



Institute of Technology Sligo

School of Business & Humanities

School Planning and Programme Revalidation

Report

Thursday 26th/Friday 27th May 2011

Contents of Report

- Part 1** Introduction & Terms of Reference
- Part 2** Meetings of the Panel of Assessors
- Part 3** Meeting with the President
- Part 4** Meeting of Panel with Head of School and Heads of Department
- Part 5** Meeting of Panel with Head of School, Heads of Department and Programme Chairs and Administrative and Support Staff
- Part 6** Departmental Meetings
- Part 7** Meeting with Students
- Part 8** Follow-on meeting with the School
- Part 9** Findings and Recommendations
- Part 10** Conclusion
- Appendix i** Agenda
- Appendix ii** Membership of Review Panel
- Appendix iii** List of documents sent to the Panel in advance of the meeting
- Appendix iv** Private meetings of the Panel.
- Appendix v** List of Staff members who met the Panel
- Appendix vi** List of students who met the Panel
- Appendix vii** Academic Programmes recommended to the Academic Council by the Panel for validation

Part 1

Introduction

Traditionally, a Programmatic Review is a process through which a School assesses its progress comprehensively over recent years (typically 5 years) and sets down proposals and plans for future developments. It is a very significant part of the quality assurance process as it enshrines the concept of continual improvement and development based on self-evaluation. A Programmatic Review is a self-monitoring quality-assurance activity carried out by the Academic Council of the Institute.

The review process includes production of documentation by the School and formal evaluations by internal and external review Panels. The overall process is controlled by the Academic Council. The Head of School manages the process within the School and the Registrar has overall responsibility for managing the process on behalf of the Academic Council.

In 2008, following a series of Programmatic Reviews in each of the three Schools, the Academic Council concluded that the process (i) was excessively demanding on staff, (ii) significantly impacted on the core teaching functions, and (iii) did not give the best value for the effort involved. The Programmatic Review process was evaluated by the three Heads of School and it was agreed that the process would be enhanced by separating the process of Programme Revalidation from the process of School Planning. Furthermore, it was explained that these two processes do not need to occur at the same time.

Typically, the process takes 12 months to complete and the output is a set of documents that report on the findings of the self evaluation and specify the proposed changes to the various programmes (with supporting justification). The documentation is normally considered by an internal Panel, and subsequently by a Panel of external experts. This latter Panel comprises representatives from other 3rd level providers, state agencies and from relevant employer sectors. This Panel is expected to read through the documentation and visit the Institute over a 2 day period. A report of the visit is issued together with a set of conditions and recommendations from the Panel. The Panel makes specific recommendations in regard to the continued validation of the proposed modified programmes. This report is sent to the Academic Council for approval and subsequently the list of approved programmes is sent to HETAC for inclusion on the order of Council for the new period of validation.

The School of Business and Humanities completed its last Programmatic review in 2005. This current submission incorporates the considerable changes that have occurred in the sector since then and presents the proposals of the School in its efforts to prepare itself for the years ahead.

Terms of Reference

In accordance with the Quality Assurance Procedures of the Institute a detailed evaluation and analysis of the content of modules and programmes must be carried. This is to ensure that the School/Department updates its programmes and that they remain relevant to students and employers. It is also an opportunity to make the necessary changes to the programme structures and content to keep them current.

A visit of the external Panel of assessors took place on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 25th, 26th and 27th of May respectively. The agenda for this meeting is contained in **Appendix i**. Membership of the Review Panel is listed in **Appendix ii**.

The Panel examined how the School and each Department has achieved the objectives of the programme revalidation process.

These are to:

- (a) Propose improvements to programmes based on a formal feedback and evaluation process
- (b) Incorporate feedback from staff, student and employers into the revised programmes
- (c) Ensure that programmes remain relevant to learners needs, including academic and labour market needs
- (d) Ensure that learning modes are compatible with academic standards, coupled with the life style of learners
- (e) Achieve enhanced integration between all aspects of learning, teaching and research incorporating any new pedagogical thinking, where appropriate
- (f) To achieve revalidation of all programmes, incorporating the agreed changes (for up to a maximum of 5 years)

The Panel also considered the following:

- How each Department has addressed and dealt with issues and questions raised in the last programmatic review.
- The relationship of revalidation to the Strategic Plan of the School and the Institute
- The contribution of active research to learning
- Proposed changes to programmes submitted for revalidation by the Departments

It should be noted that the School Self Evaluation document submitted as part of this process refers to the present situation. Following discussions at the Executive Committee, regarding restructuring of all Departments across the Institute, there will be a requirement for a comprehensive School planning exercise, in accordance with the QA procedures, in the near future. Therefore, this current process focuses primarily on the programme revalidation that is necessary to ensure that the programmes on offer in the coming years are properly validated, in accordance with the QA procedures.

The list of documentation received by the Panel is contained in **Appendix iii**.

Part 2: Meetings of the Panel of Assessors

The Panel held 5 private meetings at which a number of points were raised for discussions with staff of the School. A summary of the comments is contained in **Appendix iv**.

Part 3: Meeting with the President

The President delivered an overview to the Panel of the review process in the School and the stages involved. Under Delegated Authority it is a requirement to conduct such a review at least once every 5 years.

The Institute takes this process seriously and welcomes the commitment and involvement from the Panel from academia and the world of work. It is intended that the recommendations made at this review will relate to top level, such as student experience, continuous improvement and, at a lower level, recommendations for individual programmes. The Institute, through the Academic Council and Governing Body will ensure that the recommendations will be implemented. The Head of School will be responsible for the implementation. The Institute seeks serious and considered recommendations to ensure the relevance of our programmes and to

reflect the changing world around us. For example, the recent cuts in staffing and funding will require changes in the way programmes are designed and delivered.

The Panel queried the profile of the graduate that IT Sligo is intending to educate. The President pointed out that, as an employer, the Institute itself has a number of its own graduates as employees, which is a reflection of their capability. The President went on to explain that the programmes of the Institute are designed to promote independent learning, as delivered in the learning to learn modules. The President also noted that programmes are designed to develop an entrepreneurial capability and foster a zeal for enterprise with students.

The provision of the new Yeats library learning centre, supports the students working in groups. The importance of work based elements in each programme was also emphasised by the President.

The President explained the process carried out by the Institute in developing its strategic plan. Underpinning this are related strategies such as Learning Teaching & Assessment, Student Support Services and the Library Strategy.

The graduates of the Institute are differentiated from others in terms of their relevance to the region and to employment opportunities in the region. This is important for building the regional economy, and the President referred to, for example, the 22 incubation companies in the Innovation Centre on campus.

The Chair thanked the President for her contribution and clarification on the issues raised.

Part 4 Meeting of Panel with Head of School and Heads of Department

The Chair outlined the process for this session and welcomed the School Management team, who introduced themselves. He emphasised that this should be a positive experience and should make what is good, better.

The Chair asked the School to explain how they conducted the review and how they implemented the recommendations of the previous review.

The School explained that there were 27 recommendations and comments in the previous review. Since then the review process has been redesigned in order to address some of the issues encountered during the previous review – in particular the volume of documentation and the scope of the review. One of the key recommendations was a requirement to address the fact that while some of the programmes were semesterised others were not. Following some debate in the School, it was decided to semesterise all programmes in the School. This allowed for, for example, the incorporation of an introduction to learning module and an open 'Semester 6' to facilitate the development of entrepreneurial competencies. In 2010/11, the School introduced a series of information days for first year students and will be implementing Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) in coming years. These changes have been highlighted on page 33 of the submission document.

There was some further contribution from each of the Department heads with examples of how the recommendations were addressed, including the introduction of semesterisation and introduction of more flexibility in the programme delivery. Cross-disciplinary modules have also been introduced, for example, in the tourism programme, with links to science and recreation modules.

The Panel sought clarification on the inroads that have been made over the last few years to address the poor retention, following from the recommendation of the previous review. The School recognised that it's retention statistics are poor and that initiatives need to be developed for all years of programmes. For example, the retention issue related, not only to 1st year students but also those transferring into add-on programmes and for the variety of the streams on the add-on Business programme. The School has also introduced mentoring for first year

students and operated a help desk system for the first 6 weeks of semester 1, in September 2010.. There is still a retention issue for Computing programmes, which the School noted is a national issue.

The School pointed out that, given the profile of the incoming students there is a need to give more supports to students. This is being provided with the introduction of the mathematics and literacy tutorials and the PAL initiative. The School has also done work to build on its acknowledged reputation of high level of care for students.

The Panel queried the likely effect of semesterisation on retention. The School has changed the assessment to occur earlier on in modules, with the objective of identifying weak students early on in the Semester. There is a member of staff with a retention portfolio who is responsible for organising assistance for weak students. For example, the School has also identified the overall better performance of female students, and has developed initiatives to attract more female students into its programmes.

The Panel queried the strategy of the School in terms of its learners with a view to creating unique IT Sligo graduates, as outlined by the President. The School pointed to the new learning to learn module which will develop self-learning and study in students. The Humanities Department is rolling out the successful practices identified in Fine Art, such as linking projects to student own interest, providing an opportunity for students to publicly display their work, and the development of entrepreneurial skills. These are intended to improve retention and to increase the engagement of students on their programmes, particularly in the male population.

The School explained that there had been considerable debates within the School, during the review process, on issues such as student attendance at lectures. It was noted that the discussions related to attendance on Computing programmes which were particularly contentious.

On semesterisation, the Panel enquired if all Semester 1 modules were pre-requisites for Semester 2. It is the School policy only to have pre-requisites where essentially necessary.

The Panel queried the guidelines for approaching the balance between self-directed learning and the relative high contact hours (for example, in the Information Systems programmes). The School explained that these are discussed on page 3 of the submission document, with a guideline of 24 hours of contact set as an upper limit. For example, the contact hours have actually reduced in many of the proposed revised modules, with a norm of 3 hours per week, to a maximum of 4 hours contact for a 5 credit module. While this may appear high, in Computing it includes class and laboratory-based learning. The Panel noted that, the contact for many of the modules are at the 24 hour limit and reflects a relative high amount of contact. The School argued that this is consistent with the ECTS model, where the student is expected to contribute a workload of 5 hours of learning for every credit earned (i.e. 125 hours of student workload per 5 credit module). The School also pointed out that much of these time-tabled hours are actually self-directed learning by students with the 'contact' being in the form of guidance (rather than front-of-class delivery) provided by the academic staff. There was some further debate on this topic.

The Panel asked for clarification regarding the selection of 5, rather than 6 ECTS credits. The School explained the introduction of 6 credits has led elsewhere to modules of 3 and 2-credit weighting whereas the application of 5 credits defines the smallest module size. Modules of any multiple of 5 are allowed and many modules had a 10 or more crediting weighting. The Panel further explored the rationale of 5 credit modules in the context of introducing Semesters, pointing out that this is likely to increase the amount of assessment and lead to over assessment. The School pointed out that it was aware of this issue and held discussions of this at School and programme level with a view to avoid over assessment. A view was expressed that the number of credits awarded to a module is likely to develop to larger size (i.e. 10 and 20 credits) to reflect the holistic learning objectives rather than the fragmentation that can arise from the smaller 5 credit modules.

