

NEW TAUGHT PROGRAMME

EVALUATION PANEL REPORT

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 **Provider:** Institute of Technology Carlow

1.2 **Provider Locations:** Carlow Main Campus

1.3 **Date of Visit:** Wednesday 3 May 2017

1.4 **Overview:**

1. The purpose of the visit was to evaluate a 60 credit ordinary degree award which has been developed for the pharmaceutical sector.
2. The programme development responds to the increasing demand from Level 6 graduates of the Higher Certificate in Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies for progression opportunities. Also the proposal has been welcomed by industry.
3. The programme builds on IT Carlow's current provision in this domain namely:
 - Higher Certificate in Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies.

The Panel note the intention to deliver this programme at the Institute's main campus at Carlow. They further note the possibility of delivery at other sites, including internationally, subject to differential validation.

1.5 Principal Programme:

Evaluation

Type of Award	Level	Proposed Programme Title Evaluated	Total Credits	Proposed Embedded Exit Award Evaluated	Exit Credits
Major	7	Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies	60	NONE	
Number of Annual Intakes:		1 full-time; 1 part-time intake			
Duration:		1 year full-time; 2 years part-time			
Target Learner Groups:		Graduates of the IT Carlow Level 6 Higher Certificate in Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies Graduates of other 3 rd level education providers who have a Higher Certificate in Science in Pharmacy Technician Other applicants from a related cognate area with a proven competence in Pharmacy Technician Studies (to include overseas).			
Enrolment Date:		September 2017			
Expected Number of Learners per Intake:		18			
Approved Countries for Provision:		Ireland			

Approval The following programme is approved subject to the decisions set out in Section 3 below.

Type of Award	Level	Approved Programme Title	Total Credits	Approved Embedded Exit Award	Exit Credits
Major	7	Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies	60	NONE	

1.6 Evaluation Panel Membership:

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Breda Brennan	Chairperson	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dr Don Faller	Academic Representative	Dean of Faculty of Science and Health, Athlone Institute of Technology
Dr Paul McCague	Academic Representative	Lecturer in Pharmacy Education, Queen's University Belfast
Ms Fran Glynn	Industry Representative	Senior Pharmacy Technician, Naas General Hospital
Ms Sinead McCool	Project Manager	IPU New Medicines Service Pilot
Mr David Denieffe	Secretary to Panel	Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, Institute of Technology Carlow
Ms Dolores McCann	Admin Support	PA to Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar, Institute of Technology Carlow

1.5 Programme Development Team Attendance Register:

Institute of Technology Carlow

Dr Patricia Mulcahy, President
 Dr David Dowling, Head of Faculty of Science
 Dr Paula Rankin, Head of Department of Science and Health
 Dr Andrew Lloyd, Department of Science and Health
 Ms Nicola Cantwell, Department of Science and Health
 Dr Brian O'Rourke, Department of Science and Health
 Dr Fiona Leonard, Department of Science and Health
 Ms Ruth Behan, Department of Science and Health
 Dr Martina O'Gorman, Department of Science and Health
 Dr Úna Ní Ghogan, Department of Science and Health
 Dr Dina Brazil, Department of Science and Health

2. EVALUATION AGAINST THE VALIDATION CRITERIA

2.1 Examination of the Programmes:

The Panel noted the alignment of the validation to the criteria set out in the *Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training 2016* (including sub criteria set out in the QQI template for *Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Validation of a Programme of Education and Training*).

The Panel met with the academic staff involved in the design of the programmes:

To examine the programmes against the criteria for the Institute's *Policy and Procedures for the Design, Development, Validation and Withdrawal of all Programmes at Award Levels 6-10 in the NFQ 2016*.

The Panel heard how the submission had been developed.

Input to programme requirement, design, review, etc. by industry professionals must be clearly embedded into the programme documentation (to include hospital, community, pharmaceutical industry/regulation). The Panel ask that an Industry Advisory Committee be established, specific to the pharmacy programmes.

The attributes of the level 7 pharmacy technician graduate must be clear and transparent in the submission document; it must be apparent how the level 7 graduate will differ from the level 6.

It is agreed that the programme is in-line with the Institute of Technology Carlow's *Policy and Procedures for the Design, Development, Validation and Withdrawal of all Programmes at Award Levels 6-10 in the NFQ 2016*.

