

Comhairle na nDámhachtainí Ardoideachais agus Oiliúna
Higher Education and Training Awards Council

ASSESSORS' REPORT

PART I

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROVIDER	Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
DATE OF VISITATION	Friday 28 th April, 2006
PROGRAMMES EVALUATED	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Applied Social Studies in Social Care
PROGRAMMES APPROVED	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Applied Social Studies in Social Care
PANEL OF EXPERTS	<p>Chairperson: Mr Damian Courtney Coordinator for Business and Humanities, Cork Institute of Technology</p> <p>Ms Karen Sugrue School of Business and Humanities, Limerick Institute of Technology</p> <p>Dr Patricia Kennedy Senior Lecturer in Social Policy, School of Applied Social Science, University College Dublin</p> <p>Dr. Teresa Nyland, Acting Social Inclusion Manager, HSE, Rathdown Road, Dublin 7</p>


06/06

INSTITUTE STAFF

Dr Diarmuid O Callaghan	Registrar
Mr Des Moore	Head of School
Dr Rose Doolin	Design Coordinator
Dr Celeste McCann James	Head of Department
Mr Aiden Carthy	Course Coordinator
Ms Pamela Kelly	Lecturer
Ms Mary O'Reilly	Lecturer
Ms Siobhan Quinlan	Lecturer
Ms Deirdre McGrath	Lecturer
Ms Angela Rankin	Lecturer
Ms Lily McLean	Lecturer
Mr Gerry Clarke	Lecturer
Ms Mary Dunne	Lecturer
Mr Tom Donoghue	Lecturer

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PART II

FINDINGS OF PANEL OF EXPERTS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The panel had an initial meeting with the Registrar and Head of School. The chairman of the panel complemented the Institute on its work to date in Social Care and on the quality of the documentation provided for the proposed programme.

The registrar introduced the Institute and explained the role of the proposal in the strategic plan of the Institute.

The main thrust of the proposal is for a one year 'add on' programme to the existing accredited Bachelor of Arts Level 7 award.

The panel was also asked to consider the validation of a four year ab-initio programme consisting of the existing 3 year Level 7 award, plus the new one year add on programme at Level 8.

The panel agreed to consider this and it was dealt with throughout the visit

2.1 EXAMINATION OF THE PROGRAMME

The panel met with academic staff of the Institute involved in the design of the programme, to examine the programme submission against the criteria for the validation of programmes as stipulated by the Council. The criteria address the requirements of the Act, provider quality assurance arrangements and specific arrangements, and specific features of programme design.

2.1.1 Education and Training Requirements

The panel was satisfied that the programme was consistent with the Institute's mission, that it does not constitute redundant provision and that it makes efficient use of resources. The panel was also satisfied with the Institute's case on the rationale for the programme and the research undertaken, including the consultation with industry, before the programme was proposed to HETAC and complemented staff on the comprehensive approval adopted.

2.1.2 Protection of Learners

The Council will not validate any programme of education and training pursuant to section 25 of the Act, such programme being of a duration of three months or more, unless it is satisfied that the provider concerned has arrangements in place, as specified under Section 43 of the Act, which make provision for learners where that provider ceases to provide the programme concerned. The panel was satisfied that this provision was not applicable to the programme in question, as the Institute did not intend providing the programme on a basis as set out in Section 43 (1) (b) of the Act.

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2.1.3 Quality Assurance

The panel heard how the submission had been developed and approved internally as a result of the application of the Institute's quality assurance procedures. The panel was satisfied that those procedures had been applied to the development of the proposed programme and that quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure its provision, monitoring and review.

In particular the panel was informed that the existing Bachelor of Arts, Level 7, programme was revised for the School Programmatic review recently undertaken and this contributed to the view of the panel that it was up to date and had revisions which would contribute to the confidence in the proposal to combine the two programmes to create an ab-initio Bachelor of Arts (Honours) programme.

Programme Titles and Award Titles

Following discussion, the panel was satisfied that the title of the programme is clear, accurate and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders. The panel was satisfied that the proposed title of the programme also encompasses the Council's related named award title.

2.1.4 Ethics

It is expected that providers will have procedures in place to ensure that any teaching and learning or research activity at any level shall be conducted in a manner that is morally and professionally ethical.

Because of the significance of this item in relation to the field of study, this was dealt with in some detail and the panel was informed of the inclusion of it within individual modules and of Institute and Academic Developments Policies for engagement in research.