The Panel moved the discussion to consider key topics, such as innovation, entrepreneurship, partnership, placement, globalisation, commercialisation, and asked to what extent a graduate can expect to attain learning in these areas. The School referred to examples in the Marketing programmes, where the importance and inclusion of work placement, internship and interaction with industry was highly commended by students and employers. The School also emphasised the importance of teaching entrepreneurship, citing examples where students work on real world projects, and the successes in national enterprise competitions (which students have won a number of times). Other examples were cited in Business, where the assessment of modules has been designed to allow inclusion of more practical, work-based projects. The Innovation Centre is also a tremendous asset as it allows students to work with, and interact directly with self-employed entrepreneurs.

Regarding commercialisation, the School pointed to its successes (significant for its size) in projects such as the Imagine Cup, and national enterprise competitions.

The Panel queried further the relationship between programmes and the activities in the Innovation Centre. The School explained that they have a number of innovation vouchers, and other EI funded schemes, and are also planning to implement the scheme for staff to work in industry for 3 days. A number of student projects are conducted in conjunction with companies in the Innovation centre and joint events are organised such as the local Dragon's Den and the annual Enterprise and Innovation Week.

Part 5 Meeting of Panel with Head of School, Heads of Department, Programme Chairs and Administrative and Support Staff

Meeting with Head of School, Heads of Department, Programme Chairs and Administrative and Technical Support staff.

The Panel opened the discussion on the topic of the activities of the School to respond to the economic needs of the country, the learning needs of the unemployed and the introduction of flexible delivery modes. The staff cited its work in seeking places under the Springboard scheme. However, it noted that it was not successful in winning places on Business courses. The staff noted that Moodle is used as a learning platform across the School and that the Institute has a training programme for all staff to ensure, at least, a basic level of competence. The School referred to the objective under Strategic Priority 2 of the Institute's Strategic Plan with the stated objective of training staff to a level of competency in elearning techniques.

Alternative learning support tools are also used on other programmes, such as Windows Live, where appropriate. The Panel queried the access by part time staff to training opportunities. The staff responded that part time staff are facilitated to access training opportunities, but are not paid to attend such training.

The Panel asked for clarification on the review process and the feedback from external stakeholders. The staff explained how this has been operated during the review. For example, on HR modules (cross-programme) each member of staff took responsibility for a module. A questionnaire was prepared for each module and sent to key personnel in companies in the region. Feedback from this was then incorporated into the modules. The Panel discussed a specific example of the incorporation of issues such as conflict resolution into modules as a result of this feedback.

The Panel queried the structure of the School and asked if the staff considered that it was appropriate to the future direction of the School, The Panel, in particular queried the rationale for having Accounting programmes within the Information Systems Department. The staff responded that there was no conflict and cited examples where the Accounting programme has liaised with other programmes resulting in modifications to modules to contribute to the needs of these other

programmes. The staff also referred to meetings with employers – such as hotels, local authorities and accountancy firms – where there was no negative feedback on the inclusion of Accounting programmes in the Information Systems Department. The Panel pursued this topic further to seek clarification on the sense of identity within the Departments of Information Systems and of Humanities. On the latter, the staff responded that there are two main streams in the Department –the social professions studies area and the creative studies area – and there is good collaboration within these areas. Staff pointed out the benefits from mixed disciplines within a Department, leading to staff exchanging cross-disciplinary ideas and good practices.

The Panel asked about how students get an opportunity to feedback into this debate. They were interested to understand how students could make their views known regarding being part of a Department with mixed disciplines. The staff referred to focus groups and surveys of students and that no student had raised a concern about feeling unsatisfied with the structure of their Department. They further cited examples of the benefits of mixed disciplines.

There was a query from the Panel on programmes in Humanities, and the plans to redesign and recalibrate the suite of programmes, at a strategic level. The staff clarified that the strategic direction is to review the suite of programmes in the two areas. The objective in the social professions area is to emphasise the focus on the workplace.

The Head of School referred to discussions at an Institute level, regarding the introduction of a 4th School in the Institute, in the area of Humanities. This Department is disproportionately large compared to other Departments. In addressing this issue, the Institute is still reviewing the departmental structure across the Institute.

The Panel queried the modules delivered across a number of programmes and the staff confirmed that this occurs, providing a number of examples.

The Custodial Care programme provided an example of collaboration between this programme and the Social Care programme in ethics.

The Panel asked the views of the staff on semesterisation and the preparation for the impact of introducing this in the coming year, especially with 1st year students. The staff explained that a number of staff have taught on semesterised modules and would be familiar with the issues for students, including providing feedback following, for example, Semester 1 exams (as cited for the Recreation and Leisure programme). The Panel followed this discussion with a query on the rationale regarding the number of assessments and the strategy for breakdown in assessment between Continuous Assessment (CA) and final exams. It was acknowledged that there is no School or Departmental strategy, rather each programme makes its own decisions appropriate to that programme. The staff cited examples on the Accountancy programme where the 80:20 (final exam to CA) split was in response to the requirement by the professional body.

The Panel asked if there was a School/Departmental policy on formative assessment. The Staff referred to the Institutes Learning, Teaching & Assessment strategy which provides guidelines for staff in developing programmes. Examples were provided in Humanities where, while there is no specific policy, there is an ethos of incorporating a high level of CA in the creative programmes.

The Panel asked for an explanation of the Learning and Self-Development module on all programmes. This module builds competency in study skills, time management and self-learning skills, including interview skills. This is included on most programmes, but not in the Humanities programmes. The staff explained how this module, or variations of it are used on different programmes. These modules were developed by the communications lecturers, and were developed as appropriate to the discipline areas.

The Panel pursued further the LTA strategies and asked for examples of how the School was offering innovations in teaching approaches (e.g. project based learning, wikis etc.). The staff cited examples in Computing where students use Window Live groups. PBL is used in Communication modules where, for example, students set up a company and operate a recruitment process. In the Creative Design programme PBL is used across all years. Diverse and joint assessment is also applied in the cross over between law and Business modules (e.g. on EU

legislation). In Custodial Care the objective is to allow students to compare their work experience with theoretical models and the topics are delivered on a mixed mode (theory and practice) basis.

The Panel investigated the strategy regarding the provision of feedback to students on assignments and allowing them to retain their project work. The staff provided examples in Computing, where students work in teams and must undergo peer assessments. They also use techniques such as video feedback. In first year, the CA is returned to all students. In Business & Tourism, student work on real world projects in the community in Event Management. A number of the modules are PBL-based with final exams. They commented that, in this area, every student gets verbal feedback and a summary sheet of the assessment breakdown. In Recreation and Leisure, students are also working in the community, where they log their work and progress, and this log is assessed. On other modules, the students are provided with an opportunity to defend their approach and staff critique the work.

The Panel queried how the School formally leveraged the benefits of the integration of the learning between academic and real world experiences, pointing out this is not well articulated in the documents. The staff responded briefly that they had followed the headings in the new QA procedures around the School planning and programme revalidation processes, which they found to be somewhat restrictive in addressing these type of issues.

The Panel raised a question on the stated ethos for research revenue streams, where research informs scholarship and institutional research. They queried where does this ethos fit into programmes. Examples in the Games Technologies area were provided by staff, where a research cluster has been set up on the 'cloud'. There are two students at masters level, one seeking to transfer to a PhD programme. The staff also referred to the successful FP7 submission in Computing. On the Business and Tourism programme there is a research methodologies module and a dissertation. Many of the students have progressed on to post graduate studies including the Failte Ireland scholar (the only one in the country). Staff also attend and present at national and international conferences. The Panel noted that there were few metrics around the achievements in research (i.e. impact factors) and asked if there were any supports for staff to engage in research. The School referred to the restraints on allocating staff to do research, however it was noted that there is a central resource to support research. The School commented that at the time of the previous review there were 6 PhD graduates, whereas now there were 23 graduates. To date there are 25 new PG students in the School, which represents a significant growth within the Institute. The staff also explained how research informs teaching. There are a series of seminars on research in the School, with presentations from visiting researchers and from staff and students. There are also workshops on topics such as research methods and techniques. Reference was also made to the active participation on the national stage in presenting at, and hosting conferences.

The Panel queried the full range of programmes presented for validation. It was commented that there were few masters or non-major awards presented. The School referred to the successful MBA programme which is not part of this submission. This programme is undergoing a major revamp, including consideration of introducing distance learning, and greater integration and collaboration with employers. There was some further discussions around these topics, with examples of sector-wide debates on Early Childhood and Computing programmes.

The Panel developed the discussion on Plagiarism, and asked if there was a mandatory requirement for all work to be checked for plagiarism through the software, *turnitin*. While this is School policy, it is not currently the practice, although there are a number of examples of where this is performed on programmes. The Custodial Care programme intends to apply it universally from 2011/12. The importance of adequate training on this and the correct interpretation of the output from *turnitin* was emphasised.

A further point was made by the Panel regarding the role of placement on programmes. The rationale behind the design and size of modules was also highlighted. While there was some discussion on this topic at this stage, these topics were taken up further at the Departmental discussions.

Part 6 Departmental Meetings

Department of Business

Programmes considered:

- Higher Certificate in Business, Level 6 (Full time and ACCS)
- Bachelor of Business, Level 7 (add-on)
- Bachelor of Business, Level 7 (ab-initio)
- Bachelor of Business Management Applications, Level 7 (add-on)
- Bachelor of Business, Level 8 (ab Initio and add-on)
- Bachelor of Business in Financial Services, Level 7
- Bachelor of Business Studies (ACCS)

General Discussion

The lecturers were introduced to Panel members by the Head of Department. Each lecturer introduced themselves and indicated the area/programme with which they were associated.

The Panel referred to the President's Executive Summary which mentioned Innovation, entrepreneurship and partnership-as important to the Institute, and they asked how these topics are reflected in Programmes.

The staff responded that BBS Yr 3 Work placement has been very successful and the School has received positive responses both from students and industry. In yr 4, after work placement has finished, students are given the opportunity to select modules from a number of electives, which is influenced by their experiences on work placement.

On the BBS Level 8 programme,-students participate in cross-disciplinary projects, linking with other programmes in the School, particularly Creative Design.

When asked about the structure of the administration of student placement the staff responded that some lecturers take ownership of student placement. They meet with industry and have constant contact with the students while on placement, through Moodle, contact by phone and also visiting the students in the workplace.

The staff commented that it was considered to offer placement at Level 7, however it was decided that neither students nor Industry would get any value from this due to time constraints.

The Bachelor of Business in Financial Services-it is intended to offer work placement as a result of feedback from the previous validation process. This will prove challenging due to the current economic downturn. At Level 6 there is no work placement but students are engaged with industry through project work.

The Panel asked if the School use testimonials from graduates to market the programmes. The staff commented that some graduates have visited as guest lecturers. IT Sligo also has an active Alumni association.

The Panel queried the logic behind semesterisation and prerequisite requirements for Semester 2. Basic skills carry across both Semesters, however, failure in Semester 1 doesn't affect learning in Semester 2 as modules in both Semesters are stand alone. In the area of mathematics, if a student has failed Semester 1 they are supported in Semester 2 to work, as part of a group, working on 'real world' problems, putting theory into practice. There is also an Institute-wide maths support service.

