

Report of Validation Panel

Date of Meeting: 9th April 2014

Named Award: Higher Diploma
Programme Title: **Higher Diploma in Business in Sales Management**
Award Type: Special Purpose Award
NFQ Level: 8
Intakes Commencing: September 2014
ECTS/ACCS Credits: 60

PANEL MEMBERS

Name / Function / Institution
Mr Eoin Langan, Head of Business School, Athlone Institute of Technology (Chair)
Dr Jason Healy, Associate Faculty, National College of Ireland
Mr Barry Hanrahan, Major Accounts Manager, Laya Healthcare
Ms Margaret O'Donoghue, Loyalty Brand Manager, Musgrave Retail Partners Ireland
Dr Irene Sheridan, Head of Extended Campus, Cork Institute of Technology
Dr Catherine Frehill, Module Moderator, Office of Registrar & Vice-President for Academic Affairs, CIT

PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name / Function / Department
Dr Pio Fenton, Head, Department of Marketing and International Business, CIT
Mr Gerald O'Donovan, Head, School of Business, CIT
Ms Kate Howey, Lecturer, Department of Management and Enterprise, CIT
Ms Michelle Collins, Lecturer, Department of Management and Enterprise, CIT
Ms Antoinette Hogan, Lecturer, Department of Management and Enterprise, CIT
Mr Kieran O'Reilly, Lecturer, Department of Accounting and Information Systems, CIT
Ms Josephine O'Halloran, Lecturer, Department of Marketing and International Business, CIT

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

The proposal seeks validation for a one-year Higher Diploma in Business in Sales Management aimed at those working in or aspiring to sales management roles that have a foundation of experience in a sales environment. In developing this new level 8 higher diploma in the specialist area of sales management the Department of Marketing and International Business is endeavouring to create a flagship offering in the Munster Region.

Through consultation with employers and industry groups the proposers have developed a programme designed for an executive cohort that is currently in employment. Utilising blended learning this programme will provide new educational opportunities in an area where there is a lack of formal third level qualifications.

FINDINGS OF THE PANEL

*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 has considered the documentation provided and has discussed the programme with the proposers. Based on this, the Panel has arrived at a number of Findings, Requirements and Recommendations as follows.

1. Programme-Level Findings

1.1 NEED FOR THE PROGRAMME

Validation Criterion: Is there a convincing need for the programme with a viable level of applications?

Overall Finding: Yes

1.2 AWARD

Validation Criterion: Are the level and type of the proposed award appropriate?

Overall Finding: Yes

1.3 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Validation Criterion: Is the learning experience of an appropriate level, standard and quality overall?

Overall Finding: Yes

The proposed Programme Outcomes as presented to the Panel are attached as Appendix 1.

Findings, requirements and recommendations concerning individual modules (if any) are recorded in Section 3 below.

1.4 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

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

Overall Finding: Yes, subject to certain Requirements

The Semester Schedule as proposed to the panel on the 9th April 2014 is shown in Appendix 2.

1.4.1. Requirement: The panel is concerned about the overlap and the inter-related nature of the four mandatory modules proposed and requires the proposers to redevelop the four modules as two modules of ten credits each. While doing this the proposers should ensure the modules retain their practical focus and the module assessment should reflect the interrelated nature of the topics.

1.4.2 Requirement: The Sales and Marketing Finance module which is proposed as an elective should be an mandatory module on the programme.

1.5 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Validation Criterion: Are the programme management structures adequate?

Overall Finding: Yes, subject to certain Requirements and Recommendations.

1.5.1 Requirement: A course handbook should be developed which includes a detailed timetable for induction for both semesters and guides for study skills plans. The induction sessions should include study skills plans, writing skills including business report writing and other topics tailored specifically to module assessment requirements. The course handbook must specify and clarify for the learner the totality of the learner effort expected and include a compendium of assessments.

1.5.2 Requirement: Develop a programme assessment strategy and ethos within the programme submission documentation.

1.5.3 Recommendation: The panel recommends the proposers engage with employers to develop learning contracts with a view to leveraging the benefits of work based learning.

1.5.4 Recommendation: The panel recommends the proposers consider delivery of the programme on a Friday and Saturday due to the nature of employment of the learners.

1.6 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Validation Criterion: Are the resource requirements reasonable?

Overall Finding: Yes

The Panel was assured on behalf of the President and Head of School that appropriate resources in terms of staffing and facilities will be put in place when the programme is validated.

1.7 IMPACT ON THE INSTITUTE

Validation Criterion: Will the impact of the programme on the Institute be positive?

Overall Finding: Yes

2. Module-Level Findings

The Panel was informed that the new draft modules have been the subject of internal scrutiny by the CIT module moderator (Dr Catherine Frehill).

In exercising its brief to consider the overall standard and appropriateness of modules, the Panel wishes to add the following findings, requirements and recommendations.

2.1 ALL MODULES

2.1.1 Requirement: Any revisions to Module Descriptors or Semester Schedules made to address the recommendations and requirements in this require sign-off from the CIT Module Moderator and the Registrar's Office prior to approval by the CIT Academic Council.

2.1.2 Requirement: The Coursework Breakdown across the module descriptors should be reviewed and revised where necessary to clarify the actual assessment deliverables.

2.2. Module: Sales and Marketing Finance

2.2.1 Requirement: A learning outcome to evaluate or assess the impact of the financial viability plan should be included. The indicative content should be expanded to include planning, analysis, communication of results of implementation and performance of marketing. The coursework breakdown should be modified to include a related assessment.