2.1.5 Particular aspects of proposed programmes

With regard to the following, the panel found:

- **Unity**

The programme design is consistent with the Council's Policy on Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects. The programme has an underlying unifying theme and the modules are bonded by linkages which are either implicit or explicit. It was also clear how the standards of knowledge, skill and competence, determined by the Council for the named award to which the programme proposes to lead, evolve throughout the programme as a whole.

- **Teaching and Learning**

The proposed approaches to teaching and learning were indicated and justified.

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This was achieved by consideration at the streams in Psychology, Sociology, Communications etc. The additional benefit to all of individual learners making presentations on their research findings was highlighted as a contribution to the learner experience.

The contribution of supervisors to learners on placement was acknowledged by staff and the panel.

- **Teacher-Learner Dialogue**

The modes of interaction between the teaching staff and the learners were elaborated upon satisfactorily.

There was clear evidence that the enthusiasm and commitment of staff contributed to an excellent dialogue between staff and learners, and that an excellent support system existed for learners. The building upon achievement project currently available within the Institute was noted as a support mechanism for learners with varying abilities and backgrounds.

- **Standards**

The learning outcomes of the programme, one year add on were stated in such a way that the compliance with the interim standards determined by the Council for the award of:

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
was clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of the panel of experts.

The panel is also satisfied that this standard is achieve on an ab-initio programme combining the existing Bachelor of Arts and the proposed Bachelor of Arts Honours.

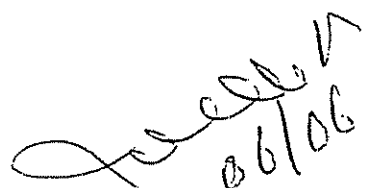
- **Learner Assessment**

The programme's learner assessment methods are fully elaborated and consistent with the Council's policy on fair and consistent assessment. The assessment methods are capable, amongst other things, of demonstrating attainment of the standards of knowledge, skill or competence, determined by the Council, for the related award.

The experts were informed that following a recent programmatic review the assessment methodologies on the Level 7 award were revised and that a commonality of approach will exist between the existing and new award.

- **Access, Transfer and Progression**

The programme incorporates the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the Authority. The programme is in line with the requirements of the Act and the operational principles of the Authority, and accommodates a variety of access and entry requirements from applicants with expertise related discipline areas and from applicants who demonstrate extensive experiential learning in this field of study.


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The panel was informed by the Institute's policies on entry to programmes and of the policy of recognising Foundation Level Mathematics at B2 Level or higher.

The panel also noted and accepted the different entry requirements between the existing Level 7 award and the proposed ab initio Level 8 award.

- **Staffing and Physical Resources**

The panel was satisfied that the necessary staffing levels will be in place and were generally satisfied with the level of qualifications and competence of the staff concerned.

The panel favourably noted the research activities of staff. The panel visited the facilities of the Institute, relevant to the provision of this programme and it is satisfied that the necessary resources for the delivery of the programme are available.

Lee
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PART III
RECOMMENDATION/ COMMENT
FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION
COMMITTEE

3.1 Recommendations:

The panel of experts recommend the validation of the programme:

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Applied Social Studies in Social Care one year add on

Bachelor of Arts Honours) in Applied Social Studies in Social Care ab-initio

for the purposes of the award of:

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

Subject to:

Council's general conditions of approval

3.2 Conditions

The panel of experts require that the Institute should take note of the following conditions and that a satisfactory response to those conditions shall be received before the validation is considered by the Programme Accreditation Committee.

1. Review the allocation of percentage to elements of assessment within modules in order to ensure a coherent and consistent approach though the four years of the programme.
2. A greater emphasis shall be placed on journals in reading lists and the library resources should reflect this emphasis.
3. Reading lists shall be updated and outdated texts shall be eliminated and replaced by more modern material. They should also relate to multicultural diversity.
4. Links with stakeholders established in the recent programmatic review and in the preparation of the proposal for the programme should be built on.
5. Diversity and Intercultural Competence should be included as a topic in a more explicit form in the first year of the programme.