In the case of languages, there is a need for prior learning for success in Semester 2. If a student is found to be weak in Semester 1, the fact that this is highlighted early in the year, the

student is supported in Semester 2 through extra tutorials etc. The Head of Department commented that semesterisation in the School is a useful tool when marketing the Institute to foreign colleges, as this fits in with their academic year.

The Panel queried, how do staff test as a learning outcome, a student's ability to work as an Entrepreneur? Students are taught how to prepare a Business Plan, how to market their Business, compliance with Revenue etc. This process is as close to a real situation as possible. Students are given the opportunity to interview successful Entrepreneurs and following this, give a presentation on the interview.

The Panel asked, with the high number of electives, how is it decided which ones to run. Students are given the chance to select from a number of electives. There are a minimum number of students needed for an elective to run. It was decided to reintroduce language as an elective on all programmes, to give students a chance to progress and work in foreign countries.

The Panel stated that, with the level of unemployment at an all time high, there is a need now for job creators, not job seekers. Are courses being developed with this in mind? The staff explained that, across all Programmes students are taught to understand general Business topics. For example, in year 3 on the Bachelor of Business, HRM and Financial Management are mandatory topics, the student then decides in year 4 which direction they wish to take. A dissertation is also being introduced at Level 8, final year. This will give students a good research base, not only as a path to Masters qualification, but also as a 'job creator'. The Head of Department explained how the School reacted quickly to growth markets in previous years, e.g. the Financial Services programme and this will not change, when growth markets are identified, programmes will be developed to suit.

The Panel raised the issue of entry requirements to programmes and the low points needed, does this affect IT Sligo as a Brand? The Head of Department defended the low point requirements on Level 6 programmes. Career Guidance teachers indicated the need for availability of programmes for weaker students. The School of Business & Humanities has responded to this, offering opportunities to a wide range of academic abilities.

It was also pointed out the Level 8 programme is offered at 300 CAO points minimum, and the overall average of applicants points is often much higher. At Level 7, a minimum of 250 CAO points is expected.

A Panel member opened up the discussion on a Common First Year. There are a number of common electives across first year programmes. However, all programmes have different points entry requirements and in some cases programmes are specialised and do not lend themselves to a common year.

The Panel queried the changes in the HC in Business (part time) from a three year to a two year programme. The Head of Department explained that the three years are now condensed into two. Some module titles have changed. The number of hours involved in delivering the course has not changed.

In conclusion, the Panel thanked the staff for their open and honest approach and responses and reiterated the absolute need for all programmes to reflect the needs of industry at the particular time.

The Head of Department asked the Panel to recommend offering Exit Awards to give students more choice. It was further noted that as a result of feedback from Focus groups, a Department of Business Advisory Board has been set up and will meet throughout the year, offering the School the chance to get more direct feedback from external stakeholders.

The Head of Department thanked the Panel for their constructive feedback and comments.

The Panel acknowledge the teamwork that has been instrumental in improving the programmes.

Department of Marketing, Tourism & Leisure

Programmes considered:

- Bachelor of Business in Tourism with Event Management
- Bachelor of Business in Recreation and Leisure
- Bachelor of Business in Marketing with PR & Events Management,
- Bachelor of Business in Marketing (abinitio and add-on)
- Bachelor of Business in Marketing with Languages
- Bachelor of Business in International Marketing
- MSc in Marketing
- Bachelor of Business (Honours)

General Discussion

A general discussion regarding the transition arrangements for the introduction of semesterisation took place. A big 'bang' approach is being proposed by the Head of Department and colleagues. This has been discussed at management level and a procedure will be put in place to manage the transition.

The School has experience of using qualifiers and this approach will assist with the way the revised semesterised programmes are introduced, and in, for example, the case where students have failed and come back, say, three years later. It was also noted that the Institute's RPL system has been in operation for some time.

The Panel queried the process when a student fails their exams. The staff explained the process and that the requirement for examination only and/or project work is determined at the examination board meeting for each repeat student.

It was recommended by the Panel that the transition arrangements for semesterisation will have to be carefully looked at as they will encounter difficulties. In particular, there is a need to consider the progression arrangements for any student groups who are likely to miss out on programme learning outcomes in the transition, including what is being assessed and also to consider the cost involved in this.

BB in Tourism with Event Management, Level 7

The staff explained that there was a history where: some modules/programmes have been Semesterised.

There was some discussion around the newly introduced policy of the Institute to allow a student to carry up to 2 failed modules, i.e. to a maximum of 10 ECTS credits. The staff reported that, of a total of 17 students who were permitted to progress in this manner, 16 subsequently passed the following year and the failed elements in the previous year.

The staff were asked if they envisaged any issues with students who have failed, for example, a module in semester 1 progressing to modules in semester 2, the staff clarified that there are no prerequisites between semesters.

The staff were asked how they would deal with students failing one part of an exam. They replied that the Institute has regulations for students who failed both theory and practical elements, the repeat requirement is in place already, and new procedures would incorporate this.

There was some discussion around the issue of the absence of topics on Cultural Tourism and why this is offered as an elective and is not mandatory. The staff responded that students have an opportunity to specialise in Tourism in 4th year if they wish to do so.

Regarding the issue of work placement, the staff reported that there was 100% employment in paid jobs on placement.

The Panel queried the student feedback process and the staff commented that there are a variety of methods used across programmes, including online surveys, focus groups, discussion with graduates. In general, the staff reported good relationship with the students, with an open door policy and regular meetings with student reps. Currently, focus groups are operated on, for example, the BB Tourism year 4 (add-on). The feedback indicates that students are happy with semesterisation and that it is preferred to have a single consistent system rather than two systems in operation. The students are also very positive about their work placement. Placement students in Semester 3 are prepared for their work experience, covering topics such as complaints issues and ethics.

The Panel explored the role of the dissertation on programmes. The staff noted that, in general, there was positive feedback on the dissertation in year 3, as it provided them with experience of writing academically and to prepare for 4th year. The staff also commented that the field trips provided a good opportunity for students to link with potential employers.

The Panel recommended changing the title of the Event Management modules as they are so identical.

Bachelor of Business in Recreation and Leisure, Level 7

The staff explained that this is essentially a Business Studies programme with three exit streams and students can progress to level 8 honours.

The unique elements of this programme is the employability - students have gained positions in Sports, Recreation and Leisure Industry, facilities operations, Coaching fitness instruction, Sport development and Local Authority Development Officers.

Some students use this as a path to teaching – many graduates complete level 7 and then level 8, postgraduate work towards primary school teaching or second level (up to now it was in the UK in UCAS).

Students receive National Qualifications including Athletics, Code of Ethics and Good Practice etc.

Regarding the Team sports modules, the students have a choice of three modules. All students complete a Soccer Kick start, Rugby Foundation and a GAA Foundation level and for the more advanced students, they can complete level 1 GAA for selected athletics (with some additional costs).

Outdoor recreation includes sailing, power boating, orienteering and map reading.

The Panel asked if opportunities exist for non-GAA work placement students, noting that there are 56 students who might not all be interested in GAA. The staff noted that there are opportunities for students to work abroad.

The staff also commented that the use of Logbooks is useful for 1st year students, in particular.

The Panel asked about research topics and the staff explained that there is a wide selection of topics to choose from. There is a potential synergy for links with National Governing Bodies.

For the latter year, i.e. Semester 5 and Semester 6 the staff explained that students normally want to study Education Studies and that many want to study Pedagogy as this provides an opportunity for a teaching career. Pedagogy is delivered in both semesters to give the students the option to study it in either Semester 5 or 6.

On the topics of managing people, the staff explained that throughout the entire programme, the students work to get their practical skills and certificates in the early years and then later in the programme the focus is on people management. People skills are also incorporated into some of the modules such as Management and Communication, and the modules also include about 25% on topics such as staffing control, working as a team, roll plays.

The Panel recommended that the word 'Introduction' be removed from certain module titles as it is not an introduction at this stage.

The Panel commented that the Tourism is a very innovative programme and that tourism, in its widest sense, is well integrated into the programme. It was acknowledged that, this programme offers so much that the challenge is what to include.

This programme is unique as it includes external qualifications validated by outside bodies. The employability of graduates is a major attraction for students to this programme. The topic of Management focuses on the service industry. By way of explanation, of a cohort of 45 graduates, 60% go to directly to the leisure, business and tourism industries.

Bachelor of Business in Marketing with PR & Events Management, Level 7 and

Bachelor of Business in Marketing (ab-initio and add-on), Level 7 and

Bachelor of Business in Marketing with Languages, Level 7

The Panel noted that there were many Level 7 programmes on offer. The staff responded that this was because of demand, and students want to study at Level 7.

The Panel commented that the module titles are not explicit and recommended the inclusion of titles such as 'Marketing and Sales'.

There are mature candidates and young students, attracted to different titles. It has been found that the offer of streams attract more students, who can subsequently transfer to other years of programmes if they wish. Mature students, with existing work experience, are often looking for courses in Marketing or Accounts.

The Marketing and Languages programme has attracted many non-nationals, who may already be living in Ireland. Graduates of this programme often progress to other programmes internationally, under the Erasmus programme.

Bachelor of Business in International Marketing, Level 7, add-on

The programme is designed specifically for Erasmus students. It is an add-on programme and there are currently 70 registered students. The final year is spent here and students may be awarded a dual degree with their home college. Bilateral agreements are set up with the home institutions. In order to verify their entry requirements, the partner institution provide academic transcripts for programmes in cognate areas for students wishing to study on this programme.

The staff commented that they intend to introduce the PAL – Peer Assisted Learning –mentoring system in the coming year.

It was noted that international students tend to be older than the Irish students and that this brought an 'added-value' dimension to the learning environment.

Regarding the proposed changes, it is intended to include two levels of English introduction. In this context, it was noted that the Korean market is being targeted, with a proposed intake of 6-8 students.

5 MSc in Marketing

The Panel commented that there is real evidence of potential in this programme.

The Panel asked about the entry requirement for mature students. The RPL process is used for students who have prior experience. This entry requirement is considered on an individual basis and there are students currently who have applied through the RPL process this year.

The Panel recommended that the entry requirements are broadened to make the programme more attractive.

It was noted that there are two typos in schedule: Entrepreneurship should be 5 ECTS credits and there is an error in the module title for Research.

The panel asked the group about a Dissertation, and the Panel made the recommendation that the department consider other examples of good practices for specifying the thesis, for example, using workshop Dissertations, encouraging the writing of a journal article and publishing the findings.

The Panel commented that there are some good unique aspects to this programme and they recommended that the Department consider how to market the programme to attract more marketing graduates. It was noted that students who are experiencing difficulty in completing the programme may be facilitated to complete the dissertation at a later stage, flexibility for students makes the programme more attractive.

Bachelor of Business Level 8

This is a high demand programme. There are some 240 students within the Institute eligible to progress onto this Level 8 programme, and an additional 50 outside applicants wishing to transfer in.

The Level 7 programme provides a general qualification with specialisation occurring in the level 8. The panel noted that it was almost like a double qualification, where the students benefitted by the specialism and general Business.

It was commented that the programme offers a wide choice, and the Panel recommended additional resources be made available. Clarification was sought on what the 'General Business' stream was and this was clarified by staff. It was observed by the Panel that there were a lot of streams within this programme and it was recommended to ensure that a minimum number of students be set to run the streams.

