

PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW OF THE TEACHING AND LEARNING UNIT

Phase 2: Programme Review

PROGRAMME PANEL REPORT

DEPARTMENT: Teaching and Learning Unit

DATE: April 6th 2017

PROGRAMMES SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW

Major Awards

Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Non-Major Awards

Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, NFQ L9 Minor Award, 30 ECTS Credits
(linked to Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education)

PROGRAMME REVIEW PANEL MEMBERSHIP

Ms Naomi Jackson, Dean of Academic Affairs, College of Computing Technology (Chairperson)

Dr Jen Harvey, Head of Learning, Teaching and Technology Centre, Dublin Institute of Technology

Ms Clare Gormley, Learning Technologist, Teaching Enhancement Unit, Dublin City University

Dr Helen Murphy, Head of Department of Education, Waterford Institute of Technology

Dr Pio Fenton, Head of Department of Marketing & International Business, CIT

PROGRAMME REPRESENTATION

Programme Staff

Ms Marese Bermingham, Head, AnSEO – The Student Engagement Office/Head Teaching and Learning Unit

Dr Tom O'Mahony, Teaching & Learning Unit/Dept. of Electrical & Electronic Engineering, Course Coordinator MA in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education

Dr Gearoid O'Suilleabhain, Head, Technology Enhanced Learning Centre

Dr Angela Wright, Teaching & Learning Unit/ Dept. of Organisation & Professional Development

Dr Stephen Cassidy, Dean of Academic Quality Enhancement

Ruairi O'Ceallachair, AnSeo

Prof. Irene Sheridan, Head of Extended Campus

Deirdre Creedon, Access Officer

Learner Representatives

Irene Hogan

Dr Brigid Lucey

Ruth Murphy

Tim O'Halloran

Catherine Frehill

Graduates

Deirdre Goggin

John Twohig

Paddy Anderson

Anne Crowley

A. PROGRAMME SUMMARY AND MAJOR CHANGES PROPOSED

1. MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING & LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The aim of this programme is to equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and competence to design and deliver quality, learner-centered educational programmes; to evaluate the effectiveness of those programmes; and to reflect on how professional practice supports student learning.

Through engagement with modules in areas of educational research and the completion of a research project, learners will develop high level skills of enquiry and research to apply to key issues in teaching and learning practice and policy. Through their immersion in educational research graduates will be equipped to contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Graduates of this programme will be employed in a Higher Education Institute sector primarily as lecturing staff. The programme aims to produce graduates that will reflect on, plan and contribute to the evidence-based enhancement and transformation of their teaching and learning approaches. At the module-level graduates will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to design and deliver learning experiences that engage and challenge in a variety of contexts. Graduates will possess a body of professional knowledge and skill to enable them to contribute to and lead the development of programmes within higher education. The programme aims to produce graduates that are practiced researchers that contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

2. POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

This programme aims to equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and competence to design and deliver quality, learner-centered educational programmes; to evaluate the effectiveness of those programmes; and to reflect on how professional practice supports student learning. To achieve this aim, the programme builds on the knowledge, skills and competences previously developed in the certificate. Participants are required to a) explore good practice in curriculum design and evaluation b) explore a current issue in higher education c) further develop their professional practice by completing a module in a specialised topic.

Graduates of this programme will be employed in a Higher Education Institute sector primarily as lecturing staff. The programme aims to produce graduates that will reflect on, plan and contribute to the evidence-based enhancement and transformation of their teaching and learning approaches. At the module-level graduates will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to design and deliver learning experiences that engage and challenge in a variety of contexts. Graduates will possess a body of professional knowledge and skill to enable them to contribute to and lead the

development of programmes within higher education. It is envisaged that graduates of this programme would be recognised as teaching and learning champions within their discipline area.

3. CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In this programme participants are asked to critique and evaluate their professional practices as educators. The focus of the programme is at the individual module level. The specific aim of this programme is to equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and competence to design and deliver quality, learner-centered educational experiences; to evaluate the effectiveness of those experiences; and to reflect on how professional practice supports student learning. To achieve this aim, the programme integrates a number of thematic areas: the teaching and learning process; the assessment process and the use of technology. By increasing awareness and understanding of the learning process, participants are encouraged to adopt teaching methodologies that enhance student learning. Participants will also examine the critical impact that assessment policies and practice have on learning. Finally, learning management systems and other appropriate learning technologies are advocated to support and manage the teaching and learning process.

