

Validation Report



BN743

Certificate in Enterprise Skills

(NFQ level 6 30¹ ECTS credits)

¹ See recommendation 1

Introduction

The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown was established in 1999. 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 in 2006 was awarded delegated authority enabling the development, validation, implementation and continuous improvement of taught higher education and training programmes up to and including level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

In keeping with the Institute's mission statement, course and programme development is on-going. This programme supports the mission of the Institute and facilitates much wider access to the Institute by a cohort of potential students whose needs are currently not being met.

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 programmes as stipulated in the Institute policy document 2MP01¹.

This submission by the School of Informatics and Engineering in conjunction with the School of Business and Humanities and the Learning and Innovation Centre (LINC) evolved through:

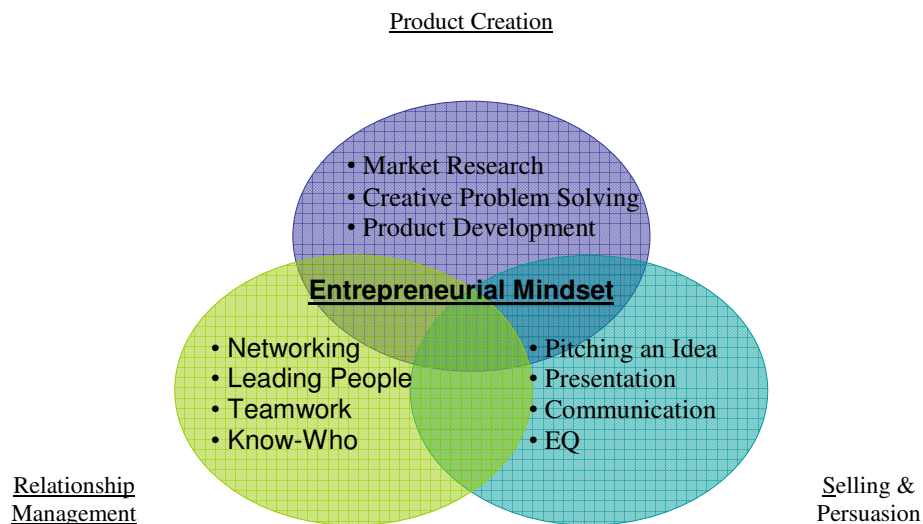
- examining the competence, expertise and experience of ITB staff in addition to the strategy of the department/school/Institute and Government educational policy.

¹ 2MP01 Design, validation and accreditation of new academic programmes

- responding to current opportunities identified including FÁS and other labour market activation initiatives.
- responding to research carried out by 'Accelerating Campus Entrepreneurship' (ACE) pointing to a growing number of employers seeking to recruit personnel with enterprise skills.

Programme overview

The proposed programme aims to foster participants' mindset to be capable of recognising and pursuing opportunities in an enterprising manner. The skills underpinning this mindset are categorised below:-



The programme will adopt enterprising pedagogies designed to stimulate and nurture these skills through experiential learning, practice and reflection.

More specifically, the proposed programme aims to:-

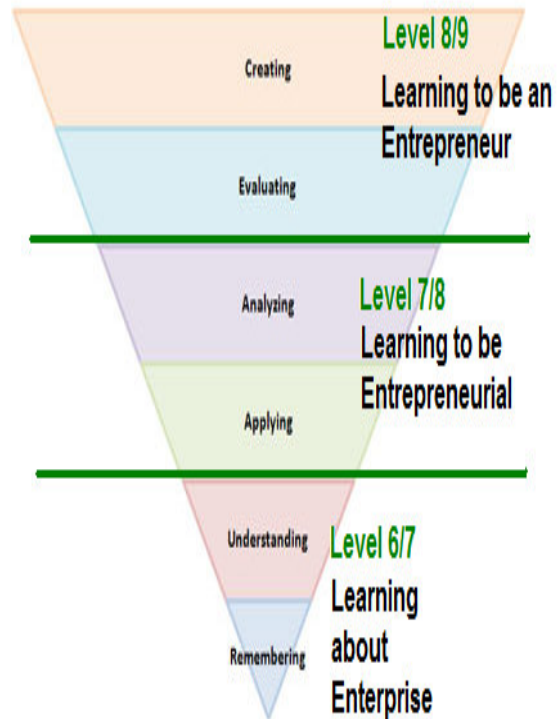
- Provide time, space and mentorship for participants to learn the processes (in an enterprising way) used to develop a product or business idea in a business incubation environment, thereby experiencing the process and tasks for business entry;
- Coach participants out of their comfort zone to think “outside the box” of innovative products and services, in areas, for example, such as renewable energy, sustainability, new materials, services and new electrical technology and others;
- Foster participants’ enterprising skills, attitudes and behaviours so that they can learn to galvanise resources to pursue new opportunities;
- Increase participants’ confidence and motivation for business entry through exposure to role-models, their mind-set and their ‘tricks of the trade’ for success and develop empathy with their entrepreneurial way of life;
- Learn and apply generic entrepreneurial skills and business ‘how-to’s’ and develop relationship management skills by networking with other entrepreneurs and enterprise development experts and participating in teaming exercises.

This programme will provide what is a significant departure from the traditional higher education and training in that it seeks to build learners awareness of entrepreneurship and to provide them with a framework for assessing the viability of opportunities or any innovative project in the context of their own interests.