The Panel queried the employment opportunities. While some students complete further study on to Masters level, others get employment in the areas of management, banking, media, and others enter the education field or study on programmes overseas.

Department of Humanities

Programmes considered:

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Advocacy Studies
- Higher Certificate in Arts in Custodial Care
- Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art
- Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fine Art, add-on

General Discussion

The Panel asked for an explanation of the recommendations from the last programmatic review, commenting that recommendations may not always be directly relevant.

The staff responded that the Department of Humanities is the largest Department in the Institute, with a 2:1 ratio in size between the two discipline areas of Professional Studies and

Creative Studies. It was clarified that some programmes were being presented for revalidation (with proposed changes) and others were not. The staff then went on to identify the proposals related to specific programme areas:

- a) BA in Applied Social Studies and the BA (Hons) in Early Childhood Care and Education were not being presented for revalidation. Following consultation with staff it was agreed that there is a need to significantly redesign these programmes. On that basis it was decided not to present for revalidation. The Academic Council granted a further one year extension to the existing validation to allow time to submit the new programmes.
- b) The BA in Creative Design (Level 7 and Level 8 add-on) and the BA (Hons) in Performing Arts are also not being presented for revalidation. These programmes were re- accredited in May 2010 and no further changes are required, at this time.
- c) HC in Advocacy Studies. This area is undergoing major changes at the moment. The programme board considered that it would be unwise to make changes to the programme until structural changes are clear, so this is being presented for revalidation with minimal changes.
- d) HC in Custodial Care has been running for 3 years. Some changes are proposed in the revalidation documentation.
- e) BA in Fine Art (Level 7 and Level 8 add-on) has been redesigned and is now fully semesterised and there has been a change in the elective structure, as identified in the documentation. It is intended to develop a new Ab Initio Level 8 in the future.

The staff provided a summary of the programme areas as follows:

Social Care

This programme has been semesterised for a while and has a lot of electives. The intention is to dovetail it with early childhood. This year, first year students were asked why they chose the programme in order to ascertain if students had made the right choice and if not, help them to consider their options. The Panel asked if the electives could operate more widely, perhaps being offered across the Institute? The staff replied that the Institute is only now being semesterised so this may be possible.

The Panel asked about student feedback. Staff provided an example, in the programme of the Placement Review, of where feedback is given to students. This was further clarified as follows:

- Students are asked what they would recommend in the form of changes for incoming students
- Peer review, workshops
- Year Tutors groups give feedback to Head of Department every year in the EAP7 document.
- Programme Boards discuss the programmes
- Module assessment feedback to School system goes to Head of Department and Head of School.
- Year tutors, are the 1st port of call for student's issues.
- There are no big boundaries between students and staff and the view is that students find the staff very approachable.

The Panel asked for an explanation of how students get feedback from projects. The staff explained that students may contact lectures by email or by going directly to their staff offices. Detailed feedback is also given in class on assignments.

The Panel queried how Quality Assurance reports, in particular EAP7s, are used. Is there one per programme? It was noted that these are light on detail. Staff outlined the follow-up process: EAP7s are given to each year of each programme and when completed are forwarded to the

Head of Department and Head of School for action. The Panel asked for clarification on the policy on feedback timelines.

The staff observed that this differs from programme to programme, that there is no School policy on timelines for feedback. They also noted that feedback from the module student survey is very relevant and useful for lecturers. On the Custodial Care programme, students are interviewed for feedback on the programme.

It was also clarified that the School operates a policy on requests for extensions to project submission dates.

The Chair reported anecdotal evidence of good placement practice in IT Sligo.

The Panel sought clarity on how the issue of the number of contact hours per module was addressed in the course of the review? Staff declared that they were guided by the imperative to make the programme better for students. Individual staff members, adopting a team perspective, were willing to lose module hours in the interests of ensuring a more holistic experience for students.

The Panel commended the student Induction process.

HC in Custodial Care

Staff summarised proposed changes and noted that 'Professional Development' is now integrated across the totality of the programme with two new modules introduced. 'One module, Society, Ethics and Health' now attracts 30 credits and the programme is now fully semesterised.

Staff commented on international interest in this programme. The School will soon host an international criminology conference. Staff and students are well informed about what's happening in training of prison officers in other countries.

The Panel expressed the view that the programme could be offered elsewhere as it is highly unique, could be quite lucrative, and they commended the partnership between Institute staff and the Irish Prison Service for working in partnership.

The Panel queried if there is a progression route after the Higher Certificate. The staff responded that some 10-20% of graduates are interested in progressing further, and a new add-on programme is under development.

On the topic of semesterisation, the Panel asked the Department how they intended to cope with stragglers, who would have been on non-semesterised programmes. The staff responded that the effects will only be seen when implemented. Some problems are envisaged as the entire Institute is not yet fully semesterised. It was noted that the transition to semesterisation in the case of the Social Studies programme was quite smooth.

Fine Art

Staff gave a brief summary of the programme and explained that, during the course of the review the programme was thoroughly examined and rebuilt. The aim was to have a flexible and creative programme for students. The proposed new programme recognises the increasing integration and cross-fertilisation across the field of Fine Arts and the 'creative industries'. Staff then identified some of the main proposed changes. The Panel asked why students might choose this programme. Staff responded by explaining that the programme has many foreign students, with varying perspectives, a high percentage of mature students, and that some students are limited by geography, particularly mature students with families. Most students want to make a living from their qualification.

The Panel asked if there is any Business module taught in order to teach students how to sell their goods. The staff confirmed that there was, with topics such as the processes of working in the real world, funding, teacher training, etc. Final year students have to deliver a professional

show at end of year at which they sell their products. Also, feedback is an ongoing process on the programme and final year students give a presentation to their peers which is videotaped. They get very useful feedback from this.

The Panel asked if students have an opportunity to study copyright law, taxation, funding. The staff referred to the Professional Practice module and the fact that an extensive number of visiting lecturers present on the Business side of their work, grant applications etc. Students are also provided with the opportunity to go on field trips.

The Panel commented on the vibrancy of the discussion and the need to convey this in their written documentation on the programme. The Panel asked whether students tended to stay in their area of expertise? The staff commented that students tend to be able to diversify – students determine their own direction, there isn't a sense of sameness. Diversification allows them to pursue a variety of avenues. Students asked for equal weighting in all electives for this reason. The benefits of the IT Sligo programme is that it is small and lecturers work closely together.

The Panel asked why was the proposed Ab-Initio level 8 is not yet in place. The staff explained that this cannot be done through the programme revalidation process. The Panel understood this and advised that the educational aims of Level 7 and Level 8 should be differentiated in accordance with the NFQ. The Panel went on to raise a few specific points about the programmes:

- Assessment strategies – need more work. Staff are advised to devise authentic assessments.
- Placements – it is difficult to place students, outlets being limited in terms of their capacity to offer good experience. Requirement for 75% attendance – The Panel recommended that the attendance issue is addressed in terms of learning outcomes instead of having a 75% attendance requirement.
- Learning outcomes should be restated so that their taxonomy reflects progress in learning from year to year.
- Visual and Material Culture – this new module started this year and is also on the Creative Design and Performing Arts programmes. This seems to be working well but may change as time goes on. Good feedback from students on it. It was noted that the design students seem to benefit from this module. .

The Panel asked about the vulnerability of the Art/Design area in the Institute, given unit costing It was suggested that staff need to identify opportunities for creating links in the sector in order to solidify their programme.

The fact that the teaching methodologies employed in art and design are to the fore should be noted by the Institute. Staff explained the wide application of Problem Based Learning in their programmes.

Department of Information Systems

Programmes considered:

- Higher Certificate in Business in Office Administration
- Bachelor of Business in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Administration
- Higher Certificate in Business in Accounting

- BA in Accounting
- BA (Honours) in Accounting
- BSc in Computing in Software Development
- BSc in Computing (Honours) in Software Development
- BSc in Computing Systems and Networking
- BSc in Computing (Honours) Systems and Networking
- BSc in Computing in Web Development and Creative Media
- BSc in Computing in Games Development
- BSc Computing
- BSc (Honours) in Computing
- HC in Computing

General discussion

The chair welcomed the Lecturing staff from the Information Systems Group and introductions were made. The Chair commented on the amount of work done in the review and outlined the purpose of this meeting.

The Panel asked, how did the team go about the process of review, seeking feedback from learners and stakeholders. The staff explained the process including the initial meetings in the Department, the process of seeking and analysing feedback from students, graduates, and Industry. It was clarified that this was done programme by programme. The student evaluation forms were assessed and also student focus groups were held. While this is routine, continuous process, additional sessions were held in relation to the review. The staff emphasised that they discussed the programmes on a regular basis with students. They also referred to a School-wide survey carried out by the by Head of School, breakdown of the feedback is provided on page 35 of Volume 1.

The staff provided examples of changes that were being proposed to programmes as a result of the review. For example, there is a proposal to increase the level of integration between IT and accounting programmes.

There was some discussion on the proposed changes to the titles of modules.

The Panel queried how the Department was responding to the needs of industry. The staff pointed out that the graduates work in different markets and that it was challenging to design a programme that prepares graduates for all markets. The staff provided a number of examples of where the graduates are working and the type of work they are doing. It was noted that a module in preparation for the Cisco Exam was an option instead of placement.

The Panel asked about partners, who are they and where are they. The staff explained that LinkedIn is used substantially. The Panel pointed out that it is important that the Department takes the feedback and really reviews and considers it.

The Panel queried the quality assurance processes and asked about what happens to the QA2 forms. The staff confirmed that they do review this feedback and do take action. Examples of how feedback was responded to included doing more examples in class. The staff also pointed out that typically there is a good relationship between staff and students and that feedback occurs informally.

On the topic of placement, the staff confirmed that attitudes have changed, particularly in terms of paid placement. Now unpaid placement is the norm. For example, there is a 3 week placement in year 2 of the accounting programme which was 100% paid placement. Now that is not the case. Now companies are seeking unpaid placement for maternity leave cover. It was further noted that some students are prepared to work for nothing.

The Panel asked about the assessment of placements and was it on a Pass or Fail basis. The staff explained the process around the placement, including the visits, the supervisor feedback and the continuous link with Industry.

The Panel then asked about retention and what did the Department feel about the stats and what are they doing about it. The staff responded that Computing is so broad, and sometimes the students do not fully understand their subject matter. There is a common first year for Computing. There were 110 students in the 2010/11 Level 7 intake. Various options were discussed including a summer camp, a taster programme. It was also pointed out that, from the student perspective, there is a different perception of Computer Applications as compared with Computers.

The staff also commented that they work with the weaker students, providing extra tutorials with them and monitor those tutorials.

The staff also commented that they rarely get an opportunity to do exit interviews, however they perceive that many of the reasons for students leaving programmes are to do with financial issues.

On the issue of the transition to semesterisation and the role of assessment, the staff provided an example of the introduction of an assessment map in Software Development, Year 1, Semester 1 and that the introduction of semesterisation has made them think about this. A discussion followed on the advantages and disadvantages of semesterisation.