Graduates of this programme will be employed in a Higher Education Institute sector primarily as lecturing staff. The programme aims to produce graduates that will reflect on, plan and contribute to the evidence-based enhancement and transformation of their teaching and learning approaches. At the module-level graduates will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to design and deliver learning experiences that engage and challenge in a variety of contexts.

4. MAJOR CHANGES BEING PROPOSED FOR THIS SUITE OF PROGRAMMES

The available evidence suggests that the overall programme aims are relevant and are being achieved. The existing modules support the programme aims and engage staff. The teaching, learning and assessment processes support a deep approach to learning and the quality of that learning is consistent with national norms. The key change is to introduce 10 credit modules to reduce overall workload on students and hence improve progression rates through the programme. In designing those 10 credit modules, the objective was to maintain, in so far as possible, the existing strengths of the Programme. To achieve this, the programme team chose to combine individual 5 credit modules to form 10 credit modules - where a natural symbiosis existed. This should address the excess workload by effectively reducing the number of learning outcomes from ten (for two five credit modules) to approximately six (for a single ten credit module). Simultaneously, it addresses the overassessment problem by removing half of the draft and final assignments. By attempting to combine modules, it should be possible to maintain the same programme outcomes. Similar to the

existing 5-credit modules, the design philosophy, when creating these new modules, was to integrate theory with reflective practice. The net effect should be a programme that is very similar in terms of aims and objectives but facilitates improved progression rates.

The programme team have increased the emphasis on self-assessment and peer-review throughout the programme. In the revised programme, self-assessment and peer-review will form a part of most assignments. This approach is consistent with recent developments in the assessment literature, where the emphasis is changing from using assessment to support learning to using assessment to develop critical competencies e.g. the ability to learn independently. However, these skills are acknowledged to be difficult to learn, and a single instance is unlikely to be effective. In contrast, embedding them within the curriculum allows for these skills to be practiced and developed. Furthermore, the team intend to use routine and formal self-assessment to help improve the alignment between the suite of programmes and the National Professional Development Framework. Principally, self-assessment can be used to support Domain 1: The Self in Teaching and Learning by encouraging participants to reflect on the module learning outcomes, how those learning outcomes have been achieved and the intersection with their own professional practice, personal philosophy and value set. In a similar way, the team see the use of formal peer-review processes as supporting Domain 3: Professional Communication and Dialogue in T&L. By using a variety of different peer-review processes (e.g. on-line forums, face-to-face discussions) peer-review could be used to satisfy element 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 of Domain 5. Hence a curricular approach to self-assessment and peer review should simultaneously enable assessment AS learning and enhance the alignment with the National Professional Development Framework.

The programme team are also keen to continue to provide flexible pathways towards learning. To this end, the team have identified a number of modules that will be delivered on-line. The remaining modules will utilise the Blackboard LMS to realise a blended learning environment to support learners. Lecture components will be recorded and made available via the Blackboard LMS.

Furthermore, the team are keen to enable opportunities for learners to leverage CIT's experience in the Recognition of Prior (Experiential) Learning sphere. Over the past two years, the TLU has been developing and promoting a staff mentoring process. Consequently, a new module has been developed that would allow mentors to gain recognition for that experiential learning. Similarly, the existing 5-credit Improving Practice module has been re-cast as a 10- credit Publishing Practitioner Research which should allow staff that have a SoTL publication to gain credit for that experiential learning.

B. PANEL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. OVERALL RECOMMENDATION TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL ON REVALIDATION

Contingent upon confirmation of [the fulfilment of any Panel conditions and] the successful completion of the internal programme and module moderation process, the Panel **recommends to Academic Council that the listed programmes be revalidated** for five years or until the next Programmatic Review, whichever is sooner, with effect from September 2017.

No Panel conditions are attached to this recommendation

2. GENERAL

Commendations

- 2.1 The excellence, diligence and collegiality of the team is notable. The commitment to the programme and good practice within their own teaching was also strongly featured throughout the panel visit.
- 2.2 The transition to 10-credit modules is a laudable solution to a diagnosed problem.
- 2.3 The flexible and accommodating approach throughout the programme is appreciated by students and graduates.
- 2.4 The variety of teaching styles is an attractive feature of the programme.

