



Griffith College

Coláiste Uí Ghríofa

Independent Panel Report on a Programme Review

Provider	Griffith College [PV03057]
Programme(s) Reviewed	Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management PG24135 Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management PG24136 Certificate in Advanced Taxation PG24539
Date of Panel Event	26/03/2024

Programme Review Panel

Name	Programme Review Function	Affiliation and roles
Dr David McCarthy	Panel Chair	Academic Secretariat, Dublin City University
Dr Lee Richardson	Panel Secretary	Data Analytics and Reporting Manager and Student Engagement and Success Unit Team Lead, Dublin Business School
Prof Danielle McWall	Academic/ Subject matter expert (International)	Head of Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics, Ulster University
Richie Hoare	Academic/ Subject matter expert	Senior Lecturer in Accounting, Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
Judith Condell	Employer Representative	Director of Business Development, CPA Ireland
Paula Nunes Leocadio	Learner Representative	PhD candidate in Management and Marketing at UCC

All members of the independent Panel declared their independence of Griffith College and that they have no conflict of interest.

Part 1. Introduction

The Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management (MSCAF) is a one-year full-time or two years part-time, NFQ Level 9, 90 ECTS programme, with an embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting and Finance Management (PDAFM) comprising 60 ECTS, and an embedded Certificate in Advanced Taxation (CATX) comprising 25 ECTS. The MSCAF includes a dissertation stage of 30 ECTS.

All three programmes are currently delivered by the College's Graduate Business School at the College's Dublin campus.

The MSCAF and PDAFM programmes were originally jointly validated in 2009 by Nottingham Trent University and the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and validated by HETAC only from 2010. The programmes were revalidated by HETAC in 2013 and most recently revalidated in 2019 by QQI. The CATX programme was originally validated by QQI in 2021.

This review is presented to QQI by Griffith College as part of the programme's consortium steering group's proposal for the re-validation of the programme for a further five-year period.

Part 2. Evaluation Process

2.1 Documents Supplied to the Panel

	Document Type	Document Name
1.	Agenda and Terms of Reference	• Agenda and Terms of Reference
2.	Key Documents	• Letter of Application to QQI (from President) • Proposed Programme Document • Module Descriptor Booklet • Self-Evaluation Report • Programme Review Report
3.	Support Documents	• Overview: Prospectus, Lecturer handbook, Staff CVs • Sample Assessment Handbook (including Dissertation Handbook and Dissertation by Industry Practice Handbook) • Learner Handbooks (Student Handbook, Class Rep Handbook, International Student Handbook, Pre-semester Information Video) • Facilities Overview • Industry Support Letters
4.	Governance Information	• Quality Assurance and Enhancement Systems • Griffith College Annual Quality Reports • QQI Awards Standards and Procedures
5.	Legacy Programmes	• Approved Programme Document • Certificate of Validation and Panel Report • Sample Assessments and Projects • External Examiner Reports • Programme Handbooks • Annual Programme Report

2.2 Provider's Representatives Met

Session 2: Senior members of Griffith College

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Prof Diarmuid Hegarty	College President
2.	Dr Tomás Mac Eochagáin	Director of Academic Programmes
3.	Áine McManus	Head of Faculty, Graduate Business School
4.	Jim Daly	Head of Griffith College, Cork
5.	Suzanne Burdis	Programme Director (Dublin), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
6.	Deirdre Cogan	Programme Director (Cork), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
7.	Eilis O'Leary	Programme Development Director, Graduate Business School
8.	Sinéad O'Dea	Head of Business Development and Marketing, Griffith College Cork
9.	Eamonn Nolan	Head of Academic Programmes
10.	Ailish Finucane	Head of Academic Administration
11.	Kevin Geoghegan	Director International Office
12.	Mary Doyle	Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Session 3: Programme Team

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Áine McManus	Head of Faculty, Graduate Business School
2.	Jim Daly	Head of Griffith College, Cork
3.	Suzanne Burdis	Programme Director (Dublin), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
4.	Deirdre Cogan	Programme Director (Cork), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
5.	Eilis O'Leary	Programme Development Director, Graduate Business School
6.	Sinead O'Dea	Head of Business Development and Marketing, Griffith College Cork
7.	Alan Lynch	Module Leader
8.	Brian O'Grady	Module Leader
9.	Garrett Ryan	Module Leader
10.	Ger McCarthy	Module Leader
11.	Greg O'Brien	Module Leader
12.	Ivan Toner	Module Leader
13.	Joe Walsh	Module Leader
14.	Josh Moran	Module Leader
15.	Suzanne Whelan	Module Leader
16.	Dr Tomás Mac Eochagáin	Director of Academic Programmes