There followed some detailed questions on assessments, for example allocating 30% of the marks for Continuous Assessment on a first year module. The staff explained that there are 3 elements in the 30%. It was further explained that formative and joint assessment are used.

There was some further discussion on Induction, for all years, on changes in general, on module and programme monitoring, the 'gate' in passing a module, the role of entrepreneurship and learning to learn.

The Panel noted a request for a number of exit awards.

Finally, the Panel asked, what is radical about the proposal made as a result of the review. A number of examples were provided including the introduction of PBL which was based on existing experience in EBL/PBL in the Department.

Programmes

Higher Certificate in Business in Office Administration, Level 6

There was a discussion on mandatory attendance for languages.

Bachelor of Business in Business Administration, Level 7

There was a discussion on placement credits and if grades were allocated to these 15 credits. The staff confirms that there will be a grading system, and that this needs to be first agreed with the Registrar.

Bachelor of Business in Business Administration, Level 8

The absence of a final year project was noted and that there were significant changes in the programme. The staff explained that, in order to distinguish the programme from the Level 7, there is a proposed new module, Supervisory Management, in Semester 1 while Semester 2 is more hands on.

Higher Certificate in Business in Accounting

In 2nd Year, topics on mathematical methods for accountants has been introduced. It was confirmed that students have a progression route. A discussion on the retention figures ensued.

Bachelor of Business in Accounting, Level 7

No issue raised.

Bachelor of Arts in Accounting, Level 8

The staff noted that this 3 year programme was validated but it was not running. The work was done during the programme development but the Institute did not recruit sufficient numbers at the time.

There was a discussion around the topic of professional bodies and why the Department was only offering accountancy at Level 8.

There was a discussion on exemptions. There was also a discussion on an Ethics module and it was confirmed that ethics is embedded in all modules.

BSc in Computing in Software Development, Level 7 and

BSc in Computing in Software Development, Level 8

There was an engaging discussion on programming, software, web applications. The Panel queried how much do students actually understand about what they are doing.

There was some discussion about the appropriateness of the title and about the attendance requirement. As an administrative matter, it was noted that there are discrepancies in some of the book titles.

BSc in Computing in Systems and Networking, Level 7 and

BSc in Computing in Systems and Networking, Level 8

There are significant changes in this programme due to feedback from industry. The graduates lacked the soft skills, so work experience was introduced. It was noted that the Professional Exams are optional.

BSc in Computing in Web Development and Creative Media, Level 7

The Panel commented that the portfolio occurs early on in the programme. The staff agreed, but argued that this provided an opportunity for student to maintain and update their portfolio.

There was a particular question on when the topic of Security was covered and this was addressed by the staff.

It was clarified that progression opportunities are provide through the Level 8 programme.

BSc in Computing in Games Development.-Level 7

There was some discussion about the allocation of credits.

BSc Computing Level 7

The staff confirmed that this is not a new programme, it is a refreshing of an existing programme, and will replace the Database programme currently on offer. The view was expressed that this will be more attractive to the students (rather than the more specialised title, that is not well understood). The Panel noted that it was difficult to get good graduates in Database Management, but they understood the rationale behind the proposal from the Department.

BSc in Computing, Level 8

Similar discussion to above.

Higher Certificate in Computing, Level 6

No issues raised.

Part 7 Meeting with Students

The Chairman welcomed the student group and outlined the process on which they were participating. The Panel introduced themselves. The students also introduced themselves.

The Panel asked the students about feedback regarding their own work and their views on the programmes. For example, do students get sufficient time on assignments and what form does the feedback take? A number of examples were discussed.

The Fine Art students commented that it works well because theirs is a relatively small group and staff are always accessible and available, even on a one-on-one basis. Business students also commented that it works well, particularly in small groups. Some projects can be kept or copied by the students. A student of Computing, who had transferred from NCI, was facilitated with extra tutorials. Another student has transferred from Edinburgh and was facilitated with extra notes and classes to bring him up to speed.

In print-making (Fine Art), the staff member had retired and there was an issue around using the equipment, as there are hazardous materials. The students 'protested' to the HOD and a lecturer was provided within 2 weeks. This is a situation where a lecturer is needed to be present and students want to use equipment.

Do students understand the process of feeding back and have they been satisfied with the responses? An example was provided in Business where there is a proposal to set up an 'office' to allow students to get familiar with the environment. This has not been implemented yet. On the Office Administration programme there was a request from students for assistance on payroll management,

Course coordinators usually inform students about upcoming meetings (say 2 per year) and are asked for feedback or issues by staff.

Feedback also occurs when the Computing course placements are finished, and students are asked for their views on how the placement worked.

A common concern was raised in relation to group work and how marks are awarded to individuals. The view was that this is not always fair and consistent as poorly performing students benefit from the work of others. A proposal was made that lecturers meet with the group to evaluate progress and to understand who is doing the work. Alternatively some students have made their own presentations and are marked separately. Most students have been involved in group projects at years 3 and 4.

How do students feel about how well they are prepared for the workplace? Has the college done a good job? Fourth year fine art students explained that they do topics on professional practice where the issues with getting work and making a living is discussed. Some Marketing students reported that they got experience on real work projects (as part of their modules), but did not go on placement. This was considered a weakness and they requested that work placement be organised.

Regarding the programme feedback evaluation sheets, the students noted that they do not know where these end up. For example, one student commented that they had completed evaluation sheets on an uninteresting (in his view), out of date and poorly delivered module. They do not know where the sheets went to and got no feedback.

The Panel queried how students dealt with 'boring' lecturers. Typically, it was explained that, older students attend, younger students do not attend.

The Panel asked for feedback on the life of a student, and was it a good experience. As a mature student is it good? The students, in general, reported that the Institute did a lot for them. It was noted that, only a small number of students were in clubs and societies. The students union recognised the importance of involvement in extra-curricular activities. The soccer club is well run and brings students from all years and programmes together. Currently there are 4 players from the Institute on the Sligo Rovers team.

Fine Art is busy and there is no time for other activities. But they have no boring lectures.

One student had set up 2 clubs himself but found it difficult to get interest from the student body in 'niche' hobbies.

All tourism students are members of the tourism society. In 3rd year students were not made aware of the trips being organised by the society.

The Panel asked if there was an emphasis of entrepreneurship on the programmes. Examples were provided where these topics are covered on Business and Computing programmes. Students requested that programmes include more about how to set up a company and a business to be ready for the workplace. Entrepreneurship should be incorporated into more of the programmes. Also, many students do not get jobs in the areas they are trained in. Some students noted that there is poor awareness of upcoming jobs among the final years and graduate community. Business students felt there should be a second year of entrepreneurship in order to prepare, for example, setting up their own business. Examples were cited where class-based business plans have turned into viable business opportunities. The students requested that there should be a greater number of young entrepreneurs and former graduates presenting at the Institute.

The students strongly agreed that they would like to have course materials available on Moodle, although it was commented that this depended on the capability of the lecturer. One 2nd year student did not know what Moodle meant. Other students commented that while Moodle was used in Art History, students do not have easy access to computers. In 2nd year Business, only a few modules use Moodle. The students reported that lecturers said that they do not have time to learn how to do it, even though students would like it. Some staff said they did not use it because students would not turn up to class.

The students reported that, in general, it is easy to access the Moodle system. There are no fully delivered modules online and Moodle is only used as a support to class-based lectures. There are a number of shared drives and staff put notes on s-drive. On Computing programmes, different lecturers use different platforms which can be confusing (e.g. Microsoft live, web sites, s-drive. Moodle).

The Panel queried the mechanism for raising the above concerns as an issue. Marketing students raised this with the HOD and were told this is being addressed at the moment with staff training being provided. It was also noted that students are not trained on how to use Moodle and the library data base.

The Panel asked if students get a handbook on their programme that included timings, dates etc. The students reported that they did and that this is typically done on an individual module basis. Marks allocation is shown, but the quality and level of detail provided varies from module to module. The Panel noted that the attrition on Computing programmes is high (on an AQA entry course). The students reported that the numbers on the Business programme reduced from 26 down to 11 over the 4 years. One explanation is that student's changed course as they realised the course was not for them. Other reasons why students leave is it is not their first choice and that selecting a course at 17 is very young. In fact, many students at the Institute are themselves on their second course, having left another course elsewhere and transferred to the Institute.

The Student's Union provide induction for new students with Student Services. While the Careers Office were available for support, some students never heard or met the staff in the Careers office.

The Panel asked for feedback on the proposed introduction of semesterisation and if students were aware of the introductory process and the likely consequences. Students have been informed about the forthcoming change. Concerns were expressed about the pace of work required – for example if you got sick you would miss out. Some students worried about the workload – constant demand.

Self-directed learning is encouraged. Many mature students are present in the group. Younger students do not know how to study. Lecturers do provide good notes (sufficient to pass) and references to books, which is the responsibility of students to follow up on.

Are you over assessed? One PT student, 14 in class, has a dissertation (including a literature review) but did not hear about it until February – which was late in the year and it overlapped with other assignments. Many students deferred this project until next year.

Another student referred to his experience when studying on an Open University course. The main pressure was that one was assessed every 2 to 3 weeks by CA (MCQ) and regular reports were due.

Project submission dates are very close and students found this to be very stressful while studying for exams. Some lecturers are flexible on this. Also there is variation between years on the same programme.

Most students are aware of the maths support centre.

Some know about the writing support centre.

Students were aware of the importance of their writing and literacy ability in order to achieve their learning outcomes and to get employment.

The first year students were aware of Semesters and the change. The induction occurred in first week. Day 1 introduction to modules and what they entail and there are many handouts. They could not recall being told about maths support and writing centre at that time. Induction received well.

All students use ITSligo email and read messages from the college. There is a problem with spam on college email.

Students do get emails about job opportunities from the careers office. It was confirmed that the Careers Office does visit all class group represented at the meeting (other than Fine Art) and provides talks about interview skills. The Careers Office provides CV support on Wednesdays.

The Panel observed that there is an opportunity to develop a business plan for the college aimed at courses to improve the communication and focus.

Any exposure to the international environment – e.g. on the Marketing programme and do students go abroad.

On the issue of feedback, the class reps meet every 6 weeks. SU required a formal arrangement every couple of weeks the reps would meet with the staff programme leaders.

The Student's Union is represented on major committees but not on lower committees.

The Panel asked if there was any interaction with the innovation centre companies. Not much, in general, but some years of the Business programmes do interact.

The Panel asked about the experience of the new library. The students stated that there were few silent spaces. They acknowledged that it is a wonderful facility but reiterated that it is difficult to get quite time. Like a social hub. Move social zone out.

At the very end of the meeting with students and as a follow-on to an earlier panel question about employment and readiness for work, the Panel asked the students about their awareness of Graduate Management Programmes. In response, they seemed very unaware of the existence of such programmes.

There was some issue about the suitability of some lecturers to teach at first year level. It was noted that there is a high failure rate in 1st year which some students attributed to poor delivery.

Part 8 Follow-on meeting with the School

The Panel asked for an update on staffing and resourcing, including general supports for the School. Computing is stretched as there have been a number of retirements. The national ECF has impacted on numbers and the School is in the process of analysing the impact of the most recent targets for staff reductions. Administrative support staff have retired and have not been replaced. Other activities, for example on RPL, and part time applications are taking considerable time and resources. The other Schools have the same administration support, which reflects an imbalance, based on student numbers.

