

Validation Report



BN734

Certificate in Conditioning for Association Football

(15 ECTS credits leading to a level 6 Special Purpose Award)

Introduction

The mission of the Institute is to serve its students and the community by meeting the skills needs in the economy and increasing the level of participation in third-level education and training, particularly in Dublin North-West and its environs. The Institute will do this:

- by achieving consistently high standards of relevance and quality in teaching, research, development and consultancy, and
- by offering a welcoming and supportive environment to students from all educational and social backgrounds, and to adults wishing to increase their level of technical skills.

The Institute has developed an active adult continuing education programme to provide education and training that is relevant and responsive to economic and social needs both locally and nationally and is committed to both lifelong learning and second-chance education.

The Institute in 2006 was awarded delegated authority enabling the development, validation, implementation and continuous improvement of its existing taught higher education and training programmes up to and including level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

It is Institute policy to validate all academic programmes offered by the Institute, and in so doing, indicate award and programme title, academic level by relating them to the National Framework of Qualifications and volume of learning by allocating ECTS^I credits to the programme.

The purpose of this document is to report on the findings of the peer review panel established to validate this proposed programme against the criteria for the validation of minor, supplemental and special purpose awards as stipulated in the Institute policy document 3AC05^{II}.

This submission by the School of Business and Humanities evolved through:

- examining the competence, expertise and experience of it's staff in addition to the strategy of the department/school/Institute and Government educational policy
- responding to market needs identified through research

^I European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

^{II} 3AC05 Policy and procedure for proposal, development and validation of minor, supplemental and special purpose awards

Programme overview

The proposed programme is designed to ensure that graduates have the theoretical and practical knowledge to condition teams. The students will receive insight into best practice and exposure to current high quality training methodologies. In order, to enhance the course effectiveness and quality, the course board will from time to time, invite expert practitioners to deliver on core modules.

What is proposed is a one year part-time, two semester programme comprising of a 'Conditioning for Association Football' module in Semester 1 and a 'Sport Placement Project' during Semesters 1 and 2.

The conditioning for association football games module is designed to introduce the student to fundamental concepts, debates and methodologies in conditioning for association football. The topics and content imparts an introductory insight into the conditioning theory and practices employed in preparing teams. The module will ensure that students will recognise and understand best practice and ensure that their team members receive high quality conditioning.

The module 'Conditioning for Association Football' consists of 45 contact hours and utilises any one or a combination of the following delivery methods:

- Formal lectures
- Practical's
- Academic and practical workshops
- Guest lectures
- Peer coaching sessions
- Weekend clinics
- Moodle
- Podcasts

The variety of delivery methods reflect the changing educational environment at third level and the ever changing needs and demands of the students participating in part time programmes.

The 'Sport Placement Project' module together with appropriate supervisory meetings, clinics and workshops will be scheduled for the duration of semesters 1 and 2.

This sporting placement will be assessed primarily by the production of an extensive portfolio which will demonstrate the fulfilment of the learning outcomes and experiences of the student. As part of the portfolio verification and assessment process the student will be required to attend a viva voce

examination. The student will be assisted in the portfolio production by guidelines for self reflection, observer feedback and coaching/video diary production.

The portfolio may also include any one or a combination of the following;

- Audio digital recordings and interviews with players/teams & reflections
- Audio/visual digital recordings (CDs/DVDs) of individual/team conditioning session(s) & reflections
- Written reflections on learning experience in line with learning outcomes
- Periodised conditioning plans –Macro/Meso/Micro Cycles
- Individual conditioning session plan and reflections
- Additional research material
- Player feedback
- Peer assessment
- Questionnaires
- Self evaluation reports
- Supervisor/club officials' report
- Parental feedback if appropriate
- Minutes of meetings with any stakeholder
- Reports on player feedback
- Individual player skills development programme
- Individual player physical development programme
- Individual player psychological development programme
- Goal setting meetings and reports

The 'Sport Placement Project' also has a 15 hours coaching theory component to aid in the portfolio preparation and content delivery.

Going forward the department envisages embracing the notion of flexible course delivery modes. In particular, using a combination of outreach centres, information and web based technologies together with flexible workshops. Consequently, there is no reason why the programme could not be delivered nationwide. Strategically this presents the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown with a major opportunity for nationwide recognition and creating a centre of coaching excellence.

Programme detail

Programme title	Certificate in Conditioning for Association Football Level 6 15 ECTS Credits
Award title	Certificate in Conditioning for Association Football Level 6 15 ECTS Credits
Award type	Special Purpose
NFQ¹ level	6
ECTS credits	15
Programme code	BN734
Banner code	BN_BCFAI_Q

Panel members

Chairperson	Mr. Bernard O'Hara Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Panel member 1	Mr. Paul Heaney The Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland
Panel member 2	Ms. Marian Duggan Limerick Institute of Technology
Panel member 3	Mr. Claude Delaney Dublin Institute of Technology
Panel member 4	Mr. Damian Cullen KDA Accountants Blanchardstown
In attendance	Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan IT Blanchardstown Mr. Michael Keane IT Blanchardstown
Date of Panel Meeting	Tuesday 21 st April 2009

¹ National Framework of Qualifications

Institute staff present

Mr. Michael Tobin	Head of School of Business and Humanities
Mr. Pat O'Connor	Head of Department of Business
Mr. Val Andrews	Department of Business

Panel findings

Section I

In evaluating the appropriateness, quality and proposed operation of this programme the following criteria has been considered and is hereby reported upon:

Strategic planning

The panel was satisfied that the programme is in keeping with the Institute's mission, that it does not constitute redundant provision and that it makes efficient use of resources.

