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation.¹¹

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme	Yes	<p>The existing programme is comprised of core mandatory modules at Stages 1 and 2, with four mandatory modules totalling 30 ECTS at Stage 3 and five x 10 ECTS electives, of which learners can choose any combination to make up the balance of credits. In updating the programme, it is proposed to restructure the final stage into five mandatory modules equalling 40 ECTS, and to introduce additional electives to allow for four clearly defined specialisations: (1) general business; (2) accounting and finance; (3) information technology; (4) marketing.</p> <p>The programme is suitably structured to enable learners to achieve the programme learning outcomes. However, it is recommended by the panel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

		<p>syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider title of the Management module in Year 3 to capture essence of module content and to reflect the capstone nature of the assessment for this module. • Consider swapping module titles of Managerial Accounting in Year 2 with Cost Accounting in Year 3 to better reflect progression of knowledge in this subject area. • Review and eliminate duplication of syllabus material covered in modules on Managerial Accounting in Year 2 and on Cost Accounting in Year 3 to provide more space for inclusion of other subject areas such as Taxation and Law. • Consider inclusion of one or two learning outcomes and related relevant content across modules on project management, which would be particularly relevant to preparing learners for the Capstone Project in Year 3.
Embedded Programme 1	Yes	<p>The programme is suitably structured to enable learners to achieve the programme learning outcomes. However, it is recommended by the panel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills. • Consider swapping module titles of Managerial Accounting in Year 2 with Cost Accounting in Final Year of Bachelor of Business Programme to better reflect progression of knowledge in this subject area. • Review and eliminate duplication of syllabus material covered in modules on Managerial Accounting in Year 2 and on Cost Accounting in Final Year of Bachelor of Business programme to provide more space for inclusion of other subject areas such as Taxation and Law. • Consider inclusion of one or two learning outcomes and related relevant content across modules on project management.

Criterion 6: There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

- a) The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to-practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 c).
- b) The programme has an identified complement of staff¹² (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
- c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.
- d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development¹³ opportunities¹⁴.
- e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
- f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>Staffing requirements to deliver the programme are precise and appropriate, with DBS having an identified complement of staff who are in a position to provide the specified programme. The staff are well-qualified to enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes of the programme. Considering the focus of the course, the panel noted that staff members have a broad range of industry experience.</p> <p>Staff are encouraged and facilitated to engage in appropriate continuous professional development opportunities. Staff members attend conferences with learning and networking opportunities, and there is (limited) funding available for research. Staff are subject to current DBS staff appraisal procedures.</p>

¹² 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.

¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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.

Criterion 7: There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

- a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).
- b) The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
 - (i) suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
 - (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
 - (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
 - (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
 - (v) technical support
 - (vi) administrative support
 - (vii) company placements/internships – if applicable
- c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).
- d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
 - (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
 - (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
- e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>Physical resource requirements to deliver the programme are precise and appropriate. DBS provides a suitable environment for learning in which students can study comfortably and safely, either individually or in groups.</p> <p>DBS uses Moodle as its virtual learning environment, and also has a full range of online and other digital resources (electronic journals, etc.) along with a highly-qualified complement of staff to assist students in this area. There is college-wide WIFI access. DBS has an award-winning library facility with a wide variety of printed and digital materials for teaching, learning and assessment. Classrooms and other venues for learning are fully equipped with all elements necessary for an appropriate learning experience.</p> <p>DBS has provided estimates of costs and income associated with the course for the next five years.</p>

Criterion 8: The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

- a) The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.
- b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.
- c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>The programme's social, cultural and intellectual environment including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes. Learners are supported not only by lecturing team but also by staff in the range of support services available within DBS.</p> <p>DBS is to be commended for its duty of care to learners in terms of both academic and personal support.</p>

Criterion 9: There are sound teaching and learning strategies

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

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>The teaching strategies are thoughtful and well-designed. While modules will be delivered through a mix of lectures, workshops, tutorials and practical sessions, teaching and learning focuses on the learner applying problem-solving skills and undertaking critical reflection and critique.</p> <p>Students benefit from a close relationship with lecturers, which provides an environment in which mentorship and attention to the students' needs is given great importance.</p> <p>It is recommended by the panel that the preparation for work ethos of the programme continues to be reviewed as well as the need not to include work placement as a module.</p>

Criterion 10: There are sound assessment strategies

- a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with *Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards*¹⁵
- b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
- c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme.¹⁶
- d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
- e) There is a satisfactory written *programme assessment strategy* for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.¹⁷
- f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.
- g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
- h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award.¹⁸

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme	Yes	<p>Assessments are fair and consistent to ensure that the programme learning outcomes are achieved by learners who successful completes the programme.</p> <p>The panel commended the programme team on the level of group work incorporated into the programme in response to stakeholder feedback to improve learner teamwork skills. However, it is recommended by the panel that formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level. Good practice noted by the panel, but lack of a policy document caused concern. In addition, it is recommended by the panel that the volume of group assessment in the final year of programme i.e. Year 3 be reviewed. There appears to be significant amount of group work versus individual assessment.</p> <p>The panel noted that some joint assessment exists on the programme, especially in Year 1. But it is recommended by the panel that opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme be considered. The</p>

¹⁵ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁶ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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).

