



Date of Meeting: 30/4/2010

Named Awards: Higher Certificate
Programme Titles: Higher Certificate in Culinary Studies, Higher Certificates in Hospitality Studies
Award Class: Major
NFQ Level: 6
Intakes Commencing: Proposed for September 2010
ECTS/ACCS Credits: 120

PANEL MEMBERS

Name
Mr Donagh Davern, General Manager, Kingsley Hotel Group
Mr John O'Hara, Head of Department of Hospitality, Tourism & Leisure Studies, Athlone Institute of Technology
Mr Edmond Riordan, CIT Deputy Registrar & Head of Academic Quality

PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name
Mr Adrian Gregan, Head of Department of Tourism & Hospitality
Mr Ray Coughlan, Head of School of Business & Humanities
Mr Liam Noonan
Ms Breda Buckley
Ms Breda Hickey
Mr Joe O Donovan
Ms Linda Hayes
Ms Gail Cotter

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

A suite of Higher Certificates were proposed to replace FETAC / Fáilte Ireland professional skills programmes, and had been developed by a consortium of Institutes of Technology. Fáilte Ireland had indicated that it wished to withdraw from the academic and organisational responsibility for such programmes in the Institutes of Technology. A sector-wide approach was adopted, co-ordinated by IoTI:

- The courses where possible to be upgraded to meet Higher Education outcomes at NFQ Level 6
- recruitment to take place through CAO
- a common approach to be prepared by the affected IoTs for the upgrading of the affected programmes
- each Institute to consider and validate the revised programmes under its own delegated authority

The Panel had before it a Report of a QA process carried out in GMIT on the work of the consortium. The purpose of the present CIT Panel was to ensure that the programmes as adapted to the CIT modular system and as proposed for implementation in CIT meet the criteria for validation.

FINDINGS OF THE PANEL

1. General Findings

*NOTE: In this report, the term “Requirement” is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the Panel **must** be undertaken prior to commencement of the Programme. The term “Recommendation” indicates an item to which the Institute/Academic Council/Course Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of ongoing monitoring.*

The Panel commends the work of the consortium and of its CIT participants.

The Panel notes that a further Higher Certificate in Bar Supervision has been developed but is not being proceeded with in September 2010.

The Panel found that many of the new draft modules did not show evidence of having been taken on board from the consortium and properly finalised.

Accordingly, this is an interim report pending a reconvened Panel meeting. The Department of Tourism & Hospitality has undertaken to address rapidly the various issues highlighted by the Panel during the meeting.

2. Validation Criteria

The Panel has considered the documentation provided and has discussed the programme with the proposers. The panel has concluded that the programmes HC in Culinary Studies and HC in Hospitality Studies **have the capacity** to meet the required standards in the Arts field of study at Level 6 of the National Framework but further work is required as indicated below. The Panel will reconvene to review the revised documents.

Requirement: Revised documentation to be presented.

With regard to the CIT Validation Criteria:

2.1 Is there a convincing need for the programme with a viable level of applications?

Yes.

2.2 Are the level and type of the proposed award appropriate?

Yes

2.3 Is the learning experience of an appropriate level, standard and quality?

To be determined at reconvened meeting.

2.4 Is the programme structure logical and well designed (including procedures for access, transfer and progression)?

Requirement: The proposers should produce a chart showing the entry and progression pathways for the various new Higher certificates, and how they link with the existing programmes in the Department.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to renaming the Higher Certificates. This should be in consultation with other Institutes.

2.5 Are the programme management structures adequate?

Recommendation: The course teams should have engaged more with the incorporation of these programmes into the Department. This was evidenced for example in the gap in standard between existing “approved” modules and the draft modules presented to the Panel. The Panel accepts the assurances of the Department that this has been addressed and that the programmes will be well managed.

2.6 Are the resource requirements reasonable?

The Panel was assured on behalf of the President and Head of School that appropriate resources in terms of staffing and facilities will continue to be provided, in line with those available for the existing Fáilte Ireland/ FETAC system.

2.7 Will the impact of the programme on the Institute be positive?

Yes – these programmes, and the Bar Supervision Higher Certificate which is under development, will continue to meet a clear industry need, and the equivalent programmes have been provided successfully by the Department for many years.

3. Programme Structure

Requirement: In Hospitality Studies, Semester 1, the “CIT” module should be listed as mandatory. This will consequently require a check on the issue of 30 credits per semester; (There cannot be 6 mandatories plus electives).

Requirement: The Panel was informed that in the nationally accredited programme there were 10-credit year-long modules. Each such module must be divided into 5-credit modules, and the resulting 5-credit modules must have their own specified learning, content, assessment etc. It is not permissible for a Semester 1 and a Semester 2 module to have the same outcomes and content.

Requirement: In Culinary Studies, there are four mandatory Pastry modules. At the same time, issues such as Cost Control, Human Resources, Marketing and Mathematics are not explicitly addressed, or occur as part of elective modules. This seems off-balance to the Panel and must be addressed. One possibility (not the only one) would be to incorporate two new mandatory modules with content from Chef Entrepreneurial Skills and Business Mathematics for Hospitality (which are both currently elective modules) with the addition of Cost Control, Marketing and HR.

Recommendation: In Hospitality Studies, consideration to be given to moving the Front Office module to 1st year in order to facilitate placement.

Recommendation: Consideration to be given to implementing bridging studies as required for the current cohort of Fáilte Ireland students who will form the transition group to the new awards.

Modules

General Comment: The Panel notes that many modules on the proposed programme are pre-approved modules derived from related programmes in the CIT Modular system. These are of a good standard.

Requirement: The following points could be applied almost universally to new draft modules, and should be addressed:

- There should normally be five clearly stated Learning Outcomes, with a focus on measurable (assessable) achievements. Outcomes should avoid terms such as ‘appreciate’ and ‘understand’.
- Indicative content in many cases was too sparse – often just a handful of bullet points.
- Assessment details must be completed. Coursework must be explained and percentage allocated. The learning outcomes covered by each form of assessment must be given.
- Hours: 7 hours per 5 credit module. A breakdown of lecture, lab, independent study etc is required.
- Too many websites are listed in the references, many of them of dubious relevance.
- The module author listing should be updated.

Recommendation: Avoid where possible over-complicated module titles, such as “*Culinary Skills 1 / Culinary Studies*”.

4. **Conclusions:** The Panel will reconvene in June 2010 to consider revised submissions, to conclude the process and make its final recommendations.

Note to Academic Council October 2010

Revised modules were presented in June 2010 and the Panel members indicated that the two programmes could be recommended for validation. Accordingly, the Academic Council Executive approved the Higher Certificate in Culinary Studies and the Higher Certificates in Hospitality Studies at its meeting of June 18th 2010. Further QA meetings will be held, involving the Module Moderator, Deputy Registrar and the Department of Tourism and Hospitality to ensure implementation of the Panel findings.