Common enterprise training and entrepreneurship education programmes can be categorised by:

- 1) Learning about enterprise;
- 2) Learning to be entrepreneurial;
- 3) Learning to become an entrepreneur.

This level 6 programme is focused on categories one and two, which aim to be consistent with Blooms taxonomy, by giving students an experience of what they may expect in the business start-up process.



Participants will be asked to apply their knowledge and skills directly to their own business idea, thereby covering the basic “knowledge level” of Blooms Taxonomy and seeking to reach beyond “comprehension skills” and as well as touch on some “application skills”. However, through enterprising pedagogies, there is a fundamental divergence from the Bloom model whereby emphasis is placed on key enterprise processes related to conative construction, i.e. motivation and will, as well as cognitive learning. Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values are all developed within this alternative pedagogical approach in an attempt to reconcile the meaning of strong academic performance and enterprising performance. The proposed programme will merge these two streams of knowledge – education and enterprise – by using Bloom’s revised taxonomy to develop general principles for learning, teaching and assessing enterprise skills.

Programme detail

Programme title	Certificate in Enterprise Skills
Award title	Certificate in Enterprise Skills - Level 6 30 ECTS credits
NFQ level	6
ECTS¹ credits	30
Programme code	BN743
Banner code	BN_ECIES_Q

Panel members

Chairperson	Mr. William (Tony) Quinlan Registrar (retired) Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Panel member 1	Mr. George Kiely Enterprise Ireland
Panel member 2	Mr. Michael Lonergan Midlands Innovation & Research Centre - AIT
In attendance	Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan Registrar, IT Blanchardstown Mr. Michael Keane Quality Assurance Officer, IT Blanchardstown
Date of Panel Meeting	Thursday 14 th April 2011

¹ European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Institute staff present

Mr. Richard Gallery, Head of Department of Engineering

Ms. Assumpta Harvey, LINC Manager

Mr. Liam Quirke, Head of Trades

Mr. Cormac MacMahon

Mr. Niall Campbell

Ms. Ann Murphy

Ms. Claire MacNamee

Mr. Jerry Bradley

Dr. Barry Kirkpatrick

Panel findings

In evaluating the appropriateness, quality and proposed operation of this programme the following criteria have been considered and are 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.

Evidence of consultation

From the submission document and through discussion with the programme design team the panel was informed of the depth of the consultation that took place. The panel was satisfied with this consultation.

Protection of learners

Section 43 of the Act^I does not apply.

Demand

The initial demand for this programme is driven by a HEA funded programme to be delivered between FÁS Loughlinstown and ITB. This programme will provide the first cohort of participants after which it is envisaged that subsequent cohorts will be funded through various labour activation initiatives supported by the HEA^{II} and other government bodies.

Quality assurance

The panel was informed of how the proposed programme 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.

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 HETAC^{III} 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.

^I Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999

^{II} Higher Education Authority

^{III} Higher Education and Training Awards Council

Unity

The panel found that the programme design is consistent with HETAC 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 with learners. Evidence of a clear dialogue was confirmed, enabling learners to develop and have available to them the support of academic staff. The panel commended the proposed use of enterprising and experiential pedagogies designed to stimulate creativity, problem-solving, teamwork and product development capacities.

Course management arrangements were discussed and deemed adequate.

Learner assessment

Through discussion with the design team, and from the submission document itself it was explained in detail to the panel the multiple modes of assessment, both formal and informal that will be employed on the programme. The panel deemed these to be adequate. The panel, however, stressed the importance of linking learning outcomes to assessment events as opposed to syllabus content, see recommendation 2.

Standards of knowledge, skill and competence

The panel having reviewed the syllabi and assessment methods for the programme was of the opinion that learners would be capable of attaining the standards of knowledge, skill and competence relevant for this NFQ level 6 special purpose award.

Access, transfer and progression

The panel was informed of how the programme incorporates the established procedures for access, transfer and progression that support clear transfer and progression routes within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). However the panel recommended that these be clearly defined and published within programme documentation to adequately inform prospective learners, see recommendation 5.

Panel observations

The panel congratulated the programme design team on what they found to be a very interesting, cohesive and responsive initiative and commended the innovative experiential pedagogical approach to be used in the delivery of this programme.

Decision of the panel

The panel recommends the validation of the proposed programme namely:

Banner code	ITB code	Programme title	Award title	NFQ level and ECTS credits	Format
BN_ECIES_Q	BN743	Certificate in Enterprise Skills	Certificate in Enterprise Skills - Level 6 30 ¹ ECTS credits	Level 6 30 ¹ credits	Special purpose

Panel recommendations

1. Review the credit weighting of the module “Enterprise Development Project” to more accurately reflect the volume of student effort involved. The panel suggested that the design team consider a credit value of 10, thus increasing the volume of the overall award in its proposed format to 35 credits.
2. Revise the module learning outcomes to ensure that each is measurable and linked to individual assessment events as opposed to syllabus content.
3. Review and clarify the minimum entry requirements as discussed at the panel meeting to include requirements with regard to qualifying trades and any mathematical requirements at the point of entry.

¹ See recommendation 1

4. Clarify the boundaries within which the selection criteria and interview marking scheme will be applied for participant selection to provide a fair, transparent and appealable process.
5. Define within the programme documentation transfer and progression opportunities appropriate to this programme.
6. Make other minor and technical amendments as discussed at the panel meeting.

Panel signatures

Chairperson

Mr. William (Tony) Quinlan _____ Date _____

Secretary

Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan _____ Date _____