



Programmatic Review
for the
Department of Health &
Leisure Studies
(School of Health and Social Sciences)
June 2014

1 Introduction

The Institute of Technology Tralee

The Institute of Technology Tralee (ITT) is a recognised Higher Education Institution with Delegation of Authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) for all of its undergraduate programmes and taught masters programmes. It also has been granted Research Approval by Quality & Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to deliver Postgraduate Research Degrees at NFQ Level 9 & 10 in eleven research fields.

The Institute of Technology, Tralee (IT, Tralee) has grown to become the primary provider of higher education services in the south-west region of Ireland. The Institute contributes in a significant and constructive manner to the local and regional economy, society and cultural fabric. Established as the Regional Technical College, Tralee in 1977, it was designated as an Institute of Technology in 1997 and was granted delegated authority to make awards for its undergraduate programmes and taught postgraduate programmes to level 9 on the NFQ in 2004.

The current student cohort amounts to 3,500 of which more than 10% are international students. The Institute currently employs circa 300 staff. The Institute is a modern, dynamic college, which prides itself on the quality of its academic programmes, both undergraduate and post-graduate, the applied nature of its research and its extensive engagement with its extensive range of stakeholders. The Institute is dedicated to providing a world class education for its students.

Mission Statement

The Irish higher education system is currently undergoing significant enhancement within the context of the implementation of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030. The main objectives included in the reform of higher education in Ireland include improved student experience, strengthening of the impact of higher education on society and the economy, and an increased international recognition of Ireland's higher education. The Institute's mission statement which is widely disseminated and reflects the National Strategy:

"Sárobair a dhéanamh i dteagasc, i dtaighde agus in obair fhorbartha chun leasa macléinn, na tionscalaíochta agus an phobail i gcoitinne."

"To excel in teaching, research and development work, for the benefit of students, industry and the wider community".

Changing Landscape

The current programmatic review takes place in the context of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and in a different and rapidly changing landscape, when compared to previous reviews.

- The Institute has agreed a Performance Compact with the HEA. The objectives and targets of the Compact are reflected in the strategic objectives described in the school's self-evaluation document.

- The Institute is a member of the Southern Cluster of higher education institutions. The purpose of the cluster is to *“improve quality of teaching, learning and research through more effective collaborations between the institutions. Two priority goals have been set for each cluster - better student pathways between the institutions, and co-ordinated academic planning to reduce duplication and improve quality of programmes”* (Mr Ruairi Quinn, Policy Statement).
- The Institute has submitted a Stage 2 document as part of the joint ambition of these Institutes to establish the Munster Technological University. The self-evaluation of programme provision by the school was executed as negotiations and developments were ongoing.
- The Institute’s latest Research, Development and Innovation Strategy document was published in 2014, and the Institute’s general Strategic Plan (2008-2013) is being renewed.

School of Health and Social Sciences

The School of Health and Social Sciences is one of three academic schools of study within the Institute. During the term of the current review, the Institute’s academic schools were re-structured. The School of Health and Social Sciences, and its three departments (Health & Leisure, Social Sciences, Nursing & Healthcare Studies), was established from constituent departments of the former School of Science and Computing (Health & Leisure Studies and Nursing & Healthcare Studies), and the original School of Business and Humanities (Social Sciences).

The purpose of the restructure is to:

- meet the future challenges within the education sector,
- facilitate additional multidisciplinary programme development,
- directly address the demands of the labour market,
- facilitate additional multidisciplinary developments,

The School of Health and Social Sciences, and its three departments (Health & Leisure, Social Sciences, Nursing & Healthcare Studies), was established from constituent departments of the former School of Science and Computing (Health & Leisure Studies and Nursing & Healthcare Studies), and the original School of Business and Humanities (Social Sciences).

The Programmatic Review described in this document features simultaneous review of programmes in each department in the school. Details of each department’s self-evaluation, programme portfolio and strategic plans are presented in each departments self-evaluation document. There is a parallel programmatic review being undertaken by the School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The synchronised schedule of programmatic review was established in the last review when the semesterisation and modularisation model of programme delivery was implemented across the Institute.

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors who considered the School's programmatic review self-study document and individual programme documentation. The panel reviewed the development of programmes over the previous five years, evaluated the flexibility of the School to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process, reviewed the range and mix of assessment procedures, and reviewed plans for future development.

The purpose of the Programmatic Review is to ensure that each programme or suite of programmes:

- Contributes to the Institute's strategic objectives
- Offers a valuable educational experience to learners
- Are reviewed and revised to ensure the skill set and knowledge of the graduates is relevant and are in alignment with the needs of enterprises both locally and nationally
- Are benchmarked against similar programmes, regionally, nationally and internationally
- Takes cognisance of the National Framework of Qualifications and implements procedures in relation to access, transfer and progression
- Are reviewed and assessed in terms of the resources required for their delivery

The Programmatic Review was undertaken in compliance with Section A7 of the Institute's Quality Assurance Manual (Appendix 1).