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VALIDATED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROVIDER	:	Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
TITLE OF AWARD	:	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
SPECIALISATION	:	Applied Social Studies in Social Care
LEVEL	:	Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
LEARNING MODES OFFERED	:	Full-time/ AOCs
STAGE	:	1
SEMESTER	:	1
DATE EFFECTIVE	:	Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Proj.	Allocation Final	Max	ECTS Level	ECTS CREDITS No
Fundamentals of Psychology	1	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Fundamentals of Sociology	2	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Computer Applications	3	M	4	100	-	-	100	1	5
Group Dynamics and Development	4	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Health and Wellbeing	5	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Applied Social Studies – Context	6	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5

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SPECIALISATION	:	Applied Social Studies in Social Care
LEVEL	:	Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
LEARNING MODES OFFERED	:	Full-time/ AOCs
STAGE	:	1
SEMESTER	:	2
DATE EFFECTIVE	:	Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Proj.	Allocation Final	Max	ECTS Level	ECTS CREDITS No
Development Psychology	1	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Social Practice in Irish Society	2	M	4	30	-	70	100	1	5
Fundamentals of Communications	3	M	4	100	-	-	100	1	5
Health Promotion	4	M	4	50	-	50	100	1	5
Applied Social Studies – Provision	5	M	4	40	-	60	100	1	5
Recreation and Creative Studies	6	M	4	30	70	-	100	1	5

John Lee
06/06

VALIDATED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROVIDER	:	Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
TITLE OF AWARD	:	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
SPECIALISATION	:	Applied Social Studies in Social Care
LEVEL	:	Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
LEARNING MODES OFFERED	:	Full-time/AOCS
STAGE	:	2
SEMESTER	:	-
DATE EFFECTIVE	:	Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Allocation Proj.	Final	Max	ECTS CREDITS Level	No
Social Psychology	1	M	4	30	-	70	100	2	7
Social Administration and Social Policy	2	M	4	30	-	70	100	2	7
Communications Structures and Techniques	3	M	4	40	-	60	100	2	7
Group Development and Structure	4	M	4	50	-	50	100	2	7
Placement Preparation and Reflection	5	M	4	100	-	-	100	2	4
Applied Social Studies -Professional Practice 1	6	M	4	40	-	60	100	2	7
Legal Studies	7	M	4	30	-	70	100	2	7
Placement 1	8	M	1	100	-	-	100	2	14

Accepted
06/06

VALIDATED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROVIDER : Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
 TITLE OF AWARD : Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
 SPECIALISATION : Applied Social Studies in Social Care
 LEVEL : Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
 LEARNING MODES OFFERED : Full-time/ AOCs
 STAGE : 3
 SEMESTER : -
 DATE EFFECTIVE : Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Allocation Proj.	Final	Max	ECTS Level	ECTS CREDITS No
Applied Psychology	1	M	4	30	-	70	100	3	7
Sociology and the Family	2	M	4	30	-	70	100	3	7
Research Methods and Practice	3	M	4	40	60	-	100	3	7
Personal and Professional Development	4	M	4	50	-	50	100	3	7
Applied Social Studies – Professional Practice 2	5	M	4	40	-	60	100	3	9
Legal Studies – Application	6	M	4	30	-	70	100	3	7
Placement 2	7	M	1	100	-	0	100	3	16

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VALIDATED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROVIDER	:	Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
TITLE OF AWARD	:	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
SPECIALISATION	:	Applied Social Studies in Social Care
LEVEL	:	Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
LEARNING MODES OFFERED	:	Full-time/AOCS
STAGE	:	Award
SEMESTER	:	1
DATE EFFECTIVE	:	Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Allocation Proj.	Final	Max	ECTS Level	ECTS CREDITS No
Challenging Behaviour in the Social Care Sector 1	1	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Advanced Research Methods and Practice 1	2	M	15	100	-	-	100	4	5
Management in Social Care Practice 1	3	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Professional Social Care, Supervision and Development 1	4	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Successful Aging and Social Care Practice	5	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Diversity and Intercultural Competence	6	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Social Care and Partnership in the Community	7	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Issues and Practice in the Disability Sector	8	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5

John
06/06

VALIDATED PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

NAME OF PROVIDER : Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
TITLE OF AWARD : Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
SPECIALISATION : Applied Social Studies in Social Care
LEVEL : Level 8 in the National Framework of Qualifications
LEARNING MODES OFFERED : Full-time/ ACOSS
STAGE : Award
SEMESTER : 2
DATE EFFECTIVE : Sept. 2006 to a date to be determined by the Council

Subject Title	Subject Number	Subject Status	Contact Hours	Cont.	Marks Allocation Proj.	Final	Max	ECTS CREDITS Level	No
Challenging Behaviour in the Social Care Sector	1	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Advanced Research Methods and Practice	2	M	15	100	-	-	100	4	5
Management in Social Care Practice	3	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Professional Social Care, Supervision and Development	4	M	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Successful Aging and Social Care Practice	5	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Contemporary Policy and Practice Issues in Mental Health	6	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Child Protection, Practice and Policy	7	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5
Principles and Practice of Social Inclusion & Advocacy	8	E	45	40	-	60	100	4	5

Lucy
06/06