There was concern raised about the loss of the skills set when staff retire – e.g. accountancy lecturers.

Examples were cited as the lack of a PA for the Head of School, however there is a good team in operation.

What is the plan to address the loss of staff? There was some discussion about possible new structural models for the School, to more rationally place programmes in Departments and to provide the appropriate resources.

It was acknowledged that support was provided by the library staff towards the work of preparing this review.

The Heads of Department also noted a work overload.

How is IT support services? Systems are stable and do not crash. There is a wide range of services and systems provided and, in general, there is a view that this is well supported.

Programme chairs cover a wide range of tasks, which is critical to the successful running of the Departments. The Panel acknowledged the work of the programme chairs.

The School had applied for a FAS placement person, but did not get allocated any positions.

The Panel pointed out that the proposed new exit awards will need to be validated to ensure that the programme learning outcomes are mapped against the appropriate levels on the NFQ.

The Panel also noted a number of sub-requirements within programmes – for example, in Computing, regarding an attendance requirement and particular passing requirement for parts of practical module assessments (i.e. a 'gate'). It was also pointed out that in Computing, exams are set to cover all learning outcomes, which includes a minimum bar to ensure all LOs are passed. The Head of Department defended the proposals on the basis that practical modules learning outcomes will not be met if a minimum grade is not attained. The Panel expressed a view that this could be very restrictive and difficult to implement and operate.

The staff responded that the issue of attendance is hotly debated across all programmes. The techniques used to address this were discussed. In the Department of Business, there is an attendance requirement on 3 modules (languages, computer applications and communications).

The LTA strategy has a student centred approach and it behoves the School to make the modules interesting enough that students will attend.

There was some discussion around the attendance requirement as a rule. This will be monitored by sign in sheets and swipe cards. Enforced attendance gives the student the chance to understand what the module is about and why they need to attend. Ultimately, a student will not fail for under attendance, as their marks will be assessed, but the rule is an indicator of what is required to learn the subject matter.

The Panel noted that there is some placement in award years, are they pass-fail and does this affect the final award? In Computing this is 5 credits out of 60. In Business it is 30 credits, for a placement abroad. In that case the placement is pass-fail only and the award is calculated on the scores from one Semester.

Where there is a high percentage of CA, how are repeat attempts managed? When results are sent out, the student gets a statement of the requirement for work to be done for the repeats.

There may be difficulties where equipment is required to carry out the repeat assignment. A project book is used to explain the repeat requirement.

The Panel raised the need for staff and student training and the need for students to be informed about this in year 1. The Panel argued that Moodle should be used more extensively and the class notes should be available to students. This requires a change in the practice of some lecturers.

The Panel proposed that a greater effort is required to introduce School-wide use of Moodle. One option would be to disconnect the s-drive to 'force' a transfer to Moodle. The staff referred to the formalised credited Institute-wide training provided by the Educational Development Unit (EDU) currently underway to train all staff on basic Moodle. It is also important to get all students registered on Moodle.

The staff argued that Moodle was not in line with the students experiences on social networking. There are other options, such as *Windows Live*.

The Panel pointed out that it is not about having a particular platform, but about access and availability of information from anywhere and consistency across the School so that students know how to access it.

The Panel also noted the recommendation of the last programmatic review regarding the introducing of Moodle and that this did not happen.

It was noted that some students have difficulties understanding Moodle.

There was some discussion about the way students learn and the fact that Moodle was only one tool in a range of tools.

Is there a policy on the allocation of resources to contact hours for projects – particularly on the years 3 and 4 of the Information Systems programme. The staff noted that the stated 7 contact hours was an error and that it should be 1.5 hours of contact.

The two 5 credit project modules appear to be, in fact, one 10 credit module. The Panel queries if this made sense and should the modules be redesigned as a single 10 credit module. Also, do the allocated credits reflect the contact hours?

It was noted that there are different models of the allocation of staff time to project supervision between Departments and programmes. The Panel made the point that this should be standardised across the School.

All programmes do not publish handbooks, although there is an Institute student handbook. Delivery details are provided at induction. This needs to be addressed.

The assessment schedule is provided to students, via the Academic Module Manager and students are made aware of all of the submission dates. Staff meet in advance of the programme commencement to discuss this and consider 'clustering' of assessments. The staff acknowledged that this could be done better.

The Panel commended the work of certain staff in working closely with students. However, the Panel proposed that there would be more effort put into including students on Institute committees to ensure greater awareness of the way the Institute works. There is training for all class reps. The programme chairs are another informal conduit for student feedback. All minutes from programme board meetings are on the t-drive. These occur a number of times each term. The Panel pointed out, however, that the students did not confirm that they met regularly on a formal basis with the Programme Committees or School Management. The School outlined the structure for student feedback, including year chairpersons, programme chairpersons, attendance by students at course boards and visits by the Head of Department to each class group. The Panel commented that the issue for students was about the feedback from the course evaluation sheets and that these seemed to disappear into the system. The staff should not be defensive about this! The staff acknowledged the work of the Student's Union in coordinating the class reps to be conduits to programme chairs.

The staff also noted that many of the courses were skilled-based and do not necessarily lend themselves to newer tools and techniques such as Moodle.

The Chair asked if the staff had any issues to bring to the attention of the Panel.

The staff asked that there would be a greater opportunity for student democratic involvement in the development of the Institute and proposed a restructuring of the participatory involvement of students.

Do lecturers routinely receive mandatory library training? No, but training is provided from time to time.

Part 9 Findings and Recommendations

The Panel recommend the revalidation of all programmes for 5 years, subject to the following:

Commendations

1. The documentation was well prepared, clearly written and well presented.
2. The defence offered by staff was strong and there was a positive approach to entering the debate.
3. The confidence of students is to be commended and reflects well on the higher education level of teaching provided by the School.
4. There were significant instances of good practice identified throughout the review, which are to be commended.
5. The Panel commends the School for investing a considerable amount of time in preparing and mentoring teams on extra-curricular activities such as the Imagine Cup and Games Fleadh.

Conditions

1. The induction activities for first year students are to be commended. As a method of addressing attrition, the School should introduce a programme of induction for every year of programmes.
2. All programmes to have a programme handbook for students with a common content structure including assessment schedules, feedback policies and procedures.
3. A clear and comprehensive policy and related processes to get and respond to student feedback to be developed. There should be triangulation of student engagement processes and feedback should be more effectively implemented.
4. A definition of 'workplace engagement, which is authentic to each programme and expressed as learning outcomes to be written. Consideration to be given to the resources required to implement a robust placement strategy.
5. The issue of transitioning students into the new semesterised system needs to be carefully considered. A point of contact, providing supports and advice to students in relation to the introduction of semesterisation to be put in place before September 2011.
6. The Panel commends the activities of the School and the Institute in its provision of a suite of programmes delivered through distance learning. The developments in other Schools in respect of online delivery are acknowledged. Following from the recommendation of the previous programmatic review, and noting the strategic targets

set by the Institute in its Strategy for Change 2009-2012, the School should quickly commence delivering modules online and develop online supports for students, taking into consideration the appropriateness of the platform and feedback following consultation with students. This will have the effect of improving IT Sligo as a provider of distance learning education, and providing the potential for attracting further non-exchequer income through delivery to full-fee paying students.

7. Support services for reducing the incidence of Plagiarism (for example Turnitin) should be applied universally across the School, allowing students to check their own work before it is submitted. This should be implemented by academic year 2012/2013.
8. The development of programme assessment strategies to be accelerated and implemented within a year.

Recommendations

For the Institute:

1. The Panel was concerned that the review occurred a year late and this is particularly relevant in respect of the non-fulfilment of some of the 2005 recommendations. It is important that the Institute ensures that it follows its own procedures and that such reviews occur in a timely manner in accordance with the agreed schedule.
2. The Panel is concerned about the current structures and the apparent inequality between Schools across the Institute. The Institute should consider the restructuring of the School at the earliest possible occasion to take into consideration the current size of the School, its diverse range of programmes and the resource constraints, which are inhibiting the development and full implementation of some very good practices.
3. The Panel is concerned about student retention and attrition. Customer retention is key to the success of any business model, especially in these straitened times. The Panel recommends that the Institute develop a comprehensive operational plan for addressing the retention issue.
4. The Panel recommends that the Institute establishes an Industry Committee as a liaison between all the Schools and industry, with a view to ensuring that programmes remain current and relevant to industry changes. An additional benefit of this new Committee could be to assist in securing placements from their own industry sectors for IT Sligo students.

For the School:

1. The Panel endorses the objective of the Institute to create self-directed learners and finds this could be supported by an intensification of the democratic approach to student involvement in the development of the School and its programmes.
2. The Panel recommends the implementation of a process of continuous review and research of industry to identify what sectors require labour resources. Given the structure of the School and the range of discipline areas, the Panel recommends that each Department establishes a Business Advisory Group, as proposed during the review by one Department, in line with Recommendation (4) above related to the Institute. The TORs should be carefully considered to ensure this is effective.
3. The Lecturer Back to Business programme is to be commended and should be extended across the School.
4. The School should develop enterprise and innovation strategies and an implementation plan to embed enterprise topics in its programmes. The Panel further recommends that

the School ensures that students are made aware of the significant opportunities available to them on graduate management programmes notwithstanding the increasing focus on enterprise and innovation.

5. Lack of engagement with Special Purpose Awards is limiting the opportunities of the School to address the needs of the unemployed and others requiring training. This needs to be addressed by the development of more Special Purpose and Minor Awards.
6. The Panel endorses the intention of the School to develop and validate a series of exit awards.
7. In some Departments there appears to be limited Level 8 direct entry opportunities. The School should consider the impact of this on recruitment.
8. The modules on all programmes are to be reviewed to ensure that the content reflects the title and that the module is appropriate to the semester in which it occurs.
9. The Panel noted that relatively few master's level programmes are offered by the School. The Panel encourages the School to develop more taught masters' programmes and in addition encourage collaboration with other providers at post graduate level.
10. The Panel commends the research being conducted by certain individuals in the School. The Panel recommends that a more formal, structured research strategy, potentially built around clusters is developed. The Panel further commends the combination of research and innovation activities and recommends that this combination is also developed in a structured format.
11. The Panel recommends that, after one year of delivery, the School reviews contact hours with a view to alignment with sector norms for discipline areas.
12. The School should review opportunities for incorporating more common modules across programmes.
13. The Panel recommends that, after one year of delivery, the School considers the appropriateness of 5 credit modules, as effectively delivering the learning outcomes.
14. A review of the taxonomy of learning outcomes to be carried out to assure that the challenges are appropriate to programme levels.
15. Developing integration across programmes is a potentially unique feature of IT Sligo and is something that the Institute should promote to a greater extent. This will have a bearing on defining what the Institute stands for and will drive a more competitive approach in respect of the relevance of the programmes to the needs of students and employers.
16. In considering these recommendations, the School should reference them against its strategic targets and prioritise their delivery on an annual basis in the period up to the next review.