Session 4: Learners and Graduates

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Thakane Lekhare	Learner
2.	Wanderson Leite Dos Santos	Learner
3.	Steffi De Almeida	Learner
4.	Shah Hussain	Learner
5.	Eastel Vinod	Learner
6.	Hong Trang Pham	Learner
7.	Nancy Fathimaraj	Learner

Session 5: Programme Team - Certificate in Advanced Taxation; and Supervision of MSc Dissertations

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Áine McManus	Head of Faculty, Graduate Business School
2.	Jim Daly	Head of Griffith College, Cork
3.	Suzanne Burdis	Programme Director (Dublin), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
4.	Deirdre Cogan	Programme Director (Cork), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
5.	Eilis O'Leary	Programme Development Director, Graduate Business School
6.	Sinead O'Dea	Head of Business Development and Marketing, Griffith College Cork
7.	Michael Bosonnet	Dissertation Supervisor
8.	Paula Byrne	Module Leader (Certificate in Advanced Taxation)
9.	Mark Campbell	Dissertation Supervisor
10.	Sana Khan	Dissertation Supervisor
11.	George Latridis	Dissertation Supervisor
12.	Stergios Leventis	Dissertation Supervisor
13.	Janette Maxwell	Module Leader (Certificate in Advanced Taxation)
14.	Brian O'Grady	Dissertation Supervisor
15.	Garrett Ryan	Dissertations Co-ordinator and Business Research Methods lecturer
16.	Dr Tomás Mac Eochagáin	Director of Academic Programmes

Session 6: Learner Support

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Áine McManus	Head of Faculty, Graduate Business School
2.	Suzanne Burdis	Programme Director (Dublin), MSc in Accounting and Finance Management
3.	Eilis O'Leary	Programme Development Director, Graduate Business School
4.	Deirdre Cogan	Year Head (Dublin), MSc in Accounting and Finance
5.	Yvonne Farrell	Teaching and Learning Faculty
6.	Emma Flynn	Careers Advisor
7.	Seán Martin	Learner Engagement
8.	Joanne McCarthy	Senior Faculty Administrator, Griffith College Cork
9.	Rob McKenna	Head Librarian
10.	Clare O'Brien	Senior Library Assistant, Griffith College Cork
11.	Greg O'Brien	Learning Technologist
12.	Sarah Ward	Learning Support Department
13.	Dr Tomás Mac Eochagáin	Director of Academic Programmes

2.3 Description of evaluation process

Griffith College conducts annual and longer-term reviews of all its programmes. These reviews are governed by the College's approved quality assurance and enhancement procedures and involve quantitative analysis of learner enrolment and assessment performance statistics, along with qualitative analysis of feedback from learners, lecturers and external examiners. Recommendations arising from annual reviews are considered by the programme team and the College's Quality Assurance and Enhancement Department (QAED) for implementation in respect of future cohorts.

This longer-term review presents an evaluation of the Graduate Business School's Master of Science in Accounting and Finance (and embedded programmes) programmes during the period from 2019/2020 to 2023/24. This review was undertaken by the programme teams in the College's Graduate Business School with the support of the College's QAED. It was informed by the reviewers' direct engagement with lecturers, learners, graduates, external examiners and employers.

The Panel reviewed the programme documents and all supporting documentation supplied by Griffith College. A review meeting was conducted on Zoom on the 26th March, during which the Panel met with representatives of Griffith College, including the programme team, learners, and members of senior management. A summary of findings, commendations conditions and recommendations made by the Panel are set out in this document.

Part 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.

3.1 Context and Terms of Reference for the Programme Review

3.1.1 Commentary

The objectives and approach to programme review were clearly outlined, with a need to conform to QQI policies published since the last validation. Details of proposed programme changes and the rationale for the same was provided. Three special considerations were also identified by Griffith College in consultation with QQI and are included in the terms of reference.

Special Consideration 1: Changes in QA since previous review

The provider and review Panel should consider objective 10 in section 2 above having regard to the new QQI QA guidelines which were published since the programme was last validated.

Objective 10: What changes need to be made to related policies, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)?

Special Consideration 2: Size of Learner Cohort

In the case of programmes with small learner cohorts, the provider and the review Panel should consider the appropriateness of the overall learner experience and the ongoing viability of the programmes.

Special Consideration 3: Dissertations

The review Panel should consider the College's capacity to supervise dissertations for the proposed maximum intake of learners, and that the Panel should review current/past dissertations and report on their quality.

The Panel was satisfied with the level of detail and discussions that took place in the review in relation to the three special considerations. The Panel made one recommendation in relation to special consideration 3.