The following report is divided into the following sections:

- 2 The Programmatic Review Panel
- 3 Agenda for the two-day site visit by the Panel of Experts
- 4 School Self-evaluation Report
 - Meeting with School Executive
- 5 Programmatic Review

Department of Health and Leisure Studies

- 5.1 Programmes under consideration
 - 5.2 Members of the External Review Panel
 - 5.3 Academic Programme Deliver Team
 - 5.4 Programme level findings
- 6 Outcomes of the Programmatic Review
 - 6.1 Evidence of Programmatic Review
 - 6.2 Meeting the changing needs of stakeholders
 - 6.3 Range and Mix of Assessment Procedures
 - 6.4 Future Developments
 - 6.5 Programme Effectiveness and Efficiency
 - 6.6 Physical Facilities
 - 6.7 Research Activities
 - 6.8 Formal Activities
 - 6.9 Programme Structure
 - 6.10 Module Descriptors
 - 6.11 Future Plans

7

Commendations and Recommendation

- 7.1 Commendations
- 7.2 Recommendations

2. The Programmatic Review Panel of Experts:

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

INSTITUTION: Institute of Technology, Tralee

PANEL OF ASSESSORS:

- Ms. Ann Campbell, Dundalk IT (Chairperson)
- Dr. Noel Mulligan, IT, Tralee (Secretary)
- Dr. Gerard McKiernan, Dundalk IT
- Dr. Ann Bourke, UCD
- Mr. Humphrey Murphy, Irish Leisure Consultants
- Dr. Suzanne Denieffe, WIT
- Dr. Mary Casey, UCD
- Ms. Catherine Kililea, NMPDU
- Mr. Damien Courtney, (Retired) CIT
- Ms. Colette Walsh, TUSLA
- Ms. Martina Leahy Ryan (Alumni)
- Ms. Deirdre Hartnett, KGH (Alumni)
- Mr. Thomas O'Driscoll, Student ITT
- Ms. Ann Marie Bright, Student ITT
- Mr. Graham O'Neill, Student IT

DATE OF VISIT: Monday, 9th June and Tuesday, 10th June 2014

3. Agenda for the two-day site visit by the Panel of Experts:

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW: SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

AGENDA

Monday, 9th June and Tuesday, 10th June 2014

in Room U306, Library Building, ITT North Campus, Dromtacker, Tralee

Monday 9th June, 2014

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|---|--|---------------|
| 1 | Private Meeting of Assessors | 09:00 - 10:00 |
| 2 | Meeting with Registrar, Head of School and Heads of Department: School and department overview, strategic plans and resources. | 10:00 – 10:45 |
| 3 | BREAK | 10:45 – 11:00 |
| 4 | Parallel Session 1:
Heads of Department and Programme Leaders: Learner Profile, Access, Transfer and Progression. National and International Links, including business and community. Research.

(a) Health and Leisure
(b) Social Sciences
(c) Nursing and Health Care Studies | 11:00 – 13:00 |
| 5 | LUNCH | 13:00 – 14:00 |
| 6 | Private Meeting of Assessors | 14:00 – 14:30 |
| 7 | Parallel Session 2:
Review of Department Strategic Plans and Programmes

Health and Leisure Studies
Social Sciences
Nursing and Health Care Studies | 14:30 – 16:30 |
| 8 | Private Meeting of Assessors | 17:00 – 17:30 |

Note: The agenda may be subject to slight alteration on the day.

Tuesday 10th June, 2014

1	Private Meeting of Assessors	09:00 - 09:30
3	Parallel Session 3: Review of Programmes and Proposed Changes (to include teaching, learning and assessment) Health and Leisure Studies Social Sciences Nursing and Health Care Studies	09:30 – 11:30
3	BREAK	11:30 – 11:45
4	Parallel Session 4: Review of Programmes and Proposed Changes (to include teaching, learning and assessment) Health and Leisure Studies Social Sciences Nursing and Health Care Studies* (Validation panel for minor award in Podiatry)	11:45 – 13:00
5	LUNCH	13:00 – 14:00
6	Private Meeting of Assessors	14:00 – 14:30
7	Parallel Session 5: Meeting with Graduate / Students* Health and Leisure Studies Social Sciences Nursing and Health Care Studies	14:30 – 15:00
8	Private Meeting of Assessors	15:00 – 16:00
9	Feedback to School Teams	16:15 – 16:30

Note: The agenda may be subject to slight alteration on the day.

4 The School Self-Evaluation Report

4.1 Meeting with Registrar, Head of School and Heads of Department: School and department overview, strategic plans and resources.

The Panel discussed the school's structure, developments, opportunities and future challenges with the school executive group. The new school has built a structure for management of the school's academic developments.

