

Appendix 7: NEW TAUGHT PROGRAMME EVALUATION PANEL GUIDELINES



1. The Aims & Objectives of New Programme Evaluation

Aims

The evaluation of a new programme including a joint award programme is concerned with its rationale, design and place within the National Framework of Qualifications; learner demand for the programme and the Access, Transfer and Progression routes pertaining to the programme; how it helps meet the goals and objectives of South East Technological University Carlow's Policy's Strategic Plan; the proposed implementation of the programme, with particular reference to its aims and learning outcomes, subject content, the level descriptors pertaining to credit levels as determined by QQI, the facilities required and the staff deployment needed in addition to the system employed to Quality Assure the programme.

Objectives

Evaluate the aims and general learning outcomes of the programme in the context of their relevance to meeting the need being served, and its place within the National Framework of Qualifications. Specific guidelines on the type of evidence that may be considered by the external Validation Panel, which include, but are not limited to the following:

Planning

Rationale for the programme

Rationale for the level of award being sought

Programme aims and objectives

Expected intellectual development and Programme learning outcomes

Market demand

Avoidance of duplication

Existing related programmes

Employment opportunities for graduates

The legal standing of any joint award programme and the reputational and other risks for South East Technological University Carlow associated with the delivery of such a programme

Stakeholder consultation

Support for the programme (industry/business/community)

Addressing local/Regional/ National/International needs

Credits

Considering the level, outcomes and volume of each module, is the number of credits attached to each appropriate?

Considering the stated objective of the programme is the number of credits attached to the award appropriate?

Level

Is the proposed level of the programme in accord with institutional policy/ national norms?

Programme titles and award

Is the title consistent with South East Technological University Carlow's policy, is it informative and is it fit for purpose? In circumstances of a joint awarding agreement, programme titles and awards should also meet policy criteria.

Note: *the validation Panel may propose modifications to the Programme/Award title as it sees fit – consistent with both national and institutional policy.*

Transfer and Progression

Progression criteria from one stage to the next and to higher levels on the NFQ

What transfer and progression opportunities/possibilities are available following achievement of this award?

Evaluate the learning experience provision with reference to Framework levels and credits, outcomes in terms of knowledge, skill and competencies, syllabus content with regard to Framework levels/descriptors and module/discipline descriptors, teaching methods and curriculum, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

Access

Application processes (CAO; Direct entry etc; Further Education applicants)

Is the expected capacity of all learners entering the programme stated?

Have any/all prerequisite knowledge, skills or competence or any other specific entry requirement been articulated?

Alternative entry mechanisms (mature, RPL, RPEL)

Advanced standing mechanisms

Exemptions policy

Curriculum

Is the programme structure well designed, coherent and fit for its stated purpose? Learning outcomes - Do learning outcomes comply with national standards for the level of award proposed?

Learner workload – the relationship between contact hours and independent learning. Does the programme address the development of the learner as an independent learner?

Does the programme adequately address the development of transferable skills, specific disciplinary knowledge, technical skills and competence?

Programme structure and content

Are module descriptions adequate and relevant?

Are modules relevant and current?

Does the combination of modules chosen have the coherence to support the proposed award?

How do the modules address national standards and learning outcomes at the level of award being sought?

Is the role and management of placement or work-based projects adequately addressed?

Student-centred teaching and learning strategy ([Section 1.3 in the ESG](#))

Can the teaching, learning and assessment strategies proposed support the achievement of the required learning outcomes?

Are the delivery mechanisms proposed adequate to the needs of the programme and the proposed learner cohorts?

Confirmation regarding any new facilities and staffing requirements (The relevant resource implications document endorsed by senior management shall be included)

Have special requirements (e.g. remote access for distance learners) been addressed adequately?

Are blended/digital learning modes well-conceived and integrated?

Locations of Delivery

Teaching and Learning Strategies to be explicated stated. This should detail strategies adopted and rationale for same and should be research-informed both in terms of academic discipline and effective pedagogical practice

Duration

What is the intended duration of the Programme?

What is the lifespan of the programme (e.g. single cohort intake to satisfy limited local demand; multiple intakes over the following 5 years). Is this realistic?