3.1.2 Recommendations

The panel recommends that the College undertakes a resource analysis for all research-related activities associated with the programme for the maximum enrolment numbers, paying particular attention to the resource requirements for one-to-one supervision, oral examinations and marking [**Recommendation 1**].

3.2 Griffith College Information and Programme Context

3.2.1 Commentary

Griffith College is one of Ireland's largest independent higher education institutions with an annual learner population in excess of 6,000. The College provides a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes validated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). In the case of

disciplines involving separate external recognition, the College's QQI academic programmes are also recognised by bodies such as the Honourable Society of the King's Inns; the Irish Institute of Legal Executives (IILEX); the National Union of Journalists and the Institute of Designers in Ireland.

In addition to providing academic programmes at levels 6 to 9 on Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), the college also prepares learners for a wide range of examinations leading to membership of professional bodies, for example: Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Ireland (CPA Ireland) and the Law Society of Ireland. Training programmes in professional skills development are also provided in a number of the College's faculties which prepare learners for awards from industry sector bodies such as City and Guilds; Avid; Cisco, etc.

Established in 1974, the College's main campus is based in Dublin's South Circular Road on a seven-acre historic site. Griffith College also delivers a number of its academic and professional programmes from its constituent campus in Cork, its city centre locations in Limerick and Dublin, nationally through the use of external rental facilities; on an in-company basis; and online. In addition, some of the College's programmes are delivered on a collaborative basis with partners in industry or other educational institutions including Innopharma Labs Ltd, Pulse College/Windmill Lane Academy and Globe Business College, Munich.

3.2.2. Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

3.3 Baseline qualitative and quantitative information - Programme Data Overview

3.3.1 Commentary

The Panel found that the baseline qualitative and quantitative information was thoroughly captured and analysed, in line with the whole review process. The programme evidences strong applicant interest and enrolment numbers have done remarkably well given the challenges over the last number of years.

3.3.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

3.4 Programme Delivery and Teaching and Learning Strategies

3.4.1 Commentary

In reviewing the documentation supplied, it was evident that a thorough review of the delivery and teaching and learning strategies had been undertaken. The Panel had a robust discussion with the programme team on the delivery methods to date and the teaching and learning strategies utilised on the programme. The Panel queried policy and procedures around blended learning, and academic integrity in light of the growth of generative AI and further clarity was sought.

In response, the Programme Team explained that as part of the re-engagement process, QQI had approved the extension of the College's scope of provision to include providing programmes via blended learning. The Programme Team also noted that the appropriate structures were in place to support blended learning.

The Director of Academic Programmes commented that the College was a member of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) and that the College had issued a statement around the use of generative AI that was in line with NAIN policy.

The Panel acknowledged the comments made by the Programme Team.

3.4.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

Part 4. Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders

4.1 Evaluation by current learners and graduates of the programme

4.1.1 Commentary

The Panel is satisfied that feedback from learners and graduates was taken into account in the review of the programme.

4.1.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

4.2 Evaluation of the programme by Staff

4.2.1 Commentary

The review process evidenced a strong, collaborative engagement by staff and the Programme Team. All aspects of the programme have been thoroughly reviewed and this was clearly documented.

4.2.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

4.3 External Stakeholder Feedback

4.3.1 Commentary

The programme report clearly evidences thorough engagement with industry. Griffith College has formal mechanisms in place for working with industry and the Panel reviewed their comments on the programme and found that they had been factored into the review.

4.3.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

4.4 External Examiner Feedback

4.4.1 Commentary

The programme report clearly evidences thorough engagement with external stakeholders. Griffith College has formal mechanisms in place for working with External Examiners and the Panel reviewed their comments on the programme and found that they had been factored into the review.

4.4.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

Part 5. Programme Quality Assurance

5.1 Complaints, appeals and commendations

5.1.1 Commentary

The Panel is satisfied that there are clear mechanisms in place to address complaints and appeals.

5.1.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

5.2 Quality Assurance Systems and Processes

5.2.1 Commentary

Griffith College has robust quality assurance systems in place and it was clear from the documentation provided that these are updated and reviewed.

5.2.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

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

5.3.1 Commentary

Griffith College has robust quality assurance systems in place and it was clear from the documentation provided that these are updated and reviewed.

5.3.2 Recommendations

Not applicable in this case.

Part 6. Summary Analysis of the programme

6.1 Commentary

Overall, the Panel is satisfied that the review of the programme has been conducted thoroughly and with the involvement of all relevant stakeholder groups. Feedback from staff, learners, external examiners, employers, as well as key reports, have been taken into account in the review and proposed revisions. The programme has clear objectives, with a well-constructed curriculum, a clear strategy for teaching, learning and assessment and robust quality assurance procedures. Learners are well-informed and cared for, in a supportive environment, with adequate staffing and both physical and online resources available to deliver the programme.