Recommendations

- 2.5 The value of this programme is enormous. CIT should resource the programme and the associated unit to a level that reflects the programmes value. Equally, it is the view of the panel that this programme be recognised for its contribution to CIT.
- 2.6 The Institute should consider ways of measuring and recognising teaching excellence.
- 2.7 Consideration should be given to workload allowances for participants on the programme. We would recommend that this challenge is discussed further at institutional and departmental level as a means of recognising the significant commitment of participants to date and strengthening the case for time allowances to participate.
- 2.8 The activities of the TLU should be integrated in some fashion to this programme with showcase opportunities being introduced throughout.

3. PROGRAMME OPERATION AND PERFORMANCE

Recommendation

- 3.1 The panel recommends that the Institute implements a mechanism within its MIS that reflects registration for CPD purposes only rather than registration on the award, where the award is not the initial intention to ensure accuracy of recording and aid informed decision-making.
- 3.2 The panel strongly recommends a promotion strategy be developed for this programme so that all eligible staff are aware of the opportunities it affords. It is recognised that resourcing of the unit would have a bearing on this.

4. PROPOSED PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION (INCL. DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT)

Recommendation

- 4.1 The panel recommends that an induction programme for the MA be developed with particular emphasis on the development of critical reflective skills.
- 4.2 In operationalising the programme, the panel recommends advance notice and consistency of timetabling to enable forward planning by potential participants. It is our belief that the current flexibility, though commendable, is not scalable.
- 4.3 The use of online technologies for delivery is to be commended particularly since it affords valuable opportunities to develop the digital skillset and confidence of course participants for teaching and learning. The panel recommends a regular reappraisal of this approach to ensure maximum fitness for purpose. In light of the communicated intention to move more of the programme into the online space in the future, the panel recommends that, in advance of doing so, the online teaching and learning strategy is given more formalised consideration at programme level with a clear rationale for determining which modules will be delivered online, what format online delivery will take, the minimum expectations / requirements of an online lesson including how interactivity will be ensured, how learning will be facilitated, learners supported and a sense of community developed among the learner body.

5. MODULES

A recommendation of the Panel to revalidate the programmes under review is contingent on the successful completion of the internal programme and module moderation process carried out by, or on behalf of, the CIT Registrar's Office.

Recommendations

- 5.1 The appropriateness of the Learning Outcomes in all modules should be reviewed to ensure that the map sufficiently and consistently to the expectations of Level 9 outcomes.
- 5.2 Further streamlining of assessment mechanism within modules needs to be undertaken. The use of draft reports as intermediary assessments may have value but also requires further consideration. The programme team should also review how the individual module assessments can function both independently as well as contribute towards a portfolio of evidence of learning and reflection across the programme. The programme team should review the volume and range of assessments used on the programme. The migration towards 10 credit modules may require further review of the nature (formative/summative) of the assessments used. Student feedback on assessment on the previous programme indicated that the use of multiple pieces of assessment in a single module was at times onerous so the team might review assessment in light of this feedback
- 5.3 Research Supervision: The panel strongly recommends that the assessment mechanism for this module use a more practical approach.

6. DEROGATIONS SOUGHT

- 6.1 The panel supports the inclusion to 10 credit modules throughout this stream of programme.

C. PROGRAMME FINALISATION

See attached implementation report.

D. APPENDIX – TIMETABLE OF PHASE 2 MEETINGS

Wednesday April 5th 2017

7.30 pm Panel Dinner

Thursday April 6th 2017

9.00 am Private Panel Meeting including presentation by Registrar's Office

9.30 am Departmental Presentation

10.00 am Meeting with Programme Team re Programme Operation and Performance

11.00 am **Private Panel Meeting (Tea/Coffee)**

11.30 am Meet with Programme Team re Proposed Changes to Programme Structures

12.45 pm **Private Panel Lunch**

1.45 pm Meet with Programme Team re General Review of Modules

3.15 pm **Private Panel Meeting (Tea/Coffee)**

3.30 pm Meet with Students

4.00 pm Meet with Graduates

4.30 pm Private Panel Meeting to draft outline report

5.00 pm Feedback to Programme Team