An example of this is in the case of the NFQ Level 9 programme development in each department with synergies (50% overlap between nursing and social care). The Department of Health and Leisure is to deliver a recently validated MA in APA Leadership programme in Sept 2014 or January 2015. The Panel noted that one of the first modules is inter-professional leadership which is shared across other two masters programmes.

The Panel also noted the following during general discussion:

(A) School re-structure

- Retention initiatives are shared between departments resulting in budgetary efficiency and wider benefits to students. There is sharing of staff across the departments.
- UNESCO chair was described and discussed in some detail. The Chair is not in one specific department, rather works on several projects across several departments.
- MTU project and the HEA compact have challenged planning over the last two years, but there is now a level of certainty with the school and department strategic plans, mapping to institute strategic plan and HEA compact.
- The Panel commented that the school restructure makes great sense.

(B) Masters in APA Leadership

- Masters in APA Leadership is very laudable. Was it challenging merging social and medical models?
- Programme viability demanded engagement between depts. And feedback is very positive.
- Interdisciplinary nature is welcomed. Sports background with HL entry to this, will further enrich student experience / teaching environment. Inter-professional reflection within clinical sites – students from different disciplines de-brief together and discuss feedback. Students appreciate each other's roles and responsibilities.

(C) Interdisciplinary teaching at undergraduate level

- Has started already led by experienced academic staff.
- Adventure Therapy also features mixed cohorts.

(D) Single subjects

- There is potential for some modules to be offered as single subjects for CPD.

(E) Level 8 programmes

- The Panel asked if there was an over reliance on Level 8 programmes? The School data shows that in 10/11, 52% of students were on level 7 programmes and in 2013/14, the proportion was 43%.
- The panel noted that the MTU position is that new entity will maintain programme levels from apprenticeships to level 10 (and not, for example, discontinue programmes at level 6 and 7).

(F) The process by which documentation has been put together and the extent to which staff have engaged.

- The Department followed a process described in Section A7 of the Institute's QA manual and the SER was based on a format that was agreed institute-wide.
- HL staff held series of meetings internally, and met with 1-4th year students, employers, stakeholders, e.g. industry, and feedback from external examiners (5yr record). The Programme Board spent time looking at core philosophy of dept and programmes and what the graduate profile should look like. This resulted in a re-established sense of the core philosophy of the department and common thinking across the department of the intended outcomes of its suite of programmes.

(G) Challenges facing the Departments

- One of biggest challenges was MTU project and undertaking programmatic review when changes are on the horizon. There was a desire to discuss programme development with CIT, which could not happen, given the early stages of the Review. Limitation to process was that opportunities could not be discussed with CIT.
- HL Department looked at CIT and how to establish niche academic differentiation in HL dept. The PR established this process and sense of identity.
- Greater challenge to effect pastoral care for students, which was taken on board for this PR. Spotlight was placed on retention during the PR process. Issues

needing quiet spot for personal discussion needed, especially in Social Sciences.

- Professionalisation of sector. Student ambassador / peer support concept.

(H) PhD Opportunities

- The Institute's support for staff taking on postgraduate research were noted. The number of staff undertaking PhD level research was quoted

(I) Support for staff

- The Panel heard that the department of nursing and healthcare studies had arranged an Away day in Nursing, and learned of other training initiatives.
- Institute staff benefit from Personal training programme provided by students in Health and Leisure. The Institute has signed an MoU with the HSE in relation to eventually establishing IT Tralee as a Health Promotion College. This is an Institute wide initiative. Present strategy is to merge the Institute's steering group for the Health Promotion Unit and the steering group for the Institute's Civic Engagement activities to streamline efforts in both. The Panel agreed that this was very important and welcome.
- The Panel learned that the series of the CE and HPU initiatives are important, and in the wider issues of hours, workload, etc. Demands of Croke Park Agreement, etc add to workload of staff, there is an onus on staff to look after themselves too. The Panel noted that there were strong supports for staff in place.

(J) Resourcing

- The Panel commended the Institute Executive for resourcing the HPU, CE and SipITT initiatives.

(K) Continuing Professional Development

- The Panel noted that the HR department coordinates applications by staff for support to undertake programmes leading to awards on the NFQ. Each academic department and school provides support to attend conferences, etc., as resources allows.
- The Panel learned of the Centre for Education Development, its range of CPD workshops and courses, and commended the range of T&L CPD for staff.

Based on its discussion with the School Executive, the Panel's findings were recorded as follows:

Commendation(s)

- Induction programme and SipITT project
- Industry / Sectoral Links and International Links – number, scope and diversity. Innovative, dynamic department with good internal and external links. The Panel wishes to acknowledge the significant contribution of staff in this regard and the need for continued support to staff in this work.
- Very impressive scale of documentation, developed in context of many other activities. Excellent documentation produced to a very high standard, well-structured and evidence of embedded and inclusive and comprehensive process.
- Very self-reflective documents
- Access chapter (and access officer for advising) and success in attracting non-standard learner applications.
- The level and diversity of community engagement
- Engagement (staff, stakeholders, other departments, research) and dynamism of the staff
- Research, development and Innovation activity, in particular the UNESCO project.