6.2 Recommendations

Further details on recommendations and commendations are outlined in the Revalidation Report.

Part 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.

7.1 Commentary:

The Panel is satisfied with the proposed revisions highlighted in the review. The special considerations identified in the terms of reference were discussed, and the Panel has one recommendation in regard to special consideration 3. This is addressed in detail under the relevant criteria in the Independent Evaluation Report.

7.2 Conditions:

Two conditions were made by the Panel for consideration by Griffith College, as further changes to enhance the programme. These are set in detail under the relevant criteria in the Independent Evaluation Report.

7.3 Recommendations:

Four recommendations were made by the Panel for consideration by Griffith College, as further changes to enhance the programme. The first one is outlined under section 3.1.2 above, with the remaining three set in detail under the relevant criteria in the Independent Evaluation Report, which follows below.

Part 8. 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.

8.1 Commentary on review process

Overall, the Panel is satisfied that the review undertaken was comprehensive and thorough, with extensive consultation with staff, industry, learners, graduates and External Examiners. Griffith College provided commendable documentation with respect to the programme review process and the programme under review.

Part 9. Recommendations on review process

There are no specific recommendations regarding the programme review process itself. The Panel is satisfied that Griffith College undertook a robust review of the programmes in question and used the findings of the review to make a number of revisions that will enhance the overall quality of the programme and ensure learners are better enabled to attain the learning outcomes.

Part 10. Commentary on programme revisions

The Panel evaluated the revised Master of Science in Accounting and Finance and embedded programmes and are satisfied with the revisions.

Part 11. Recommendations on programme revisions:

The panel's overall recommendations regarding the validation of the programme, including the proposed revisions, are detailed in the Independent Evaluation Report below. The panel is satisfied with the programme revisions, which are informed by extensive analysis of quantitative programme performance data and engagement with employers, graduates and current learners. There are no specific recommendations regarding the programme revisions.



Signed:

Panel Chairperson

Date: 3 April 2024

**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 details

Provider name	Griffith College [PV03057]
Date of site visit	No site visit. Panel meeting took place remotely via web conferencing (using zoom) meetings on the 26th March 2024
Date of report	02/04/2024

Section A. Overall recommendations

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management
	Award	Level 9, Major Award
	Credit	90 ECTS (Level 9)
	Recommendation	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Embedded programme 1	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management
	Award	Level 9, Major Award
	Credit	60
	Recommendation	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Embedded programme 2	Title	Certificate in Advanced Taxation
	Award	Level 9, Special Purpose Award
	Credit	25
	Recommendation	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Part 2. Programme Review Panel

Name	Programme Review Function	Affiliation and roles
Dr David McCarthy	Panel Chair	Academic Secretariat, Dublin City University
Dr Lee Richardson	Panel Secretary	Data Analytics and Reporting Manager and Student Engagement and Success Unit Team Lead, Dublin Business School
Prof Danielle McWall	Academic/ Subject Matter Expert (International)	Head of Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics, Ulster University
Richie Hoare	Academic/ Subject Matter Expert	Senior Lecturer in Accounting, Atlantic Technological University (ATU)
Judith Condell	Employer Representative	Director of Business Development, CPA Ireland
Paula Nunes Leocadio	Learner Representative	PhD candidate in Management and Marketing at UCC

Part 3. Principal Programme

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)	Minimum number of learners (<i>per centre</i>)
Griffith College, South Circular Road, Dublin		
Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management	320	5
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management	150	5
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	100	8
Griffith College, Cork		
Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management	120	5
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management	150	5

Proposed Enrolment	
Date of first intake	September 2024
Maximum number of annual intakes	2 (All programmes)
Maximum total number of learners per intake	220 - Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management
	150 - Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management
	50 - Certificate in Advanced Taxation
Programme duration (<i>months from start to completion</i>)	Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management ● Full-time, 1 year (12 months) ● Part-time, 2 years (24 months)
	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management ● Full-time, 9 months ● Part-time, 21 months
	Certificate in Advanced Taxation ● Part-time, 3 months
Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment: The Panel is satisfied with the proposed enrolment numbers and that sufficient resources are in place to support students in their learning.	