		<p>panel identified one such possible opportunity in Year 3 across the modules on Management, Business Ethics and Research Practice.</p> <p>For all modules, it is recommended by the panel that detail provided in module descriptions about assessment be reviewed to ensure sufficient information is made available to learner to understand clearly how learning outcomes linked to syllabus material is being assessed. This recommendation is particularly relevant to the Marketing and related modules on the programme.</p> <p>The panel commended the programme team on continuing to include a capstone project to ensure that the learners are acquiring the academic skills they need to progress to Level 8.</p> <p>External examiners comments received over the last number of years reviewed, with appropriate feedback and responses made.</p>
Embedded Programme 1	Yes	<p>Assessments are fair and consistent to ensure that the programme learning outcomes are achieved by learners who successful completes the programme.</p> <p>The panel commended the programme team on the level of group work incorporated into the programme in response to stakeholder feedback to improve learner teamwork skills. However, it is recommended by the panel that formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level. Good practice noted by the panel, but lack of a policy document caused concern.</p> <p>The panel noted that some joint assessment exists on the programme, especially in Year 1. But it is recommended by the panel that opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme be considered.</p> <p>For all modules, it is recommended by the panel that detail provided in module descriptions about assessment be reviewed to ensure sufficient information is made available to learner to understand clearly how learning outcomes linked to syllabus material is being assessed. This recommendation is particularly relevant to the Marketing and related modules on the programme.</p> <p>External examiners comments received over the last number of years reviewed, with appropriate feedback and responses made.</p>

Criterion 11: Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

- a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.
- b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
- c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
- d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
- e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
- f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.
- g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
- h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities¹⁹.
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international learners it complies with the *Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Learners*²⁰ and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.
- j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>Students are well-informed; with DBS having systems in place to keep students up to date with schedules that relate to their learning. Students are given full information about all the learning supports that are available to them. From the outset, the students are given the information they need to make appeals and complaints in a manner consistent with best quality assurance practice. The panel noted the low level of complaints to date received from students pursuing the programme.</p> <p>The teaching and learning methodologies adopted are enriched by a diverse student population. DBS welcomes student diversity and accommodates diverse needs.</p> <p>DBS has a well-developed sense of its duty of care, and actively engages with all students enrolled on its programmes, including reaching out to those who have been identified as at risk.</p>

¹⁹ For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²⁰ See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Learners (QQI, 2015)

		<p>Reasonable provision is made for students with a range of needs. For example, supports are in place for students with dyslexia, etc. Reasonable accommodation is made for students with disabilities.</p> <p>A large portion of DBS's students comes from overseas, and the college places great emphasis on support with language, technology and with adjusting to different cultural expectations, etc. DBS feels that a diverse student population is one of its great strengths and fosters a strong sense of collegiality and support for students from overseas.</p> <p>DBS's duty of care extends to providing students with a safe physical and psycho-social environment, and it is cognisant and mindful of this fact.</p>
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Criterion 12: The programme is well managed


- a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
- b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
- c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
- d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.
- e) Quality assurance²¹ is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
- f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
- g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
- h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Principal Programme & Embedded Programme	Yes	<p>DBS is actively engaged with QQI in ensuring that all quality assurance requirements are met.</p> <p>DBS has effective procedures in place for selecting suitably qualified staff to teach on the programme.</p> <p>DBS is committed to ensuring that programmes are provided with the specific resources necessary to create the optimum learning environment.</p> <p>Programme operation and management arrangements are carefully documented and suited to their purpose.</p>

²¹ See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

Overall recommendation to QQI

Principal programme: Bachelor of Business (Level 7)

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;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

Dublin Business School provides a strong offering in this programme, Bachelor of Business (Level 7), with relevant modules taught by suitably qualified lecturers, outstanding learner care, and good levels of progression to further education and employment.


Commendations

1. Dublin Business School is to be commended for the open, positive, and constructive manner, in which its staff engaged with the panel, and for the thorough documentation that was provided before the panel meeting.
2. Dublin Business School is also to be commended for its clear sense of a duty of care to learners enrolled with the School.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms. To be completed before the end of July, 2020.