Recommendation(s)

- Encourage the continued dissemination of information about stakeholder links to the broader staff body. Where further links are established, the Department should be conscious of its capacity to offer its continued support to oversee and manage these links.
- The Panel recognises the significant increase in post-graduate research activity in recent years and the need for continuing support for students and supervisors, e.g. for generic skills' training, etc.
- Make sure Professional bodies are aware of any changes and are included in stakeholder feedback.
- Keeping engagement with sector as fresh as possible is important and to be review on an ongoing basis.

5. Programmatic Review of the Academic Programmes in the Department of Health and Leisure Studies

5.1 Programmes Under Consideration:

Named Award:	<p>Certificate in Universal Physical Activity Programming; L9 (20 credits)</p> <p>Certificate in Physical Activity Communication and Advocacy; L9 (20 credits)</p> <p>Certificate Adapted Physical Activity Communication, Policy and Provision; L9 (20 credits)</p> <p>Certificate in Universal Communication and Programming in Adapted Physical Activity; L9 (20 credits)</p> <p>BSc Health and Leisure; L7 (3 years)</p> <p>BSc Health and Leisure with Massage; L7 (3 years)</p> <p>BA in Outdoor Learning; L7 (2 years, add-on, part-time)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) Health and Leisure; L8 (4 years)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) Health and Leisure with Massage; L8 (4 years)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) in Wellness; Level 8 (1 year, add-on)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) in Sports Development; Level 8 (1 year, add-on)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) in Adapted Physical Activity; Level 8 (1 year, add-on)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) in Fitness Professional; Level 8 (1 year, add-on)</p> <p>BSc (Honours) in Physical Education; Level 8 (1 year, add-on)</p> <p>Diploma in Adapted Physical Activity Leadership; L9 (1 year; Exit Award)</p> <p>MA in Adapted Physical Activity Leadership; L9 (1.5 years)</p>
Exit Award(s):	<p>Higher Certificate in Science in Health and Leisure; L6 (2 Years; Exit Award)</p> <p>Higher Certificate in Science in Health and Leisure with Massage; L6 (2 Years; Exit Award)</p>
Award Type:	Degree, Honours Degree, Masters Degree
Award Class:	Minor, Major
NFQ Level:	Level 6, Level 7, Level 8 and Level 9
Applies to Intake:	September 2014 Intakes and changes to subsequent stages will track these students in the years thereafter

5.2 Members of the External Review Panel for the Department of Health and Leisure Studies

Name	Position	Organisation
Ms Ann Campbell	Chairperson	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Mr Humphrey Murphy		Irish Leisure Consultants
Mr Graham O'Neill		Student ITT
Dr Ann Bourke		University College Dublin
Dr Gerard McKiernan	Vice Chairperson	Dundalk Institute of Technology

5.3 Academic Programme Delivery Team

Mr Seamus O'Shea	Mr John Pierce
Ms Aileen Kennedy	Mr Ciaran McCabe
Ms Jackie Gallagher	Ms Jackie Rutledge
Ms Elizabeth Brunton	Ms Eileen Sayers
Mr David Gaughran	Dr JT Deenihan
Mr Tomas Alyward	Ms Una Moynihan
Mr Pat Flanagan	Ms Catherine Carty
Mr Joe O'Connor	Ms Eimear Foley
Ms Ursula Barrett	Mr Trevor Dunne
Ms Rosie Daniel	Ms Maeve Frawley
Ms Jackie Gavaghan	Ms Teresa Richardson
Dr Alan Ringland	

5.4 Programme-Level Findings

5.4.1 Meeting of the Expert Panel with Head of Department and Programmatic Review Co-ordinators.

This section of the report addresses the Self-Evaluation Report and the following programme level considerations:

- Evidence of review of the development of the programmes over the previous five years with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of quality.
- Evaluation of the flexibility of the School / Department to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process.
- A review of the range and mix of assessment procedures experienced by participants on the various programmes.
- A review of the plans for future developments and assessment of the viability of these developments.
- An analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of each of the programmes approved under the following headings:

- Access, transfer and progression
 - Retention
 - Standards and Outcomes
 - Programme structure
 - Learning and Teaching Strategies
 - Assessment Strategy
- An evaluation of the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of the programmes, under the following heading:
 - Resource requirements
 - A review of the School's / Department's research activities and projections in the area of study under review, under the following heading:
 - Research Activity
 - An evaluation of the formal links the school and institute have established with industry / business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its programmes
 - Regional, National, International
 - Work Placement, Internship, etc

The Panel met with Programme leaders and Programmatic Review Coordinator, Head of Department and Head of School. The points discussed were as follows:

(A) Coordination of Programmatic Review

- The PR coordinator gave an overview of her role, which included reviewing documentation from the last programmatic review and aligning the departments strategies with the Institute's Strategic Plan, collating, presenting, arranging meetings, etc. The PR coordinator worked closely with the Head of Department.
- Department staff contributed to the self-evaluation through meetings which divided into sub-groups to discuss various review items.
- In terms of increasing efficiency, the department determined that it would record CPD annually so as to provide information on what will happen during the next five years – a diary as such.
- Information in relation to students, programmes, budgets, etc., is held by the Head of School on spreadsheets. This includes unit costing and maintaining key points of everything – activities, extern remarks, responses, annual reports, etc. Alumni is one area which requires some further development of one central system.
- Research outputs in the PR document is coded as per IoTI recommendations.

(B) Main changes arising from Self Evaluation

- The Department agreed that a core philosophy should be the point of origin of further development. The staff agreed that the core philosophy established during the previous Review was still valid. The Panel were referred to the table on p43 – which is comprehensive and core to H&L activities. It may evolve somewhat over time.
- The Panel asked how is the philosophy disseminated. As the Self Evaluation has reaffirmed the philosophy, could it be a plaque or department motto? It was accepted that the core philosophy to go into student / department handbook and be more visible.
- Buddy system for new staff (1hr per week to induct new staff).

(C) Defined physical space for the Department

- The department mainly operates in the Institute's South Campus, the Tralee Regional Sports Complex, Banna Hotel Pool facility, Cappanalea Outdoor Education Centre, etc. Specific rooms, noticeboard, etc exist.
- The Department is challenged by a lack of state of the art facilities and is working towards a facility. In this regard the Institute has established a Foundation board has been put in place to seek funding.

(D) Programmes

- The Panel reviewed the order in council with the Head of School and Head of Department, noting that recently validated programmes had no proposed changes but were being submitted for re-validating at this point to ensure that the validation / re-validation dates of all programme in the department's portfolio were synchronised.
- Typical intake into the programmes is as follows: 90 for Health and Leisure Studies (Levels 7 & 8) and 20 for Health and Leisure with Massage (Levels 7 and 8). These students essentially follow the same pathways up to year 3.
- The Panel suggested the department consider determining the county of origin of students on its programmes, understanding that the catchment for the H&L programmes was very broad. The Panel noted marketing previously used feeder schools survey to target schools in Kerry via schools liaison officer (based in the Institute's Development Office).
- The Department is aware of its main competitors. The Physical Education stream traditionally attracted attracts students, although this has waned recently in favour of the other streams. Students typically don't make decision in relation to stream until end of year 2, therefore there is time for

them to reflect on other possibilities.

- There is little opportunity to transfer to second year from FETAC programmes because of the various specialisms in programme and the capacity of the Department to accept additional students. FETAC graduates enter to first year.
- There is no level 6 on CAO reflecting market / applicant trend. Learners strive for L7 qualification (minimum). There are Level 6 exit awards associated with each of the bachelor degree and master degree programmes.
- The Department acknowledged that the CPA hours help significantly to resource ongoing academic delivery and non-teaching projects, and that the relatively higher student numbers bring efficiencies. Currently the unit cost per student is 1K less than ITT average.
- There is possible recognition for students who are active in sports, etc., to be accredited for extracurricular work where they choose the stage 2 elective Community Services Initiative.
- Noted Table 3.4.1 on Progression. Noted the drop in success rate in 1yr 2012/13. Led to SipITT. Noted significant increase in retention from SipITT and the department's overall response, e.g. small group sessions. Results are better too. Many of the Health and Leisure studies engage in significant amounts of Sport. Some students excel in both, but others may struggle. The Sports Officer is very proactive in supporting and advising students in this regard. The Panel noted the sports pass system in operation, coordinated by sports officer, and particularly relevant to the HL students given involvement in Sports.
- Induction for all years takes place for Health and Leisure students. Above first year the induction includes revision of core principles and what to expect in the year ahead, including weekly events for all years. Core philosophy to be reinforced next September 2014. Noted 'Ma's and Da's' initiative for peer support is being rolled out.

(E) National and International Links, including Business and Community

- The Panel congratulated the department on the links that had been established.

(F) The UNESCO chair evolved from other activities and from being involved in earlier EU projects, e.g. EIPET – about developing knowledge resource for Inclusive practice in teacher training – and by encouraging other staff to develop / contribute their expertise in this area. UNESCO were interested in the EIPET project (inclusive PE training) as it aligned with their own strategy. The panel noted that the EIPET module has been translated into many language and is still a work in progress, currently being transferred to ITT online facility. The Panel

noted that best practice for people with disability, is best practice for all, and this philosophy is one that has withstood the test of time.

