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Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne: Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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Dámh an Ghnó agus na nDaonnachtaí
Faculty of Business and Humanities

An Roinn Gnó agus Serbhíshí Airgeadais
Department of Business and Financial Services

Report of External Validation Panel

21/04/2023

Master of Science in Business Analytics (90 ECTS credits)
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics (60 ECTS credits)
Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics (30 ECTS credits)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings and findings of the external validation visit for the proposed *Master of Science in Business Analytics* and associated embedded awards, *Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics* (60 credits); *Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics* (30 credits) held on 21st April 2023. The external validation visit was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations for the development of taught programmes. An external validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on a programme proposal.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Higher Education Provider

Provider	Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
Faculty	Business and Humanities
Department	Business and Financial Services
Date of Visit	21st April 2023

2.2 Programme Evaluated

Programme Title	Master of Science in Business Analytics
Award Title	Master of Science
Code	LC_SBUSI_M09
NFQ Level	9
ECTS Credits	90
Award Class	Level 9
Delivery Mode	Full-time
Duration	2 Year
Proposed Starting Date	September 2023
Contact	Mr James Collins

Programme Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics
Award Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science
Code	LC_SBUSI_M09
NFQ Level	8
ECTS Credits	60
Award Class	Level 8
Delivery Mode	Full-time
Duration	1 Year
Proposed Starting Date	September 2023
Contact	Mr James Collins

Programme Title	Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics
Award Title	Postgraduate Certificate in Science
Code	LC_SBUSI_M09
NFQ Level	8
ECTS Credits	30
Award Class	Level 8
Delivery Mode	Full-time
Duration	1 Semester
Proposed Starting Date	September 2023
Contact	Mr James Collins

2.3 External Validation Panel of Expert Assessors

Name	Affiliation
Dr. Brendan Ryder	DkIT (Chairperson)
Ms. Caroline O'Reilly	MTU
Mr. Gerard Long	MTU
Mr. Stephen Lee	SETU
Ms. Niamh Gleeson	Kirby
Mr. Fabio Henrique Soares dos Santos Tavares	Student Representative

Secretary to Panel: Dr. Brendan Murphy, TUS.

2.4 TU Staff

Name	Role
Dr.Terry Twomey	Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar.
Mr. Donnacha McNamara	Dean of Faculty of Business and Humanities.
Mr. James Collins	Head of Department of Business and Financial Services.
Programme Leader: Dr. Mathew Horrigan Programme Team: Jennifer Dann; Eric McNamara; Ciara Staunton; Orla Watson, David Leonard, Conor Foley.	

3.0 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION PANEL

3.1 Findings

The External Validation Panel of Assessors recommends approval of the proposed programme and associated embedded awards listed, subject to the Conditions and Recommendations specified in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, respectively:

- Master of Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 90 ECTS credits)
- Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 60 ECTS credits)
- Postgraduate Certificate in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9, 30 ECTS credits)

3.2 Conditions

1) Correct the *Award Titles* of the embedded awards sought, specifying Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate, respectively. Include Programme Learning Outcomes/Programme Schedules (including full-time and part-time contact hours) for these awards in the final programme documentation.

2) Include part-time hours in the Programme Schedule for the Master of Science (Honours) in Business Analytics (Part-time delivery mode is being sought as part of the programme validation).

3.3 Recommendations

1) Include further information in the programme entry requirements section of the programme documentation on the selection criteria that would be employed where applicants exceed places available.

2) Ensure there are sufficient supports in place for students with knowledge and skills deficit on entry (if required).

3) Expand on the postgraduate research progression opportunities available to graduates of the programme.

4) New and existing modules should be clearly identified in the programme documentation. Also, module titles should be consistently used throughout the programme documentation (for example "Business Data Management" is called "Relational Databases" (Semester 1, pg. 9).

5) Provide detailed information on the student experience (teaching, learning and assessment strategies, indicative timetables) in the programme documentation on part-time and blended (synchronous and asynchronous) delivery modes. This includes student induction.

6) The TUS award standards that informed the Programme Learning Outcomes should be explicitly stated in the programme documentation as appropriate.

7) Provide a table that sets out the schedule of assessments and their due dates to be provided to students at the start of the programme. This is viewed as important in the context of the 100% continuous assessment included in the programme.

8) Review the wording of the repeat assessment strategy in all programme modules and ensure alignment with TUS Academic Regulations.

9) Provide further information in the programme assessment strategy on how the academic integrity of assessment is supported and maintained in the programme.

10) Consider introducing peer review and reflection for group assessments across the programme modules to assist with the identification of individual effort. The module "*Statistics And Tools For Business Analytics"* cited as an example. Reference should be made to the TUS Guidelines for Group Work (as appropriate)

11) Review the full title and module description of the module "*Data Interpretation and Business Analytics"* to ensure that they are aligned.

12) Consider the sequencing of the module "*The Science Of Decision Making"* with a view to delivering it earlier in the programme. The assessment strategy in the module should be reviewed to ensure that students are not over assessed.

13) Add the contact hours for the student in the module descriptor for the module "*Applied Research Project".*

14) Ensure that all module resources are up to date, that a sufficient level of detail is provided in the narrative for each module assessment component (particularly the "*Research Methods for Business Analytics*" and "*Applied Research Project*" modules) and that module Learning Outcome verbs are appropriate for the NFQ level. The use of the word "introduce" in some of the module descriptions (e.g. "*Statistics And Tools For Business Analytics*", "*Business Strategy*") should be reconsidered given that this is a Masters programme.

3.4 Commendations and Observations

The panel commended:

- the positive, proactive and collegiate engagement of the programme team during the validation visit.

- the Faculty and Department for developing an NFQ Level 9 offering in the area of *Business Data Analytics* which provides a progression pathway post NFQ Level 8 that meets the needs of industry and is aligned with the University's strategic objectives.

- the student-centred focus in the programme, the variety of assessments adopted (including the considered adoption of cross-modular / integrated assessment), the use of systematic module feedback practices, and the use of appropriate formative and summative assessment (where adopted).

- the comprehensive programme documentation provided.

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Signature of Chairperson

Date: 05/09/2023