Embedded programme 1: Higher Certificate in Business (Level 6)

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;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

Dublin Business School provides a strong offering in this programme, Bachelor of Business (Level 7), with relevant modules taught by suitably qualified lecturers, outstanding learner care, and good levels of progression to further education and employment.

Commendations

1. Dublin Business School is to be commended for the open, positive, and constructive manner in which its staff engaged with the panel, and for the thorough documentation that was provided before the panel meeting.
2. Dublin Business School is also to be commended for its clear sense of a duty of care to learners enrolled with the School.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms. To be completed before the end of July, 2020.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

Programme Learning Outcome No.8 be reviewed and redrafted to be more general in focus as opposed to being specific to business specialisms.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

- Formal guidelines on the conduct of group assessment to be devised at an Institutional level. Good practice noted by the panel, but lack of a policy document caused concern.
- Review volume of group assessment in the final year of programme i.e. Year 3. There appears to be significant amount of group work versus individual assessment.
- Provision of the programme on a part-time basis to be encouraged to increase the number of learners enrolled.
- Continue to review the 'preparation for work' ethos of the programme and the need not to include work placement as a module.
- Consider an application to the relevant accounting bodies for recognition of the programme so that learners can gain some exemptions from some professional accounting exams on graduation. The panel noted that DBS has achieved such recognition for other programmes it offers. Such recognition would also be a marketing tool for attracting learners to the course.
- IT modules in Years 1 & 2 to be reviewed to modernise, especially in terms of programme title. DBS should consider a realignment of syllabus material for IT modules across all years of programme to ensure progression in development of skills.
- Consider title of the Management module in Year 3 to capture essence of module content and to reflect the capstone nature of the assessment for this module.
- Consider swapping module titles of Managerial Accounting in Year 2 with Cost Accounting in Year 3 to better reflect progression of knowledge in this subject area.
- Review and eliminate duplication of syllabus material covered in modules on Managerial Accounting in Year 2 and on Cost Accounting in Year 3 to provide more space for inclusion of other subject areas such as Taxation and Law.
- Consider inclusion of one or two learning outcomes and related relevant content across modules on project management, which would be particularly relevant to preparing learners for the Capstone Project in Year 3.
- Consider opportunities for greater levels of formative collaboration and joint assessment in each of the years of the programme. The panel identified one such possible opportunity in Year 3 across the modules on Management, Business Ethics and Research Practice.
- For all modules, need to review details provided in module descriptions about assessment to ensure sufficient information is made available to learner to understand clearly how learning outcomes linked to syllabus material is being assessed. This recommendation is particularly relevant to the Marketing and related modules on the programme.


Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

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

Panel chairperson: Marian Duggan

Date: 17/08/20

Signed:



4.1 Disclaimer

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

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

Part 3: Proposed programme schedules

Bachelor of Business Full-time Stage one

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School												
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business												
Award Title			Bachelor of Business												
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A												
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time												
Teaching and learning modalities			various												
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective		ISCED Subject code			
major	7	5	1		6		5		60	Sept 2020		0413			
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)			Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
						Credit Units									
				Status ²²	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ²³	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

²² Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

²³ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Business Environment	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Digital and Media Skills for Business	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Fundamentals of Accounting	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		40%			60%
Fundamentals of Marketing	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Business Maths	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Academic Skills	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Special Regulations													

Bachelor of Business Full-time Stage two

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School											
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business											
Award Title			Bachelor of Business											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			Higher Certificate in Business											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			various											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code	
major	7	5	2		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
					Credit Units									
			Status ²⁴	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ²⁵	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

²⁴ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

²⁵ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

[illegible]

Bachelor of Business Full-time Stage three

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School													
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business													
Award Title			Bachelor of Business													
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A													
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time													
Teaching and learning modalities			various													
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level		Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective		ISCED Subject code			
major	7	6		3		7		6		60	Sept 2020		0413			
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)			Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)		Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status ²⁶	NFQ Level ¹	Credit Units		Clas s (or equi	Direc ted e-	Hours of Indepe	Work - base	C.A. %		Proctore d practical			

²⁶ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

			where specified		Total Hours	v) Contact Hours	learning	ndent Learning	d learning effort ²⁷		Supervised Project %	demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Management Practice Project	5 and 6	M	7	10	250	64	50	136		20%	80%		
Business Financial Management	5 and 6	M	7	10	250	64	50	136		30%			70%
Digital Technologies for Business	5 and 6	M	7	10	250	64	50	136		50%			50%
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	5	M	7	5	125	32	25	68		100%			
Business Ethics and Research Practice	6	M	7	5	125	32	25	68		40%	60%		
Selling and Sales Management	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		50%			50%
Financial Accounting	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		30%			70%
Cost Accounting	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		30%			70%
Digital Marketing Planning & Management	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		100%			
International Marketing Practice	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		100%			
Database Design and Cloud Technologies	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136		100%			
Business Programming	5 and 6	E	7	10	250	64	50	136				50%	50%
Special Regulations													