Target learner groups	
The programme is intended for applicants with a minimum H2:2 honours degree in an accounting/finance/business related field or equivalent qualification from an approved tertiary or professional institution who wish to pursue a successful career in accounting and financial fields. The programme attracts learners from a wider range of countries, creating an exciting and diverse learning environment to explore the dimensions of modern accounting and finance issues in particular. The market for graduates in Ireland, and Internationally, is strong, as is the international marketplace for learners from overseas. Learners typically undertake the programme to improve their skills and enhance their employment opportunities in a changing environment, or progress to a more senior position in accounting, finance and related roles.	
Approved countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time / Part-time
The teaching and learning modalities	
The programmes are delivered through both full-time and part-time modes. Full-time delivery comprises classroom (face-to-face) delivery with extensive blended supports, while part-time delivery uses a blend of online (synchronous and asynchronous) and classroom (face-to-face) delivery.	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	
The Accounting and Finance Management programmes provide advanced study of accounting and finance. The programmes enable undergraduates to significantly extend their specialist knowledge of accounting and finance principles and practices. The programmes aim to provide the theoretical framework and skills that accountants and finance managers need in order to cope with the increasingly complex and global accounting and finance environment. Learners develop their analytical and decision-making skills. They also develop their personal and professional skills by working independently on a range of demanding projects and by working in teams to develop their leadership and interpersonal skills. They further cultivate their management skills by addressing the relationships between accounting and finance and more general aspects of business strategy and practices. The programmes ensure learners are at an advanced stage of preparation for a career in professional accountancy.	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE
Lecturer	1.5
Head of Faculty	0.75
Programme Director	0.75
Administrator	0.5
Librarian	0.2
QAE/Programme Development	0.1
Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Lectures	1:120
Tutorials	1:30
Computer lab practical	1:40
Dissertation	1:1
Self-directed Learning	N/A
Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:	

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG24135 PG24136 PG24539	Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management Certificate in Advanced Taxation	January 2024

Part 4. Other noteworthy features of the application

Expansion of delivery to include Griffith College, Cork campus.

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)

Not applicable in this case.

Part 5. 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that the provider Griffith College meets the prerequisites to apply for revalidation of the MSc in Accounting and Finance. Griffith College has declared that the programme complies with the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. The application was signed by Professor Diarmuid Hegarty, President, Griffith College Dublin.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

¹ This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration or 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 <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards</i>. 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. j) 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel has evaluated the programme (and embedded programmes) and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion. The programme objectives and outcomes are clear, distinct, and consistent with the QQI award sought. They are mapped against award standards at NFQ level 9. The Panel is satisfied that award titles are consistent with QQI policy, and programme titles are consistent with award titles and fit-for-purpose.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel concluded that input was sought from a range of stakeholders during the review of the programme – industry, academic, learners and graduates. There is sufficient demand for the programmes from learners and from industry and their demands also. Award standards have been addressed and appropriate mapping of standards have been presented.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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.

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 <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i>, 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	Procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with QQI's policy and criteria in this area.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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)

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 <i>programme</i> 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 full-time 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Partially	The Panel has evaluated the principal programme and embedded PgDip programme and recommends that QQI can be partially satisfied that the programme meets this criterion. This 90 credit, MSc in Accounting and Finance (and embedded 60 ECTS PgDip) at NFQ Level 9 is suitably structured to facilitate learners achieving the MIPLOs. The curriculum is clear and the overall structure is well argued and fit for purpose. In reviewing the curriculum, the panel identified the following conditions and recommendations: Condition(s): 1. Remove Financial Reporting (FR) as a prerequisite for Strategic Corporate Reporting (SCR). While it is clear that FR provides the foundation for SCR, and other modules in the curriculum, it is not clear how the prerequisite would be managed in practice in a transparent and consistent manner. 2. Identify where sustainability and ethics will be included across the curriculum, providing details in the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. Recommendation(s): 2. Explore how specific accounting and data analytics software can be embedded across the programme and indicate the particular modules in which this can be accommodated.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Partially	