Are their flexible modes of participation?

Evaluate the assessment methodologies/instrument provision, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

Assessment strategies

Are examination processes and methodologies adequately described?

Are these strategies appropriate to this type of award, in terms of type, frequency and volume?

Is assessment explicitly linked with intended learning outcomes?

Does the assessment strategy underpin the achievement of the relevant standard of knowledge, skill and competence?

Has the assessment of group projects and work placement been adequately addressed?

Is it in line with SETU Carlow's practice on group assessment?

Is it fair and consistent¹ ?

Evaluate the physical facilities provision, which includes, but is not limited to the following:

Efficient and effective use of resources

Staff (in the case of joint awards include evaluation of staff provision from partner institution)

- accommodation
- Information technology
- Specialist equipment – if any
- administration
- publicity/public information
- Planned intake (first five years)
- Placement requirements
- Internships

Evaluate the Quality Assurance and improvement system provision which includes but is not limited to the following:

Programme Administration and Quality Assurance

Procedure for managing programme - Are programme management arrangements, whether for South East Technological University Carlow institutional or a joint award adequate and coherent?

Learner support learner counselling and tutorial arrangements

Aspects of programme that highlight and foster study skills, independent learning and the inculcation of individual responsibility in learners

EU and international aspects if appropriate

¹with both processes operating elsewhere in SETU Carlow and with processes operating in other Institutions.

Feedback mechanisms, e.g. use of surveys, focus groups and follow-up actions

Evaluate the curricula vitae of the academic staff provision deployed to deliver the programme. In the case of joint award programmes such evaluation shall include participating staff of the partner institution. The evaluation shall include, but is not limited to the following:

Staffing

- Quality and specialities of staff available to support the programme
- Technical and administrative support
- Staff development
- Industrial/commercial profile of staff
- Research and publications

Proposed Educational Programme

The new programme submission shall contain sufficient and detailed information as follows:

Aims and general learning objectives and outcomes.

This section shall contain a general statement of the overall goals and objectives of the programme, with particular reference to applicant demand, access, transfer and progression and to career / employment related outcomes.

Quality Assurance and Improvement:

Details shall be provided of how the Quality of the programme is to be implemented, maintained and enhanced, including standards of learning, teaching, staff development and resourcing. A statement on learner feedback and its utilisation shall be provided. The non-teaching aspects of the learning environment such as support services, including such additional support services required for any joint award provision shall be stated and the contribution these make to the learner experience.

Proposed Programme and Research Activity:

If the proposed programme is at Level 8 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications, the submission shall contain details of how the programme is informed by current research, internal or external to South East Technological University Carlow; of the research undertaken by academic staff; and of the research opportunities available to graduates of the programme.

2. Roles & Responsibilities of SETU Carlow Programme Development Team.

3. Roles & Responsibilities of Evaluation Panel members

The first agenda item on the Evaluation panel visit is training of panel members.

2.1 General Panel Member Guidelines

This is a confidential process and by agreeing to be a panel member (See Policy Section 6.0 of this document) Panel members should disclose any conflicts of interest as early as possible.

Panel members will receive programme documentation at least two weeks before the panel visit. It is incumbent on the panel member to be familiar with the documentation and access any relevant material in order to fully evaluate the programme prior to the validation panel.

Validation panel members may request clarifications through the Chairperson before the site visit.

During the validation panel, the panel members get the opportunity to ask questions and evaluate the site and the programme.

2.2 Panel Chairperson

The chairperson provides strategic leadership for the validation panel. The chairperson is required to understand the broader national context of the programme being validated. They must understand the relevant QQI policies, criteria, codes, standards, guidelines, values and procedures.

2.3 Secretary to the Panel

The secretary to the panel is the Report Writer and where the total credits is less than 180, the recording secretary. A recording secretary will be present for all programmes greater than 180 credits.

The role of the recording secretary is to make a record of the site visit proceedings to enable the panel to discuss the programme.

The role of the report writer is to coordinate the drafting of the panel report so that it reflects the views of the panel and meets QQI's reporting guidelines. They must understand the relevant SETU Carlow and QQI policies, criteria, codes, standards, guidelines, values and procedures.