Programme Specific Recommendations

Business

Commendations

1. The Panel acknowledges the team work that has been done to improve the programmes.

Specific Recommendations

1. To rethink the dissertation in the Level 8 programme with regard to the method and assessment so that the learning outcomes are met. For example, does it need to be a 10-20,000 word essay for a 10 credit module?
2. The Panel feel that there needs to be more research to be done to ascertain the future jobs prospects for the IT Sligo graduates.
3. The Panel endorse the proposed end of stage exit awards.

Observations:

1. While the rationale for semesterisation is apparent, the Panel was not convinced of its application across the board, particularly in the language area.
2. Do the courses with an entry level of 150 points lend themselves to an IT Sligo policy of promoting self-directed learning?

Humanities**Specific Recommendations & Commendations**

1. The effectiveness of the discussions in the social care area is commended. This has led to the outcome that the programmes need to be significantly redesigned, beyond the scope of this review and revalidation process.
2. The Department has considered the introduction of semesterisation and the consequences thereof in good detail.
3. The development of a 1st year programme that allows students to reflect on their course of study is commendable.
4. The uniqueness of the Custodial care programme in meeting the needs of a particular sector is noted.
5. The pedagogical innovations in operation in the suite of creative programmes should be acknowledged and recognised by the Institute.
6. It is recommended that:
 - a. The School develops a policy on student feedback, the process of how this feeds into new developments and the actions arising being communicated back to students.
 - b. The Level 7 and Level 8 educational aims should be differentiated to a greater degree than was presented.
 - c. The Department should review the taxonomy of learning outcomes to assure that the challenges are appropriate to the programme Levels.
 - d. In the creative programmes, greater consideration could be given to the incorporation of work-based learning (even if full work placement cannot be achieved).
 - e. The Institute should provide regular staff training opportunities on learning outcomes.

Marketing, Tourism & Leisure**Specific Recommendations & Commendations**

1. It was apparent that there was an excellent level of cohesion across the programmes and within the Department of Marketing, Tourism, Recreation and Leisure and this is to be

commended. The Department actively seeks solutions i.e. in work placements and are interactive with industry and then provides relevant feedback to the programmes. It is recommended that the Department 'celebrate' and communicate these instances within the department, the school and with the external stakeholders i.e. through a newsletter; published testimonials.

2. The Panel were reassured about the clarity of thinking about the introduction of semesterisation. This was evidenced on the Bachelor of Business in Tourism with Event Management where students, who have been caught up in the system, were identified and were dealt with in a pro-student manner. The Panel recommend that this analysis be conducted across all suites of programmes within the Department and is conducted on an annual basis.
3. The Panel observed good examples of integration between the Department, the School and the rest of the Institute. This integrated approach could well be a differentiating factor for Sligo IT and should be leveraged and publicised to a greater extent.
4. It was apparent that the Department went through the process of student and employer feedback for this validation process. It is recommended that this process be continued on an ongoing basis. The Department should consider using the work placement as a means of gathering feedback from employers/students.

On a programme level:

1. A number of module titles need to be reviewed to better reflect their content and the needs of the market and clearly differentiate one module from another. This will provide prospective students with greater clarity and provides a more focused offering.
2. The process adopted for scheduling and organising the large suite of streams on the Bachelor of Business (Hons) Level 8 programme needs to be commended. It is recommended that the Department should use graduate testimonials to publicise this programme.
3. There appears to be an imbalance between the number of Level 7 and Level 8 programmes. It is recommended that the Department considers introducing Level 8 programmes in the current Level 7 disciplines areas.
4. With reference to the M.Sc in Marketing, this programme is strategically important to the School and the Institute. While the content is comprehensive, work needs to be done on the packaging of this programme to increase its attractiveness to potential students and ensure it is differentiated.

Information Systems

Commendations

1. The amount of changes and programme refreshing included in Reviewed Programmes
2. The embedding of Professional programmes like CCNA and Comptia A+ in programmes is to be commended.
3. The use of common modules across programmes to capture benefits of modular systems.

Specific Recommendations & Commendations

1. Consider resource allocation and credits allocated to projects in particular 3rd year. (over resourced)

2. Make technical amendments as identified in documents, e.g.
 - module levels page 56 -57
 - work experience credits page 75
 - missing modules page 96 – 98

Part 10 Conclusion

The School of Business and Humanities carried out a self-evaluation during the academic year 2010/11. This culminated in a School Planning and Programme Revalidation submission that was assessed by a Panel of external experts in May 2011, in accordance with the institute's Quality Assurance procedures.

The evaluation process included a review of the extensive documentation submitted by the School and a number of meetings with the President, the School Management, all of the Academic staff and representatives of the Administrative and Technical Support staff. There was a very positive meeting with students in which they indicated their satisfaction with the Institute, the School and the staff.

Following the review, the Panel recommended the revalidation of all existing programmes that were submitted by the School.

The Panel specified 8 conditions and 20 School-wide recommendations. There were also a number of programme specific recommendations.

The outcome of this review will be submitted to the Academic Council for adoption.

Professor Jimmy Hill

Chairperson

Dr Brendan McCormack

Registrar

Appendix i

Agenda (confirmation at the meeting on 25th May, 2011)

Wednesday 25th May:

18:00-19:00	Private meeting of the Panel: Discussion of documentation and identification of points for special consideration
20:00	Panel dinner

Thursday 26th May:

09:00-09:45	Private meeting of Panel
09:45-10:00	Meeting with President
10:00-11:00	Meeting with Head of School and Heads of Departments: Overview
11:00-11:15	Coffee
11:15-12:45	Meeting with Head of School, Heads of Departments, Programme Chairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School/Department management & Administrative structures - Staff compliment, deployment and development - Support staff, technical & administration - Physical facilities - Student issues, throughput, retention and completion, feedback - Teach and Learning
12:45-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:00	Breakout of Panel with four Departments, Heads of Departments, Programme Chairs and all lecturing staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme design, modifications and titles of awards - Learning outcomes - Delivery methodologies - Feedback to and from students - Employment of graduates - Links with employers - Research
16:00-17:00	Tour of facilities
17:00-18:00	Private meeting of Panel
20:00	Panel dinner

Friday 27th May:

09:00-09:45	Private meeting of Panel
09:45-10:45	Meeting with Student Representatives
10:45-11:00	Coffee
11:00-12:00	Follow up meeting with Head of School, Heads of Departments, Programme Chairs
12:00-13:00	Private meeting of Panel
13:00-13:15	Feedback to School
13:15-14:00	Lunch and finish up

Appendix ii: Membership of Review Panel

Name	Title
Professor Jimmy Hill (Chair)	Dean, School of Business, National College of Ireland
Dr Diarmuid O Callaghan	Registrar, Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
Dr Marian Fitzgibbon	Head of the School of Humanities, Athlone Institute of Technology
Dr. Naomi Birdthistle	Expert in the areas of Entrepreneurship, Management, Marketing and Ethics. University of Limerick.
Mr John Cranfield	Businessman and Company Director (Founder and former CEO of FirstStep Micro Finance, Former CEO, Bank of Scotland, Ireland)
Ms Catherine Young	Current Postgraduate student, IT Sligo
Ms Catriona Walsh	Managing Director, OmniScience Design Ltd
Mr Raymond Keaney	Lecturer Tourism & Hospitality Management, IT Tallaght
Mr James Greenslade	Head of Department of Technology, Media and Science, Tipperary Institute/LIT
Ms Ann Marie McHugh	Lecturer, School of Business, DKIT
Mr Liam Doona	Head of the Department of Art and Design, School of Creative Arts, IADT
Mr Tony Keenan	Manager Bank of Ireland, Sligo
Mr Pauric Oates	Director, Oates Brehony Group, Sligo
Dr David Slattery	Associate Fellow GRADCAM, NCAD
Mr Jarlaith Jennings	Director of McConnell Ad Agency and National Chair of the Marketing Institute
Mr Michael McGeehin	Director of Coaching Ireland
Mr Martin Feeney	Software Development Manager, IBM (attending for the Department of Information Systems only)

Appendix iii: List of documentation circulated to the Panel

The following documentation relevant to the Review was circulated to the Panel in advance of the meeting.

- A proposed agenda and list of Panel members
- Chapter 5 of the QA Manual which explains what the process is about (for those of you who are familiar with the 'Programmatic Review' process, you will see that we have made changes to this process and this is the first working example of the process).
- A hardcopy of the School Self Evaluation document.
- A hardcopy of the proposed changes to programmes in the Department to which you have been provisionally assigned to evaluate.
- A USB with softcopies of all documentation including further details pertaining to programmes and modules, by Department (when you open this, click the 'Start2011' file for the contents. After that, click on the section while pressing the 'ctrl' key).
- Map of Sligo.
- Panel Visit Claim Form

Appendix iv: Private meetings of the Panel

25.05.11: Points raised for discussion by the Panel at a private meeting

1. Response to previous Programmatic Review recommendations
2. semesterisation - how ready are the staff for this, e.g. assessment strategy
3. Implementation of Moodle/blended learning techniques
4. Preparation for the real-world
5. Placement on all programmes (as in strategic plan)
6. Common modules across programmes and elective choices
7. Rationale for 5 credits rather than 6 credits
8. Contact hours related to credits
9. Organisational chart: e.g. why is accounting in the IS Department?
10. eBusiness and other such programmes with good employment opportunities
11. Have changes been driven by top down rather than from student feedback?
12. Research strategy
13. Development of part time programmes to meet employer needs
14. Communication strategy: Management-staff and staff-students
15. Cross-institutional initiatives and collaboration – learning from others

26th May 2011: Points raised for discussion by the Panel at a private morning meeting

1. Start with a discussion on the Process for addressing the previous PR and the proposed process for the follow through of recommendations from this review.
2. What is the Institutes capacity to re-evaluate itself?
3. Reasons for semesterisation and justification
4. How the revalidated programmes will be introduced over the coming years.
5. What type of student is the School trying to produce? Should they be work-ready?
6. Is there a strategy for this?
7. Where is research and innovation embedded in the programmes?
8. On programme examination be sure to look at two aspects:
 - Output, profile for graduate
 - Fit for purpose, academic content

For example:

- Relationship between modules and programmes
- Variation in contact hours
- Part time and full time
- What is the profile of the graduate

- Assessment methods/strategies
 - Learning & Teaching
9. What changes have been made to programmes through the normal change processes annually.
 10. Each breakout group to meet over lunch to discuss the issues.
 11. Is the School happy with the mix of programmes. How do these relate to programmes delivered across the country? What is the School's identity of itself.
 12. Is the learning environment suitable for the needs of programmes?