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

Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Partially	The Panel has evaluated programme programmes and recommends that QQI can be partially satisfied that the programme meets this criterion. This 25 credit, Certificate in Advanced Taxation (embedded programmes) at NFQ Level 9 is suitably structured to facilitate learners achieving the MIPLOs. The curriculum is clear and the overall structure is well argued and fit for purpose. In reviewing the curriculum, the panel identified the following conditions and recommendations: Condition(s): 2. Identify where sustainability and ethics will be included across the curriculum, providing details in the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. Recommendation(s): 2. Explore how specific accounting and data analytics software can be embedded across the programme and indicate the particular modules in which this can be accommodated.
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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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel concluded that there were no concerns in relation to the qualifications or availability of staff to implement the programme. Their expertise, knowledge and experience was also evident in the rich discussion held between the programme team and the Panel.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel was satisfied that the provider has sufficient physical and online resources in place to implement the programme as planned.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	Griffith College's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes and the needs of the learner. An induction programme for new learners is in place and information is provided to learners in the Student Handbook and Programme Learner Handbook. There is a Programme Director who learners are in regular communication with, and are supported by, academic staff. The Faculty Administrator provides a key link between the learners and Griffith College. Recommendation(s): 3. Indicate to students what teaching and learning activities or topics will be delivered in-person or online, utilising the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. This is to ensure parity in the teaching and learning experience for all students across the different intakes, locations and methods of delivery.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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, support¹⁵ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that the provider has extensive experience and expertise in delivering this programme. The programme has developed a comprehensive support system for learners as endorsed by learner feedback and their representatives met during the Panel event.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

¹⁵ Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

Criterion 10. There are sound assessment strategies

a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i>¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning. e) There is a satisfactory written <i>programme assessment strategy</i> for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹		
	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The documentation provided details of the proposed programme assessment strategy. Sample assessments were also provided. The Programme Team explained that the change in assessment weightings was to bring the assessments in line with professional body requirements.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

¹⁶ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁷ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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).

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 disabilities²⁰. i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i>²¹ 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for. The programme team conveyed a genuine commitment to their learners, evidenced in both the documentation provided, and throughout their meetings with the Panel.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	All learners are inducted onto the programme and are provided with a Griffith College Student Handbook as well as a Programme Learner Handbook, which details the programme learning outcomes, the timetable and the module descriptors.
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	Griffith College provides a range of support services to learners and the Programme Director is actively involved in supporting learners throughout the programme. The support available to learners was validated by the learner representatives of the programme when they met with the Panel.

20 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).

21 See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

Criterion 12. The programme is well managed

a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures. b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not. c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff. d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources. e) Quality assurance²² 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
MSc in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that the programme is well managed. The College and programme management structure were outlined in the documentation provided. The Programme Director is well supported by Senior Management and Faculty. Griffith College governing and management structures are clearly outlined in their QAE documentation and reflected in programme management. The Panel recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion. Recommendation(s): 4. Identify contingency plans in the case of students not being able to secure their method of choice for the capstone research project, for example, shortage of suitable industry sponsors for the practice-based project.
PgDip in Science in Accounting and Finance Mgmt	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that the programme is well managed. The College and programme management structure were outlined in the documentation provided. The Programme Director is well supported by Senior Management and Faculty. Griffith College governing and management structures are clearly outlined in their QAE documentation and reflected in programme management. The Panel recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programme meets this criterion.
Certificate in Advanced Taxation	Yes	

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

Part 6. Overall recommendation to QQI

6.1 Principal programme: Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management

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 recommendations

The Panel is happy that the programme adheres to the 12 validation criteria and recommends that it be revalidated for 5 years, subject to the identified special conditions. The Panel has also made a number of recommendations for programme improvement that Griffith College should consider.

The Panel wishes to thank the staff at Griffith College for their active participation and engagement with the Panel during the virtual programme review. It is clear that Griffith College aims to provide an excellent student experience for all their students.

Commendations

There are two commendations:

- The quality of the stakeholder engagement undertaken by the programme team as part of the programme review process. The proposed changes to the programme are clearly evidence-based and responsive to the changes in expectations and requirements of both students and industry since the programme was last validated.
- The organisation of the revalidation meeting and the quality of documentation provided to the Panel. All relevant stakeholders were available to meet the Panel and fully engaged in the process. The documentation was comprehensive and accessible, and met all the requirements of the Panel to make a fully informed decision regarding the validation of the programme.

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

There are two conditions:

- Remove Financial Reporting (FR) as a prerequisite for Strategic Corporate Reporting (SCR). While it is clear that FR provides the foundation for SCR, and other modules in the curriculum, it is not clear how the prerequisite would be managed in practice in a transparent and consistent manner.
- Identify where sustainability and ethics will be included across the curriculum, providing details in the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate.

Both conditions should be in place prior to enrolment of learners onto the programme in September 2024.

Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations:

- Undertake a resource analysis for all research-related activities associated with the programme for the maximum enrolment numbers, paying particular attention to the resource requirements for one-to-one supervision, oral examinations and marking.
- Explore how specific accounting and data analytics software can be embedded across the programme and indicate the particular modules in which this can be accommodated.
- Indicate to students what teaching and learning activities or topics will be delivered in-person or online, utilising the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. This is to ensure parity in the teaching and learning experience for all students across the different intakes, locations and methods of delivery.
- Identify contingency plans in the case of students not being able to secure their method of choice for the capstone research project, for example, shortage of suitable industry sponsors for the practice-based project.