Protection of learners

Section 43 of the Act¹ does not apply.

Quality assurance

The panel were informed of how the submission had been developed and approved internally whilst complying with the Institute's quality assurance policies and procedures. The panel concurred that said policies and procedures had been applied to the development of the proposed programme.

¹ Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999

Programme titles and award titles

Following discussion, the panel was satisfied that the title of the proposed programme, is clear, accurate and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders and consistent with HETAC¹ award titles.

Ethics

The panel was satisfied that the Institute has internal policies and procedures in place to ensure that all teaching, learning or research activity across the spectrum of NFQ levels is conducted / delivered in a manner that is both morally and professionally ethical.

Section II

In evaluating this programme the following specific aspects have been considered and are hereby reported upon:

Unity

The panel found that the programme design is consistent with HETAC's policy on Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects, that it has an underlying unifying theme with modules bonded by linkages being either implicit or explicit. It was also clear to the panel how the standards of knowledge, skill and competence evolve throughout the programme as a whole.

Teaching and learning

The panel discussed with staff of the Institute the various modes of interaction practised with learners. Evidence of a clear dialogue was confirmed, enabling learners to develop and have available to them the support of academic staff.

¹ Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Rationale

The development of this programme is in unison with the core values and mission of ITB, to embrace a policy of enhancing the quality of sports coaching mentoring and training being received in the community and the greater Dublin Area.

The report and findings of 'Tracing the Development Process and Needs of Irish Coaches' in 2002 published by the then NCTC¹ highlighted many areas for improvement in coach education.

The main attributes needed to become a coach, Table 8, page 7 of the aforementioned report, lists as follows:

- Ability to reflect on own coaching
- Ability to learn from sessions
- Ability to reflect on individual player development
- Ability to plan a session
- Ability to observe, analyse and provide feedback
- Ability to develop own coaching style
- Ability to communicate with others

Consequently, the sports placement project learning outcomes reflect the above attributes as do the assessment methodologies.

In the same report one of the 'Types of knowledge needed for coaching' Table 9, page 8 was identified as:

'Physical knowledge of the sports e.g. strength, flexibility, speed and endurance'.

These findings provided the content and delivery methodologies which were incorporated into the design of this Special Purpose Award. Indeed, they prescribed the theory and practical components of the modules of the programme.

In addition to this, the FAI Education Officer, indicated that coaches associated with soccer teams have similar deficiencies to those observed in other field sports, namely:

- Inadequate understanding of conditioning theory and practice
- Poor training programme design and implementation
- Lack of adequate theoretical knowledge
- Deficit in resistance training techniques
- Deficit in correct biomechanical assessment and speed development
- Poor conditioning methods contributing to injury and dropout rates

¹ <http://www.nctc.ul.ie/> Coaching Ireland Website

This programme is designed to ensure that graduates have the theoretical and practical knowledge to condition teams from juvenile to senior level and address the aforementioned knowledge gap.

Demand

The panel heard how feedback received from the education department of the FAI¹ indicated that there will be demand for this programme amongst it's thousands of members and clubs ranging from schoolboy to adult level.

Minimum entry requirements

The minimum entry requirements for standard applicants are a pass in five subjects (ordinary level) in the leaving certificate to include mathematics (minimum foundation level) and English or Irish, or an equivalent qualification. Mature students aged over 23 years may be admitted without meeting these minimum entry requirements. Other applicants who have exhibited an aptitude for this field of study through prior experiential learning may also be considered on a case by case basis.

Learner assessment

Through discussion with the design team, and from the submission document itself it was explained to the panel the multiple modules of assessment, both formal and informal that will be employed. The scale of learner assessment was deemed appropriate for the proposed programme.

Standards of knowledge, skill and competence

The panel felt having reviewed the syllabi and assessment methods that learners would be capable of attaining the standards of knowledge, skill or competence as presented. However the panel requested that a subject matter expert be consulted to give an opinion on whether the learning outcomes and syllabus associated with this special purpose award would place it at level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications thus reaffirming the findings of the panel. See findings of the external subject matter expert.

¹ Football Association of Ireland

External subject matter expert

Dr. Alan Ringland of the Institute of Technology Tralee was consulted as a subject matter expert and reaffirmed the opinion of the panel that the learning outcomes and syllabus of this special purpose award was appropriate for a level 6 award on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Decision of the panel

The panel recommended the validation of the proposed programme namely:

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Panel signatures

Chairperson

Mr. Bernard O'Hara _____ Date _____

Secretary

Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan _____ Date _____