- Lecturers learn from more experienced peers thanks to excellent team spirit in the department.
- Broader project proposals now exist in collaboration with the Institute's other research centres, IMaR, CEED and with IAHT, e.g. ELESa, U-FIT, as mentioned in the self-evaluation report.
- The panel further discussed engagement (p150) with external groups so students know how and not just the knowledge. As H&L developed, it looked for agencies not yet involved. Volunteering database now exists on the Institute Website where external agencies can put details of volunteering opportunities on the Institute's website. Not just a teaching and learning tool, also for student involvement in community to 'give back' and knowledge exchange as well as for personal / professional development.
- The Department's links represent a mixture of local, regional and national and international.
- The dept's engagement with stakeholders and maintaining active links is challenging. The Institute Executive must approve non-class contact hours.
- The Department sees it as important to seek level 10 approval to develop postgraduate research further. Currently it engages with areas which have approval at level 10, leading to opportunities for innovative collaborations.
- Many staff engage with research activity. Best practice agendas are developed from EU context which influences teaching practice and content. Staff have travelled or presented online to represent UNESCO and ITT in China, Russia, etc.
- The Department sees a need to develop the inclusive agenda across the entire programme – not just APA modules. Staff are encouraged to have an inclusive agenda in all aspects of the programme.

5.4.2 Meeting of the Expert Panel with Head of Department, Programmatic Review Co-ordinators and academic programmes delivery team.

The Expert Panel met with the Head of Department, Programmatic Review Co-ordinators and academic programmes delivery team. The following points were discussed:

(A) Justification of proposed changes.

- Stakeholder feedback was examined, e.g. placement survey (students and employers and Alumni); appreciative enquiry exercise (student conducted a survey with a variety of stakeholders along the lines of 'what is the best of..?').

This was to be the bedrock of the PR process.

- The Department identified intensity of student workload, commended broad nature of programme and community engagement aspects, issues with thesis, research methods.
- Employers stated students were very adaptable in terms of working with clients. Some students may lack realisation of their competencies therefore the department will begin building of professional capacity from earlier stage. Including development of enhanced induction programme.
- All above were taken into account when reviewing programmes.
- Extern examiners comments are captured on central system and the department responds to each. Exam boards have open forum on the results, etc., and items of concern are discussed at course board meetings as required

(B) Embedded awards

- The Panel noted that National Governing Bodies were not on list of stakeholders. The department accepted that these would be included. There is a wide range of embedded awards – some examined by the Institute team who are accredited examiners for specific professional certifications. Aquatics and Outdoor Education described as examples.
- Do external agencies determine content of a module? Not usually; in some cases content in module preceded that of professional awards, and the content is designed for the holistic education of the student, not just to satisfy the requirements of an embedded award. Links staff have with NGB's has sometimes led to standard setting in the NGB on basis of the HL programme content (GP exercise referral cited as example).
- In some cases, students required to partake in independent learning (outside scope of Institute) – e.g. outdoor awards. This is notified to the students.
- Can there be tensions between learning outcomes of programme (award standards) and award standards of external agencies? No. Modules support learning of award standards of external agency (+ wider breadth of learning). Often modules support development of standards in industry.

(C) How do the programmes follow trends in industry?

- Work placement and engagement with industry supervisors is an ideal mechanism for following and identifying changing trends in industry. Employers provide ongoing feedback on what is required of students. Both students and ITT can identify work placement opportunities but a placement committee will determine appropriateness of placements suggested by students and employers.

(D) Programme Governance and structure

- The Course Board generally deals with all issues. Once per six weeks (or sooner).
- The Panel asked how the SWOT analysis was prepared. It represented open analysis of programme. The SWOT analysis was done at beginning of the Review process.
- The Delivery team were asked about students' communications and writing skills. These were generally identified as weaknesses in panellists experience. Was this the case among HL students?
- Students who would like to pursue PE typically have very good communication skills, and practical teaching benefits. Confidence is a personal attribute that students need to work on (Realisation of what they can do? Pitching better). Now prepare students for this, and incorporate into work placement prep module. Also, induction programme for 2,3,4 years.
- Noted external examiners have begun to comment positively on students ability to write reports has improved. This happened after change to assessment strategy.
- The delivery team advocate bringing back graduates to tell their stories. Youth work was something that was not obvious in the programme literature but has an increasing profile in HL.
- The Marketing module is moved to stage 2. The Project in the Marketing module emphasises the importance of professional behaviour, attitude, etc in engaging with clients.
- Work Placement Preparation continues as a discrete module. Mock interviews help also in informing student if they are having the intended impact in the interview. There have been no significant problems in securing students with Work Placements. Students on work placement are visited, and staff can observe students in work. If students propose a placement, they must present the proposal to the Department's Work Placement committee, which will vet it.
- The ongoing quality of Work Placement is verified by Students log which is signed by their supervisor. In addition, a phone call is made within first two weeks of placement as an initial check. This is followed by a WP visit or Skype call.
- The Department supports contact hours involved in work placement by follow ITT guidelines and has WP Coordinator and Tutors, each with distinct duties. Quality Assurance of WP needs to be monitored. If after time, WP is not sufficiently challenging, the Department will intervene with the

Placement to re-look at the students experience.

