Report of Validation Panel
for a Special Purpose, Minor or Supplemental Award

Date of Meeting: 09-05-2014

Named Award:	Certificate
Programme Title:	**Certificate in Food Manufacturing Operations**
Award Type:	Special Purpose Award
NFQ Level:	6
Intakes Commencing:	01/09/14
ECTS/ACCS Credits:	50

PANEL MEMBERS

Name / Function / External Institution OR CIT Academic Unit
Dr Hugh McGlynn, Head of School of Science and Informatics (Chair)
Dr Jim O'Mahony, Department of Biological Sciences
Mr Brian Nation, Master Distiller at Irish Distillers, Pernod Ricard

IN ATTENDANCE

Name / Function / External Institution OR CIT Academic Unit

PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name / Function / Academic Unit
Mr Matt Cotterell, Head of School Mechanical, Electrical and Process Engineering
Dr Michael J O'Mahony, Head of Department of Process, Energy and Transport Engineering
Dr Ann Toebes, Department of Process, Energy and Transport Engineering
Mr Cilian O'Suilleabhain, Department of Process, Energy and Transport Engineering
Dr Sandra Lenihan, Department of Process, Energy and Transport Engineering

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

The IBEC report, "Sharing the Harvest: The Food and Drink Sector Jobs Dividend", published in July 2012 forecast an increase in employment in the food sector of 30,000 jobs during the eight year period 2012-2020. Already, last year there has been a significant increase in employment in the food sector. Food exports rose by 29% in the period 2009 to 2012 (CSO Yearbook). Food exports in January 2014 were 9% higher as compared with the same month in 2013.

This Special Purpose Award in Food Manufacturing Operations provides an accredited qualification in Food Manufacturing Operations for people wishing to work in production, quality assurance or validation roles within the food sector. Key topics addressed includes GMP, QA, QC, food processing, mathematics, process equipment and process engineering laboratory skills. Students will attain a knowledge and understanding of the principles of process equipment as well as the key food processing, biotechnology and quality assurance principles underpining the industry.

These key topics delivered in module format will serve to enhance the student's prospects when applying for employment as a process operator or process supervisor in the food sector.

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 validation and commencement of the Programme. The term "Recommendation" indicates an item which the Course Board (or other relevant Institute unit) should implement at the earliest stage possible, and appropriate implementation of which should be the subject of ongoing monitoring.

On consideration of the documentation provided and discussion of the programme with the proposers, the Panel has arrived at the following Findings, Requirements and Recommendations:

1.   Validation Criteria

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

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding(s): Springboard initiative indicates need for skills in this area, course proposed meets this skills shortage.

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

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

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding(s):   modules are at appropriate level

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

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

Overall Finding: Yes

The key topics delivered in module format will serve to enhance the student's prospects when applying for employment as a process operator or process supervisor in the food sector

Finding(s): Learning experience at appropriate standard and quality

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

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

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding(s): Panel indicated the need for such a course, but were keen to stress the importance of the traceability and that of the brewing/distillery sector in the emergence of the food/drinks industry and the need to stress their importance throughout the programme delivery

Requirements: none

Recommendation(s): none

1.5   Are the programme management structures adequate?

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding(s): Course Boards will be convened for this programme and course coordinator appointed

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

1.6   Are the resource requirements reasonable?

Overall Finding: Yes

Finding(s):): Course will run using existing modules and instances of delivery. However, two new modules have been proposed (Food Processing Technology and QA in Food Manufacturing, which panel find appropriate) hence additional resource requirement will be needed, which are to be met by the proposing Department.

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

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

Overall Finding: Yes.

Finding(s): Course will attract leaners through the Springboard initiative and provide opportunities for progression for learners onto the Higher Certificate programme. This will add to the portfolio of offerings within the Institute and have a positive impact.

Requirement(s): none

Recommendation(s): none

2.   Other Findings

Panel complementary of an excellent proposal

CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings, the Panel recommends to Academic Council:

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.