

Response of course board to PROGRAMMATIC PANEL REPORT

Course Areas:

Automobile Technology & Management

Automobile Technology and Transportation Course

The course board of the Automobile Technology and Transportation Course (Bachelor of Science in Automobile Technology & Management (Incorporating the Higher Certificate in Engineering in Automobile Technology & Management) and Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Transport Management) welcomes the Programmatic Panel report on the above programmes.

We would like to respond to the Suggestions and recommendations.

Conclusions

The panel has no major issue in recommending that these courses (L7 and L8) be approved for another full term (five years). The proposed changes are acceptable. However it has some suggestions and recommendations which the panel believe should seriously be looked at and possibly implemented over the next year or two. The suggestions are made for both courses (L7 and L8) as they apply to both in most cases.

Response: Accepted

Suggestions and recommendations:

1. Title: The word “automobile” should be replaced by “automotive” in the title of the level 7 course.

Response: Accepted and welcomed

2. Dealer Management Systems (DMS) on the courses to be brought into line with the industry requirements. DMS systems play a vital role in the management and productivity of all automotive industry related businesses. DMS in their design and operation, control all workshop retail, workshop warranty, and parts trade/retail sales. In addition their functionalities include in-depth and detailed KPI and Business Management reporting, to include business forecasting and Marketing. Students completing such courses within CIT should achieve very competent levels of DMS understanding and operations at the conclusion of their chosen course.

Response:

Point no. 2 (DMS) – as part of the programme review, and in an effort to ensure learners achieve a greater understanding and practical experience of using the DMS software, an entire module (AUTO 7010) has been dedicated to the system. This is a considerable increase from the existing programme, whereby the DMS aspects were combined with other computer applications (Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) within one module. This decision was taken following feedback from both graduates and employers which emphasised the importance of graduates having a good understanding of the system capabilities. However, while it is widely acknowledged that the important thing was having an understanding and familiarity with the capabilities of a DMS, the reality is that only when the graduates are using the system on a daily basis in the workplace will the functions be fully utilised and remembered.

In relation to the KPI and Business Management reporting, these aspects will be covered within the DMS module, however, it is also planned to incorporate DMS reports within the Business Finance Module (ACCT 7007) to make further use of the software. Unfortunately, this is not implicitly stated within the Business Finance module descriptor as it is a 'shared module' in that it is delivered across a number of different degree programmes and therefore appears generic in description but will actually include the use of DMS financial reports within the module.

3. Course Modules must also focus in greater detail on key Business Management principles. The areas of workshop loading, workshop productivity, and overall After-Sales department Business Management, (to include parts sales management) must be reviewed and covered at appropriate levels so as to ensure all prospective students are 'Industry Prepared' and trained to a level of expertise that will make them both extremely employable and sought after within the Industry.

Response:

Point no.3 & 6 – The Business Management principles mentioned such as workshop loading and productivity along with warranty procedures and administration, including typical manufacturer requirements, auditing, etc. will be covered in detail as outlined within the Motor Dealer Organisation 2 module (AUTO 7001). The point of ensuring module content is up to date and 'current' will be ensured with input from manufacturers and consideration towards best practice at all times.

4. Modules delivered by service in lecturers, such as mathematics, to reflect in their examples cases from the automotive industry where at all possible

Response: *Accepted. Will be conveyed to Maths lecturers*

5. Motor workshop module to be brought up to the industry standard.

Response: All Workshop modules have been reviewed and updated.

6. More focus on the warranty side of the business in some modules. In particular, the course and relevant module should have a greater emphasis on current manufacturing and industry warranty standards. As all warranty related processes are strictly audited and controlled by manufacturers the relevant course module should reflect these operating and controlling principals.

Response: *As point 3 above.*

7. Strengthen communications and interpersonal skills, especially with industry examples, such as CV writing, case writing studies on vehicle condition, (technical report writing), site visits to dealerships and transportation companies etc.

Response: Point no. 7 – The new ‘Automotive Communications and IT’ module in semester four of the proposed degree programme will place increased emphasis on the skills of communications, report writing, etc. This dedicated module was included in recognition of the need to place increased emphasis on these areas in an effort to improve skills in these areas and better prepare graduates for communications, recordkeeping, etc. within the workplace. The importance of CV writing considerations will now also be included into this module.

8. Students to be encouraged to be pro-active with their engagement with companies.

Response: *Accepted. Will be conveyed to student through year coordinators.*

9. Guest lecturers, from both the graduates in the industry and other relevant personnel in the industry to be pursued.

Response: *Accepted. Increased industrial guest lectures will be implemented.*

10. More practical examples on air brake systems. (Relevant for students seeking employment within transport Industry)

Response: *Point no. 10 – the proposed module titled ‘HGV Technology’ (AUTO 6021) will be dedicated entirely to Heavy Goods Vehicles and information relating to Air Brake Systems is included within this module.*

11. A little more on HVC (new module should help here).

Response: *As point no. 10*

12. Dedicated location for automotive electrics to be provided.

Response: *Accepted and welcomed. Will action as soon as resources are available. Priority action for capital expenditure.*

13. Time on some practical modules to be increased, especially in first year. This it was felt would even out the intake, where some students are from the industry and others know little of it, when they first come in.

Response: *First year students will have 12 out of 25 contact hours in practical labs in Semester1. Garage Practice; Engines (5 hours) is entirely workshop based. 6 out of 20 contact hours in semester 2 are workshop based. Garage Practice; Chassis (5 hours) is entirely workshop based.*

14. Consider pursuing a level 8 ab-initio degree with a project in one semester in year 3.

Response: *Accepted and welcomed*