(E) Performance in individual modules

- Exam boards allow review of each module as well as overall student performance. Reviewing allows for anomalies to be identified which are discussed at exam boards and / or subsequently at course board meetings.
- There are certain modules where student perform more poorly, which tend to be those that require particular reading and writing standards.
- Research methods in second year is another where students struggle. This generic modules as it was originally is now being embedded in other modules. This is part of renewed drive to culture appreciation for research.

(F) Class tutor

- A class tutor is assigned to each class group. The role has been discussed at course board and there is a need for it be defined at institute level. Course board discusses student performance on an on-going basis, but especially at mid-term. Meetings are subsequently arranged to discuss issues with individual students, as agreed at course boards.
- There are class reps for each of the class groups. The lecturers are recognised as being very open to discussing programme issues. Many groups may resolve issues with class tutor or with lecturer. The formal JAWS meetings deal with items of a general nature.

(G) Broad structural changes

The following points were discussed

- Level 7 and level 8 points differential and 50% requirement for progression from Level 7 to add-on level 8.
- Stream selection described. Based on merit. Specific regulations applied for entry to certain streams.
- End of year two – streams to change to three possible avenues instead of five
 - a. General student body continues with Health and Leisure Stream
 - b. APA
 - c. PE

This change was justified due to move of Work Placement from year 4 to year 3 AND retained specialism for PE and APA – p251 and p252 of SER document.

PE stream has specific modules to qualify for PE in UL, or UK and take 2 years to cover. The APA stream, based on feedback from employers was supplemented with more knowledge and the changes reflect this. It was also

noted that Work Placement in APA would require specific skills and these are addressed in the new structure.

- Students' choice of stream at the end of second year is irreversible. A lot of time spent on ensuring students are fully informed. Students on general Health and Leisure stream are not on a 'generic' programme in that it is an identity in itself.
- Proposal for a change from Fitness Professional to Athletic Performance was discussed, and the panel gave feedback. Noted that 'Athletic' can be elite or leisure. The title is more current titles, and internationally recognisable.

(H) PE - What implications from the Teaching Councils changes to teacher training?

- A two-year graduate diploma now applies to every programme, but remains one-year in Scotland. There is no choice in this instance but to accept the change. The department strategic plan proposes the department's strategic direction on this point.

(I) Implementation of proposed changes

- Students on current programmes will proceed on the original format while new students will enter on revised format which will roll out thereafter.

(J) Research project

- All streams will take up research project in semester 7,8 rather than 6,7 as originally designed.

(K) Proposed changes to the Health and Leisure with Massage programme

- Re-arrangement of content only. Massage essentially occupies the same position as aquatics and outdoor. Did you consider a single programme with an extra stream?

(L) Transitions

- The panel discussed the Transitions initiative with the delivery team. It was noted that the level 8 awards in Health and Leisure were in response to learner demand and that the Health and Leisure programme was already a common entry programme with a consistent CAO points range.

(M) Strategic Plan

- The Panel discussed the Department's strategic plan with the academic team. The Plan aligns with HEA compacts, School plan and will feed into institute strategic plan. Noted CARA, Alumni engagement (e.g. events) and the valuable contribution from these initiatives towards the development of the

Department. The Panel also noted and commended the SipITT initiative.

- The Panel noted that the Institute Gym is to be supervised by Health and Leisure students. A future intention is to improve recreational space for students.
- Discussed research and innovation and the emphasis on the UNESCO project. The Panel noted that it encompassed the education and training remit of the Institute and that the inclusive practice it advocates is a model of good practice generally – with a very broad scope (social justice) for collaborative activities, thereby facilitating input from a wide range of stakeholders.

6. Outcomes of the Programmatic Review

On the basis of its review of the documentation provided, and meetings with the relevant members of staff, the panel recommends the re-validation of awards as on the order in council until the next Programmatic Review, and agrees with departments proposals for revised titles for streams ('Fitness Professional' to be changed to 'Athletic Performance' and 'Wellness' to be changed to 'Health and Wellbeing'.

The External Review Panel, having reviewed the Department's Self-Evaluation Report, and having met with the School Executive and Departmental Staff hereby confirm the following criteria for Programmatic Review as described in Section A7 of the Institute of Technology Tralee Quality Assurance Manual (Appendix 1).