²⁷ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

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Bachelor of Business Part-time Stage one

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School													
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business													
Award Title			Bachelor of Business													
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A													
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time													
Teaching and learning modalities			various													
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code			
major	7	5	1		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413			
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)			Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)		Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
					Status ²⁸	NFQ Level ¹ where specified	Credit Units	Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ²⁹	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

²⁸ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

²⁹ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

[illegible]

Bachelor of Business Part-time Stage two

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School											
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business											
Award Title			Bachelor of Business											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			Higher Certificate in Business											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			various											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code	
major	7	5	2		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
					Credit Units									
			Status ³⁰	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ³¹	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

³⁰ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³¹ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

[illegible]

Bachelor of Business Part-time Stage three

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School																
Programme Title			Bachelor of Business																
Award Title			Bachelor of Business																
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A																
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time																
Teaching and learning modalities			various																
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level		Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective		ISCED Subject code						
major	7	6		3		7		6		60	Sept 2020		0413						
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)			Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)		Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)						
					Status ³²		NFQ Level ¹		Credit Units			Class (or	Directed e-	Hours of Indepe	Work - base	C.A. %		Proctored practical	

³² Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

			where specified		Total Hours	equivalent) Contact Hours	learning	ndent Learning	d learning effort ³³		Supervised Project %	demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Management Practice Project	5 and 6	M	7	10	250	32	50	168		20%	80%		
Business Financial Management	5 and 6	M	7	10	250	32	50	168		30%			70%
Digital Technologies for Business	7 and 8	M	7	10	250	32	50	168		50%			50%
Innovation and Entrepreneurship	7	M	7	5	125	18	25	82		100%			
Business Ethics and Research Practice	8	M	7	5	125	18	25	82		40%	60%		
Selling and Sales Management	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		50%			50%
Financial Accounting	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		30%			70%
Cost Accounting	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		30%			70%
Digital Marketing Planning & Management	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		100%			
International Marketing Practice	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		100%			
Database Design and Cloud Technologies	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168		100%			
Business Programming	7 and 8	E	7	10	250	32	50	168				50%	50%

³³ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Special Regulations

Higher Certificate in Business Full-time Stage one

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School											
Programme Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Award Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			various											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code	
major	7	5	1		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
					Credit Units									
			Status ³⁴	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ³⁵	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

³⁴ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³⁵ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Business Environment	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Digital and Media Skills for Business	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Fundamentals of Accounting	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		40%			60%
Fundamentals of Marketing	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Business Maths	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Academic Skills	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	72	50	128		100%			
Special Regulations													

Higher Certificate in Business Full-time Stage two

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School											
Programme Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Award Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			various											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):	Stage NFQ Level ²	Stage EQF Level ²	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code						
major	7	5	2	6	5	60	Sept 2020	0413						
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
					Credit Units									
			Status ³⁶	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ³⁷	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

³⁶ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³⁷ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

[illegible]

Higher Certificate in Business Part-time Stage one

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School											
Programme Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Award Title			Higher Certificate in Business											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			various											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code	
major	7	5	1		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)	Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status ³⁸	NFQ Level ¹ where specified	Credit Units	Total Hours	Class (or equivalent) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ³⁹	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

³⁸ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

³⁹ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

Business Environment	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		100%			
Digital and Media Skills for Business	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		100%			
Fundamentals of Accounting	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		40%			60%
Fundamentals of Marketing	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		100%			
Business Maths	3 and 4	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		100%			
Academic Skills	1 and 2	M	6	10	250	36	50	164		100%			
Special Regulations													

Higher Certificate in Business Part-time Stage two

Name of Provider:			Dublin Business School													
Programme Title			Higher Certificate in Business													
Award Title			Higher Certificate in Business													
Stage Exit Award Title ³			N/A													
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time													
Teaching and learning modalities			various													
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):		Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²		Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject code			
major	7	5	2		6		5		60		Sept 2020		0413			
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)			Semester no where applicable. (Semester 1 or Semester2)		Module		Credit Number ⁵	Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
							Credit Units									
					Status ⁴⁰	NFQ Level ¹ where specified		Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort ⁴¹	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %

⁴⁰ Mandatory (m) or elective (E)

⁴¹ Work-based learning effort is not the number of hours in the workplace. For example, a person might spend 35 hours in the workplace as a trainee and this might involve 7 hours of learning effort.

[illegible]