6.2 Embedded programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management

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 recommendations

The Panel is happy that the programme adheres to the 12 validation criteria and recommends that it be revalidated for 5 years, subject to the identified special conditions. The Panel has also made a number of recommendations for programme improvements that Griffith College should consider.

The Panel wishes to thank the staff at Griffith College for their active participation and engagement with the Panel during the virtual programme review. It is clear that Griffith College aims to provide an excellent student experience for all their students.

Commendations

There are two commendations:

- The quality of the stakeholder engagement undertaken by the programme team as part of the programme review process. The proposed changes to the programme are clearly evidence-based and responsive to the changes in expectations and requirements of both students and industry since the programme was last validated.
- The organisation of the revalidation meeting and the quality of documentation provided to the Panel. All relevant stakeholders were available to meet the Panel and fully engaged in the process. The documentation was comprehensive and accessible, and met all the requirements of the Panel to make a fully informed decision regarding the validation of the programme.

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

There are two conditions:

- Remove Financial Reporting (FR) as a prerequisite for Strategic Corporate Reporting (SCR). While it is clear that FR provides the foundation for SCR, and other modules in the curriculum, it is not clear how the prerequisite would be managed in practice in a transparent and consistent manner.
- Identify where sustainability and ethics will be included across the curriculum, providing details in the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate.

Both conditions should be addressed prior to enrolment of learners onto the programme in September 2024.

Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations:

- Explore how specific accounting and data analytics software can be embedded across the programme and indicate the particular modules in which this can be accommodated.
- Indicate to students what teaching and learning activities or topics will be delivered in-person or online, utilising the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. This is to ensure parity in the teaching and learning experience for all students across the different intakes, locations and methods of delivery.

6.3 Embedded programme: Certificate in Advanced Taxation

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 recommendations

The Panel is happy that the programme adheres to the 12 validation criteria and recommends that it be revalidated for 5 years, subject to one identified special condition. The Panel has also made a number of recommendations for programme improvement that Griffith College should consider.

The Panel wishes to thank the staff at Griffith College for their active participation and engagement with the Panel during the virtual programme review. It is clear that Griffith College aims to provide an excellent student experience for all their students.

Commendations

There are two commendations:

- The quality of the stakeholder engagement undertaken by the programme team as part of the programme review process. The proposed changes to the programme are clearly evidence-based and responsive to the changes in expectations and requirements of both students and industry since the programme was last validated.
- The organisation of the revalidation meeting and the quality of documentation provided to the Panel. All relevant stakeholders were available to meet the Panel and fully engaged in the process. The documentation was comprehensive and accessible, and met all the requirements of the Panel to make a fully informed decision regarding the validation of the programme.

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

There is one condition:

- Identify where sustainability and ethics will be included across the curriculum, providing details in the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate.

The condition should be addressed prior to enrolment of learners onto the programme in September 2024.

Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations:

- Explore how specific accounting and data analytics software can be embedded across the programme and indicate the particular modules in which this can be accommodated.
- Indicate to students what teaching and learning activities or topics will be delivered in-person or online, utilising the individual module descriptors and Student Handbook as appropriate. This is to ensure parity in the teaching and learning experience for all students across the different intakes, locations and methods of delivery.

6.1 Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

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

Panel chairperson: David Mc Carthy

Date: 3 April 2024



Signed:

6.2 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations expressed 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.

7 Proposed programme schedules (post Panel feedback and consequent amendments, if any)

7.1 MSc in Accounting and Finance Management [Full time]

Name of Provider:			Griffith College											
Programme Title			Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Award Title			Master of Science											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	1			9		7			60	Sept. 2024	041	
Module Title		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Financial Reporting		1	M	9	10	250	72	12	166		20			80
Strategic Financial Management		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Law and Governance		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Financial Data Analysis		1	M	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Taxation (Irl)		1	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Sustainable Finance		1	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Digital Transformation		1/ 2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Leadership in Organisations		1/ 2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Strategic Corporate Reporting		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Strategic Performance Management		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Business Consultancy		2	M	9	10	250	72	24	154		100			
Business Research Methods		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Advanced Audit & Assurance		2	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Quantitative Finance		2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Special Regulations (Up to 280 characters)														
Learners must complete two electives from the six available in semester 2.														