6.1 Evidence of Programmatic Review

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there evidence of a review of the development of the programmes over the previous five years with particular regard to the achievement and improvement of quality
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- Very impressive scale of documentation, developed in context of many other activities. Excellent documentation produced to a very high standard, well-structured and evidence of embedded and inclusive and comprehensive process.
- Very self-reflective document

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.2 Meeting the changing needs of stakeholders

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there an evaluation of the flexibility of the School / Department to the changing needs of students, employers and to all stakeholders in the process?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- The level and diversity of community engagement.
- Engagement (with staff, stakeholders, other departments, and research partners),

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.3 Range and Mix of Assessment Procedures

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there a review of the range and mix of assessment procedures experienced by participants on the various programmes?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- Development and Publication of the Assessment grading strategy and Assessment Rubric.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.4 Future Developments

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there a review of the plans for future developments and assessment of the viability of these developments?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.5 Programme Effectiveness and Efficiency

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there an analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of each of the programmes approved under the following headings:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access, transfer and progression ○ Retention ○ Award Standards and Outcomes ○ Programme structure ○ Learning and Teaching Strategies ○ Assessment Strategy
Overall Finding:	Yes

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at http://www.hetac.ie/publications_pol01.htm

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.6 Physical Facilities

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there an evaluation of the physical facilities provided by the Institute for the provision of the programmes, under the following heading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Resource requirements
Overall Finding:	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.7 Research Activities

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there a review of the School's / Department's <u>research activities</u> ?
Overall Finding:	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.8 Formal Links

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there an evaluation of the <u>formal links</u> the school and institute have established with industry / business and the wider community in order to maintain the relevance of its
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	programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regional, National, International ○ Work Placement, Internship, etc
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.9 Programme Structure

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated programme intended learning outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.10 Module Descriptors

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have the Panel made comments in relation to the module descriptors?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

6.11 Future Plans

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Evidence that the programme board considered and identified opportunities and signalled proposals for related new programme and award development.
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<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes
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Commendation(s)

- None.

Recommendation(s) - See section 7.

On the basis of its review of the documentation and meetings with the department staff, the Panel recommend the re-validation of the programmes that were submitted as part of this programmatic review. The Programme Self Evaluation Report (SER) provides more detailed information of department activities.

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:


Ms Ann Campbell, Chairperson.

Date:

10.7.2014

7. Commendations and Recommendations

7.1 Commendations

- Induction and SipITT
- Industry / Sectoral Links and International Links – number, scope and diversity. Innovative, dynamic department with good internal and external links. The Panel wishes to acknowledge the significant contribution of staff in this regard and the need for continued support to staff in this work.
- Very impressive scale of documentation, developed in context of many other activities. Excellent documentation produced to a very high standard, well-structured and evidence of embedded and inclusive and comprehensive process.
- Very self-reflective document
- Access chapter (and access officer for advising) and success in attracting non-standard learner applications.
- Commending the level and diversity of community engagement
- Engagement (staff, stakeholders, other departments, research), Documentation, Dynamism
- Programme design and structure, efficiency of sharing modules and delivery of modules in programmes.
- Research, development and Innovation activity, in particular the UNESCO project.
- Development and Publication of the Assessment grading strategy and Assessment Rubric.

7.2 Recommendations

- Review the re-positioning of modules. In particular where modules are significantly repositioned within the programmes.
- The departmental core philosophy is to be made more visible to all stakeholders.
- Further analysis of domiciliary origin of students is to be undertaken, such that the data can be used for promotional activity and such that tracking these graduates through to employment will enrich the data set available for promotion.
- Encourage the continued dissemination of information about stakeholder links to the broader staff body. Where further links are established, the Department

should be conscious of its capacity to offer its continued support to oversee and manage these links.

- Develop further the tracking of research teaching in undergraduate modules to monitor the development of graduate attributes including critical thinking, analysis, referencing skills, etc.
- The Panel recognises the significant increase in post-graduate research activity in recent years and the need for continuing support for students and supervisors, e.g. for generic skills' training, etc.
- Make sure Professional bodies are aware of any changes and are included in stakeholder feedback.
- Keeping engagement with sector as fresh as possible is important and to be review on an ongoing basis.
- Be aware that the strategic plan / implementation plan is of very ambitious scale and items should be prioritised. The implementation of the plan should be tracked. Clear measurable criteria should be included in all cases.
- Special regulations must be in ACS. Remove special regulations from module descriptors and include in ACS. ACS must be reviewed for accuracy and amended as required.
- Review reading lists. Be more specific in terms of journals and websites. Use up-to-date materials.
- Integrated and joint assessment strategies should be more obvious and promoted further.
- Recommend detailed programme handbook, including ACS, detail programme design, etc.
- Revisit and revise as appropriate, phrasing of learning outcomes in line with award standards.
- Standardise minimum attendance requirement across modules.
- Implement Institute policy with respect to group projects or develop a suitable policy specific to project requirements in H&L programmes.
- Debate the need for minimum grade in practical and in final examinations and develop proposal thereof. Define and state in the ACS or programme handbook what is practical and is governed by this regulation, and what is not.

- Certain modules are light in what the descriptor describes as content. Modules should have a consistent quantum of indicative syllabus detail. Module descriptors should be revised in light of this recommendation.