26th/27th May 2011: Points raised for discussion by the Panel at a private evening and morning meeting

1. The documentation does not contain a subject and programme specific narrative and any such consideration comes across as patchy.
2. Where is the over arching statement on Learning and Teaching.
3. Assessment strategy is not well articulated at a School level and is not evident throughout the documentation.
4. Clear statements/strategies on transition are required with respect to 'big bang' approach to the introduction of semesterisation . Transitional guidelines?
5. Have all issues pertaining to semesterisation been thought through?
6. Moodle? Turnitin? Blended? Online? For example, why is Moodle not used by all staff on all programmes
7. Entrepreneurship and innovation – this is absent at the top level overview and an School enterprise and research strategy is required.
8. There needs to be a statement around what is understood as 'work placement'.
9. There needs to be evidence of debate on the issue of 5 ECTS modules.
10. Should there be a common year 1? Apart from HC in Business.
11. Research strategy? Clusters?
12. Student retention. How is this addressed?
13. What type of student do we want to graduate?
14. Programmes are developed but there are almost 500,000 people unemployed in the country. How does the School know that the programmes are fit for purpose? What research has been undertaken? How do we develop programmes? What is the process? Project management?
15. In the shaping of the review, what was the role played by (a) industry, (b) management (c) staff (d) students?
16. RPL
17. Do we have a School-wide Business Advisory Group
18. The connection between organisation structure and research.
19. Management of repeat 100% CA
20. Genuine student understanding of Moodle and training of students
21. Project credits and have they enough

22. New programmes such as the proposed exit awards cannot be validated within the review process. These will need to be presented for validation separately.
23. Lack of enthusiasm from Business Department
24. Why are not more programmes delivered online
25. How is RPL operated and applied
26. Provide confidence that this is not an isolated review but is part of a continuous improvement process
27. Why is placement not on all programmes
28. Address the apparent anomalies in the organisational structure
29. Refine the new programme development process to ensure market relevance
30. In Business and Marketing courses, include sales-related topics (i.e. how to make a sale)
31. Consider emphasising Cloud Computing on the IS courses
32. Develop a School research strategy and implementation plan
33. Develop a School assessment strategy and implementation plan
34. There should be greater recognition by the Institute of research efforts and achievements of the School, using meaningful metrics other than funding and student numbers
35. Clarify the TORs for the proposed industry Advisory Panel
36. How good is the School at listening to students and other stakeholders

27th May 2011: Points raised at the final meeting of the Panel

This meeting discussed the proposed draft commendations, conditions and recommendations of the panel that were subsequently presented orally to the School management team.

Appendix v List of Staff members who met the Panel

Department of Business

Attendance:

Panel Members :

Ms Ann Marie McHugh (Chairperson)
 Mr John Cranfield
 Dr David Slattery
 Mr Pdraig Oates
 Ms Aoife Currid (Recording Secretary)

Staff member	Discipline area
Claire Kelly Coll	Spanish
John Creed	Law
Martine Lucas	French
Paul McWeeney	Business
Carmel Sheehan	Business/Info Systems
Mary McGuckian	Tourism/Marketing
Marie Moran	Business/Marketing
Fergal Keane	Business/Financial Services
Killian O'Mhurchu	Business
John McNamara	BBS ACCS
Catherine McGuinn	Marketing
Kieran Howard-BBS	HC Business
Angela Bartlett	Management
Pat Scanlon	Head of Department
Caroline Casey	HRM/OB/People Mgt
Jimmy Treacy	Business
Nicola Lacey	Business/Marketing
Marie Keane	Business/Marketing Enterprise
Collette Armstrong-	Business

Department of Marketing, Tourism & Leisure

Attendance:

Panel members :

Dr Naomi Birdthistle (Chairperson)
 Mr Michael McGeehin
 Mr Jarlath Jennings
 Mr Raymond Keaney
 Prof Jimmy Hill (early part discussion)
 Ms Eileen Curley (Recording Secretary)

Staff member	Discipline area
Name	Discipline
Ruth Walsh	Law
James Hanrahan	Tourism
Deborah Keegan	Languages

Emer Ward	Marketing
Siobhan Dooney	Business English
Louise Walsh	Economics
Joan Morrison	German, Eurostudies
Mary O'Keeffe	Tourism
Mary McGuckin	Tourism and Strategy
Mary Gilmartin	HRM and Communications
Diolinda Coyle	Computing and Web
Gary Reynolds	Accounting and Finance
John Gaynor	Accounting
Glodagh Crowe	Marketing
Joanna Sweeney	Tourism
Ann Higgins	Head of Department
Suzanne Ryan	Marketing
Kerry Larkin	Recreation and Leisure
Trisha McCapprey	Recreation and Leisure
Shirley McKenna	Recreation and Leisure
Linda Byane	Recreation and Leisure
Aiden Bell	Marketing and Maths
Siobhan Dooney	Business English
Deborah Keegan	Languages
Nicola Lacey	Marketing
Marie Moran	Marketing
Roddy Gaynor	Recreation and Leisure

Department of Humanities

Attendance:

Panel members :

Dr Marian Fitzgibbon (Chair)
 Mr Liam Doona
 Ms Catherine Young
 Dr Jimmy Hill
 Ms Deirdre Collery (Recording Secretary)

Staff member	Discipline area
Roisin Mc Gloin	Social Studies
John Kane	Social Studies
Orla Walsh	Social Studies
Breda Mc Taggart	Social Studies
Jacinta Feeney	Fine Art
Nevil Walsh	Creative Design
Ann Geaney	Fine Art/Creative Design
Mark Pepper	Fine Art
Elizabeth Caffrey	Fine Art
Angela Mehegan	Fine Art/Creative Design
Lizzie Kinsella	Fine Art
Fergus Timmons	Custodial Care
Maresa McGee	Custodial Care
Richard Roche	Custodial Care
Des O'Shea	Custodial Care
Sinead Meade	Psychology
Margaret Gilmore	Social Studies
Deirdre Scott	Social Studies

Rose Banaghan-Sesta	Advocacy Studies
Louis Mc Manus	Art & Design
John Pender	Social Studies
Liam Leonard	Social Studies/Custodial Care
Paula Kenny	Social Studies/Custodial Care
Mary Clarke	Social Studies/ Advocacy Studies
Hilary Gilligan	Fine Art
John Graham	Fine Art
Ronnie Hughes	Fine Art
Peggy Mc Kenna	Fine Art

Department of Information Systems

Attendance:

Panel members :

Dr Diarmuid O Callaghan
 Ms Catriona Walsh
 Mr James Greenslade
 Mr Tony Keenan
 Mr Martin Feeney (Microsoft, for this session only)
 Ms Stephanie Donegan (Recording Secretary)

Staff member	Discipline area
Rose Banaghan - Sesta	Advocacy Studies
Kevin Sludds	Higher Cert Custodial Care
Fergal Keane	BB Financial Services
Angela Mehegan	BB Fine Art (7+8)
Nevil Walsh	Creative Design (7+8)
Ruth Walsh	BB International Marketing
Caroline Casey	B. Business
Mary Gilmartin	Business + Marketing
Colette Armstrong	MCs Business
Marie Keane	Business
Amanda Harrison	Administration
Bridie Gaughan	Technical Office
Angela Bartlett	Business
John McNamara	BBs ACCS
Alan Kelly	Web
Paul Flynn	Systems and Networking
Pdraig Harte	BSc in Computing
Drew Lang	HC Computing
John Kelleher	Information Systems
Paul Powell	BSc in Computing
Margaret Feeney	Information Systems
Mary McGuckin	Information Systems
Roddy Gaynor	Marketing and Leisure
David O'Halloran	Information Systems
John Joe Gillen	Information Systems
John Creed	Information Systems
Suzanne Ryan	Suite of Marketing Degrees
Catherine McGuinn	MSc in Marketing
Emer Ward	Marketing (Level 7 add-on)
Karen Clancy	OIS and computing
Paul McWeeney	OIS and Business Administration

Colm Davey	Computing
Dana Vasaloaica	Computing
Diane O Brien	Computing
Fiona Mitchell	Computing
Neil Gannon	Computing
John Carter	Computing
Therese Hume	Computing
Una L'Estrange	Computing
Vivien Kinsella	Computing
Sarah O Beirne	Communication
Maria Diaz Caneja	Accounting
Carmel Henry	Business Administration
Helen Grady	BA Accounting
Caroline McNulty	Accounting
Beatrice Flavin	Accounting
Keith McManus	Head of Department

Appendix vi List of students who met the Panel

Name	Programme	Year
Ann Marie Cronin	Business ab initio	4
Beverley Chen	Marketing	2
Catherine Gettins	HC Accounting	2
Cathy Dooney	BA Fine Art	4
Christina Hunt	HC Business	2
Ciara Stafford	BBs Marketing	4
D Higgins	Fine Art	3
Darragh Devaney	BA Accountacy	1
David Byrne	BBs Financial Services	3
Dereck Houston	Fine Art	3
Gary Gaughan	BBs Recreation and Leisure	3
Grainne McCarran	Industrial Design	4
Hazel Marshall	Business Management	3
James Dillon	Student's Union	
James McNamara	MSc Computing	2
John Lang	Computing	4
John Lang	Computer Systems and Networking	4
Kathy Maguine	BBs Tourism	3
Kerry O'Boyle	Business ab initio	4
Kevin Shields	Business	
Lorraine Young	Business Office Admin.	3
Marsha Trotter	Business Administration	4
Mary Leahy	Business ab initio	4
Naoimh Corrigan	Business ab initio	4
Padraic Hackett	Computer Systems and Networking	2
Philip Nanu	Computer Systems and Networking	2
Robert Kelleher	Marketing	2
Rozanne Begley	Business ab initio	4
Sahira Idrees	Industrial Design	4
Scott Dolan	BBs Tourism	3
Shane Brennan	BBs Marketing	4
Sharon Smith	Business Office Admin.	3
Sheela Connelly	BBS - Finance	2
Stuart Davies	Computing Games	2

Appendix vii Academic Programmes recommended to the Academic Council by the Panel for validation

- Higher Certificate in Business, Level 6 (Full time and ACCS)
 - Bachelor of Business, Level 7 (add-on)
 - Bachelor of Business, Level 7 (ab-initio)
 - Bachelor of Business Management Applications, Level 7 (add-on)
 - Bachelor of Business, Level 8 (ab Initio and add-on)
 - Bachelor of Business in Financial Services, Level 7
 - Bachelor of Business Studies (ACCS)
-
- Bachelor of Business in Tourism with Event Management
 - Bachelor of Business in Recreation and Leisure
 - Bachelor of Business in Marketing with PR & Events Management,
 - Bachelor of Business in Marketing (abinitio and add-on)
 - Bachelor of Business in Marketing with Languages
 - Bachelor of Business in International Marketing
 - MSc in Marketing
 - Bachelor of Business (Honours)
-
- Higher Certificate in Arts in Advocacy Studies
 - Higher Certificate in Arts in Custodial Care
 - Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art
 - Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Fine Art, add-on
 - Bachelor of Arts Creative Design Level 7 (ab-initio and embedded)
 - Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Creative Design
 - Higher Certificate in Arts in Performing Arts, Level 6
 - Bachelor of Arts in Performing Arts, Level 7 (ab-initio and embedded)
 - Bachelor of Arts (honours) in Performing Arts, Level 8
-
- Higher Certificate in Business in Office Administration
 - Bachelor of Business in Business Administration
 - Bachelor of Business (Honours) in Business Administration
 - Higher Certificate in Business in Accounting
 - BB in Accounting
 - BA (Honours) in Accounting
 - BSc in Computing in Software Development
 - BSc in Computing (Honours) in Software Development
 - BSc in Computing Systems and Networking
 - BSc in Computing (Honours) Systems and Networking
 - BSc in Computing in Web Development and Creative Media
 - BSc in Computing in Games Development
 - BSc Computing
 - BSc (Honours) in Computing
 - HC in Computing