Name of Provider:		Griffith College												
Programme Title		Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management												
Award Title		Master of Science												
Stage Exit Award Title ³		Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management												
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):		Full-time												
Teaching and learning modalities		Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended												
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	Award			9		7			30	September 2024	041	
Module Title		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Dissertation		3	E	9	30	750	12		738			100		
Dissertation By Practice Industry Project		3	E	9	30	750	12		738			100		
Special Regulations (Up to 280 characters)														
Learners must complete one of the two options above														

7.2 MSc in Accounting and Finance Management [Part time/blended]

Name of Provider:			Griffith College											
Programme Title			Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Award Title			Master of Science											
Stage Exit Award Title ³			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	1			9		7			60	Sept. 2024	041	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Financial Reporting		1	M	9	10	250	72	12	166		20			80
Strategic Financial Management		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Financial Data Analysis		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Strategic Performance Management		2	M	9	5	125	36	12	77		20			80
Law and Governance		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Strategic Corporate Reporting		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Taxation (Irl)		2	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Sustainable Finance		2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Digital Transformation		2/3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Leadership in Organisations		2/3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Business Consultancy		3	M	9	10	250	72	24	154		100			
Business Research Methods		3	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Advanced Audit & Assurance		3	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Quantitative Finance		3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Special Regulations														
Learners must complete two electives from the six available in semesters 2 and 3.														

Name of Provider:		Griffith College												
Programme Title		Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management												
Award Title		Master of Science												
Stage Exit Award Title ³		Master of Science in Accounting and Finance Management												
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):		Part-time												
Teaching and learning modalities		Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended												
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	Award			9		7			30	September 2024	041	
Module Title		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Dissertation		4	E	9	30	750	12		738			100		
Dissertation By Practice Industry Project		4	E	9	30	750	12		738			100		
Special Regulations (Up to 280 characters)														
Learners must complete one of the two options above.														

7.3 Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting and Finance Management [Full time]

Name of Provider:			Griffith College											
Programme Title			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Award Title			Postgraduate Diploma in Science											
Stage Exit Award Title³			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Full-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended											
Award Class⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level²			Stage EQF Level²		Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	1			9			7		60	Sept. 2024	041	
Module Title		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Financial Reporting		1	M	9	10	250	72	12	166		20			80
Strategic Financial Management		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Law and Governance		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Financial Data Analysis		1	M	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Taxation (Irl)		1	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Sustainable Finance		1	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Digital Transformation		1/2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Leadership in Organisations		1/2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Strategic Corporate Reporting		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Strategic Performance Management		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Business Consultancy		2	M	9	10	250	72	24	154		100			
Business Research Methods		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Advanced Audit & Assurance		2	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Quantitative Finance		2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Special Regulations (Up to 280 characters)														
Learners must complete two electives from the six available in semesters 1 and 2.														

7.4 Postgraduate Diploma in Accounting and Finance Management [Part time/ blended]

Name of Provider:			Griffith College											
Programme Title			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Award Title			Postgraduate Diploma in Science											
Stage Exit Award Title³			Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Accounting and Finance Management											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Major	9	7	1			9		7			60	Sept. 2024	041	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Financial Reporting		1	M	9	10	250	72	12	166		20			80
Strategic Financial Management		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Financial Data Analysis		1	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Strategic Performance Management		2	M	9	5	125	36	12	77		20			80
Law and Governance		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Strategic Corporate Reporting		2	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Taxation (Irl)		2	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Sustainable Finance		2	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Digital Transformation		2/3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Leadership in Organisations		2/3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Business Consultancy		3	M	9	10	250	72	24	154		100			
Business Research Methods		3	M	9	5	125	48	12	65		100			
Advanced Audit & Assurance		3	E	9	5	125	48	12	65		20			80
Quantitative Finance		3	E	9	5	125	36	12	77		100			
Special Regulations														
Learners must complete two electives from the six available in semesters 2 and 3.														

7.5 Certificate in Advanced Taxation [Part time]

Name of Provider:			Griffith College											
Programme Title			Certificate in Advanced Taxation											
Award Title			Certificate											
Stage Exit Award Title³			Certificate in Advanced Taxation											
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):			Part-time											
Teaching and learning modalities			Direct Contact, Lecture, Tutorial, Computer Labs, Blended											
Award Class ⁴	Award NFQ level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level ²		Stage EQF Level ²			Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code	
Special Purpose Award	9	7	Award			9		7			25	Sept. 2024	0411	
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)		Semester No	Module			Total Student Effort Module (hours)					Allocation of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)			
			Status	NFQ Level	ECTS	Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Directed e-learning	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A. %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %
Taxation (IRL)		1	M	9	5	125	36	-	89	-	20			80
Business Consultancy		1	M	9	10	250	50	-	200	-	100			
International Tax Law		1	M	9	10	250	68	-	182	-	50			50
Special Regulations														
N/a.														