2.3. Module: Action Project for Sales

2.3.1 Requirement: This module should be retitled e.g. Applied Project for Sales

2.3.2 Requirement: The coursework breakdown should be expanded by including several milestones for the students and the assessment deliverables should be clarified. The course team should consider and include feedback from companies in the assessment of the module.

2.4. Module: The Digital Environment

2.4.1 Requirement: The coursework breakdown should include an interim report where the learner receives feedback on their progress to date.

2.5. Module: Sales Law and Ethics

2.5.1 Recommendation: The title of the module should be reconsidered e.g. Consumer Law and Sales Ethics

2.5.2 Requirement: The assessment of the module should be re-evaluated as given the theoretical nature of the module the appropriate assessment may be by End of Semester Formal Examination.

2.6. International Selling

2.6.1 Recommendation: The indicative content should include a section on culture and the topic of Key Account Planning should be repositioned in the module on Organisational Strategy. The coursework breakdown should be modified to describe the assessment via Role Play.

3. Other Findings

At the validation meeting the panel were very supportive of the programme due to the constructive engagement during the panel sessions. The panel supported and encouraged further development of the programme in line with discussions, requirements and recommendations made by the panel. In particular, the panel recommends increasing engagement with industry and to ensure where feasible the assessment is work based.

The additional documentation including a revised programme schedule and revised semester schedule (Appendix 3) and module revisions has been reviewed and the updated submission meets all the requirements as set out previously.

4. Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the Panel has arrived at the following Conclusions:

- The Programme meets the required standards for an award in the Business field of study at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications.
- The Programme meets the criteria for validation of a new programme adopted by the Academic Council of Cork Institute of Technology.

The Panel therefore recommends that the Programme be validated for five academic years, or until the next programmatic review, whichever is soonest, subject to implementation of the Requirements above, and with due regard to the Recommendations made.

Implementation of Requirements and Recommendations
Requiring Registrar's Office Sign-Off:
1.4.1 Requirement: Completed
1.4.2 Requirement: Completed
1.5.1 Requirement: Completed
1.5.2 Requirement: Completed
1.5.3 Recommendation: In progress
1.5.4 Recommendation: Under consideration
2.1.1 Requirement: Completed
2.1.2 Requirement: Completed

2.2.1 Requirement: Completed
2.3.1 Requirement: Completed
2.3.2 Requirement: Completed
2.4.1 Requirement: Completed
2.5.1 Recommendation: Title to remain as proposed.
2.5.2 Requirement: Completed
2.6.1 Recommendation: Completed

APPENDIX 1 – Proposed Programme Outcomes

Programme Outcomes

On successful completion of this programme the learner will be able to :

PO1	Knowledge - Breadth	Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the factors relating to the sales environment, its tools and techniques and the contextual organisational that surround it.
PO2	Knowledge - Kind	Show an applied knowledge of sales, sales management, sales-force management, customer relationship management, personal and organisational buying and related areas.
PO3	Skill - Range	develop, implement and employ tools relating to sales management & planning, negotiation and positioning, undertake research, disseminate findings, design organisational processes, develop relationships, perform quantitative analysis and plan for their own effectiveness.
PO4	Skill - Selectivity	Demonstrate analytical, assessment and evaluation skills that can be applied to nebulous, dynamic environments with respect to the sales environment and their own professional development.
PO5	Competence - Context	Apply their skills in a range of contexts including SME and MNC environments utilising large dedicated teams as well as more flexible workforce dynamics and all in between.
PO6	Competence - Role	Display a comfort with leadership, the expression of critical insight and participation in teams of varied dynamics while attaining personal targets and contributing to the wider enterprise.
PO7	Competence - Learning to Learn	Show a readiness to advance their own learning through formal and informal learning and to assimilate this in the context of their own professional needs.
PO8	Competence - Insight	Apply their learning through their individual approaches to their professional lives reflecting the philosophical, ethical and practical currents of their learning experience.

Appendix 2 – Semester Schedules

Semester Schedules

Semester 1

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	Buying Behaviour (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	Personal Sales Techniques (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	Oranisional Sales Strategy (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	The Consultative Sales Process (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
Elective								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	Salesforce Management (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	4.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	Sales and Marketing Finance (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%

Semester 2

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	Action Project for Sales (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	20.0	3.50	2.50	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	Sales Seminar Series (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
Elective								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	The Digital Environment (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	Sales Law and Ethics (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	International Selling for the (Draft)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	40.0%	60%

APPENDIX 3 – Revised Semester Schedule

Semester 1

Elective Regulation

Students must select two electives during the programme.

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
MRKT8009	Organisational Sales Strategy (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	10.0	3.00	3.00	100.0%	0%
MRKT8010	Effective Sales Techniques (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	10.0	3.00	3.00	100.0%	0%
Elective								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
MRKT8011	International Selling for the (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	40.0%	60%
MGMT8041	Salesforce Management (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	4.00	2.00	100.0%	0%

Semester 2

Elective Regulation

Students must select two electives during the programme.

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
MRKT8012	Applied Project for Sales Mgmt (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	20.0	3.50	2.50	100.0%	0%
MRKT8013	Sales Seminar Series (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
MRKT8014	Sales and Marketing Finance (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
Elective								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
MRKT8015	The Digital Environment (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	100.0%	0%
LEGS8006	Sales Law and Ethics (Approved)	Pio Fenton	Advanced	5.0	3.00	2.00	40.0%	60%