



**TUS**

**Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:  
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**Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest - Athlone Campus**

**Dámh an Ghnó agus Fáilteachais  
Faculty of Science and Health**

**Department of Nursing and Healthcare**

**Report of the Programmatic Review External Panel**

**Higher Certificate in Science in Dental Nursing**

**Level 6 – 2 Year Programme**

**Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2024**

**Conducted remotely via Microsoft Teams**

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# 1. Introduction

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings of the Programmatic Review Panel for the Higher Certificate in Science in Dental Nursing programme which is taught within the Faculty of Science and Health, and the findings and conclusions of the External Validation Panel conducted on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The external validation visit was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations. A Programmatic Review Panel makes an independent impartial judgement on the programmatic review and associated critical self-study and proposed programme changes.

## 2. General Information

### 2.1 Higher Education Provider

University: TUS Midlands Midwest - Athlone Campus  
Faculty: Faculty of Science and Health  
Department: Nursing and Healthcare  
Date of Visit: Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2024 – Virtual External Panel conducted via MS Teams

### 2.2 Programme Evaluated

Award Title	Higher Certificate in Science in Dental Nursing
Exit Award	N/A
NFQ Level	06
ECTS Credits	120
Award Class	Higher Certificate
Award Type	Higher Certificate in Science
Duration	2 Years
Workplace	Yes 15 credits

## 2.3 External Panel Members

Mr. John Vickery (**Chairperson to Panel**)

Former Registrar  
Institute of Technology, Tallaght  
Johnvickery51@yahoo.com

Dr Myles Hackett

Head of Department of Nursing, Midwifery & Early Years  
Dundalk Institute of Technology  
myles.hackett@dkit.ie

Dr Caitriona Long

Dental Practitioner  
Cross Street Dental  
Galway.  
info@crossstreetdental.ie

Dr Fiona Sandom

Lecturer,  
Bangor University  
Wales  
fiona.sandom@bangor.ac.uk

Dr Patrick Donohue (**Secretary to Panel**)

Former Assistant Registrar  
TUS Midwest  
drpatdonohue@gmail.com

## 2.4 University Staff & Others

Dr Terry Twomey, Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar.

Dr Don Faller - Dean of Faculty of Science and Health.

Dr Des Cawley - Head of Department of Nursing and Healthcare.

The Programme Leaders and Lecturing staff include but are not limited to Kellie O'Shaughnessy, Eilish Duffy, Sinead Beattie, Sinead Bracken, Eileen Lane, Dr Clodagh Maloney, Alison Fagan, Denis Gavagan and Dr Eileen Lane.

Students: Maria Olbrychowska, Rachel Treacy, Clodagh Byrne and Clodagh Griffin.

Employers/Alumni: Dr James Hiney, Sarah Kennedy and Rachel Bracken.

## **3. FINDINGS, CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **3.1 Main Findings**

The External Validation Panel of Assessors recommends reapproval of the Higher Certificate in Dental Nursing programme subject to the conditions and recommendations as specified in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.

### **3.2 Condition(s)**

- 1) Provide evidence of the mapping of the programme to the Irish Dental Council's Dental Nursing Scope of Practice in the documentation.

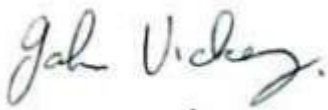
### **3.3 Recommendations**

- 1) Consider reviewing placement opportunities in semester 1. For example, introducing real-life scenarios (with dentists/patients) in a laboratory setting.
- 2) Create a documented protocol for assisting non-performing students on clinical placement.
- 3) Provide a rationale for the programme/module changes in the documentation.
- 4) Include an updated ACS for the proposed programme.
- 5) Include the supporting programme quantitative data and analysis on the programme since the last programme review. For example, minimum CAO points, pass rates, progression, employment data etc.
- 6) Check documentation for correctness and consistency.
- 7) Review and update references and reading lists where appropriate.
- 8) Change wording of learning outcomes (for example, the use of "appreciate" in Clinical Dentistry II and III).
- 9) Review LO3 in relation to quantitative appraisal tools. Ensure that the indicative syllabus takes care of this. (Dental Research).
- 10) Review the language used around professional conduct (for example, the use of "honour").
- 11) Consider including more practical training relating to vulnerable patients in the programme.
- 12) Consider enhancing the communications skills training within the programme.
- 13) Consider the weighting of the Dental Practice Management module assessment.

- 14) Review the failed element/synoptic assessments within modules with due consideration to student progression.
- 15) Reword section on page 6 on the progression of students as it could be interpreted that progression is to L7 in the UK.
- 16) Investigate the possibility of promoting Dental Nursing further as a career as opposed to a stepping stone to other programmes.

### **3.4 Commendations**

- 1) The panel commends the programme team on the support given to students on an on-going basis.
- 2) The panel commends high quality student output as demonstrated by clinical placement providers.
- 3) The alumni and students spoke positively of their educational experience.
- 4) The panel commends the positive and collegiate engagement of the programme team during the validation visit.



**Signature of Chairperson:**

**Date: 23/02/2024**