To examine the programmes against the requirements of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*.

The Panel is satisfied that the programmes meet the requirements of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*.

To examine the programmes so that they fit with the Institute's *Strategic Plan*.

The Panel is satisfied that the programmes are consistent with the Institute's *Strategic Plan 2014-2018*.

To examine the programme against the *QQI Awards Standards*.

The Panel ask the Programme Team to review programme and module learning outcomes to ensure that the language used is consistent to a Level 7 Standard.

There must be appropriate alignment of the module learning outcomes to module assessment; duplication and overassessment to be avoided.

To examine the proposed programme titles and ensure that they are fit for purpose

The Panel agreed that the proposed programme title is accurate and fit for purpose.

To examine the rationale and requirements for the programmes

The Panel noted the proposed rationale for the programme however they ask that a clear

differentiation between the level 6 rationale and the Level 7 rationale be included in the document.

The Panel ask that the requirement for this programme, by community practice, hospital and industry, be clearly evidenced within the submission.

To examine the access, transfer and progression arrangements

The Panel noted the proposed access, transfer and progression routes for prospective learners.

The application process must clearly communicate to prospective learners:

- (a) That they must carry out relevant work in a related sector whilst undertaking this programme.
- (b) The total workload hours, including guided independent learning.

The RPL process must be clear and transparent, including entry mechanism for those with existing CPD.

It must include the application procedure for applicants who hold an IPU qualification.

Include the entry procedure for graduates of the TCD Pharmacy Technician programme.

Career and progression opportunities for graduates of this level 7 programme must be clearly outlined, including how they differ from graduates of the level 6.

The programme design team to be cognizant of SUSI grants and other funding supports that learners can avail of.

To examine curriculum content so that it is well structured and fit for purpose

The Panel ask the Team to review the programme syllabus:

1. Review programme submission document to correct typos, missing segments of information, *etc.*
2. Ensure the total learning hours for each module are aligned to ECTS norms.
3. Include special regulation on programme schedule to advise that electives will be offered subject to sufficient numbers applying.
4. Continually monitor programme to ensure that it is up-to-date and relevant to the pharmaceutical practice in the community, hospital and industry/regulations.
5. Consider making the following clinical modules mandatory, *e.g.*, Respiratory/Allergy Patient Care, Dermatology and Wound Care and Nutrition.
6. Consider making the following modules elective: Pharmacy First Aid and Emergency Medicine and Mental Health Awareness.
7. Consider replacing Animal Remedies with another clinical area, *e.g.*, clinical lab tests, basic

clinical skills, palliative care, pain and analgesia, gastroenterology.

8. The increasing importance of pharmacy practice for diabetes, both in the community and the hospital, was noted by the Panel.
9. The increasing importance of pharmacy practice for care of patients with cardiology issues, within the community, was noted by the Panel.
10. The importance of pharmacy practice in nutrition in the community was noted by the Panel.
11. The importance of procurement was noted by the panel.
12. The growing availability of CPD programmes on Mental Health by the HSE and other bodies was noted by the Panel.
13. The Panel agreed that Microbiology is an important element in Pharmacy Technician Studies. Make clear and transparent in the submission how learning outcome number 6 will be assessed.
14. As Pharmacy Purchasing and SCM is a 5 credit module, reduce the number of learning outcomes accordingly; reconsider assessment methods and avoid duplication.
15. Quality Management and Research Methods in Pharmacy:
 - a) Review the assessment methodologies to include cross-module assessment and remove the written paper.
 - b) Include a section on Qualitative Research.

To examine the ethical perspectives of the programmes

The Panel is happy that the programmes will have procedures in place to ensure that any teaching, learning or research activity shall be conducted in a manner that is morally and professionally ethical.

To examine the assessment strategies and to ensure that they are sound

The Panel agreed that the proposed assessment strategies are satisfactory.

The Panel encourage the utilisation of cross-module assessment.

Where possible, the Panel ask the programme development team to avoid overassessment of a module learning outcome.

As it is expected that the Pharmacy Technician role will be regulated on a national basis, and in order to assist graduates in their registration to the proposed new regulatory body, the Panel encourage the programme team to use OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) as a method of assessment in areas such as dispensing, compounding, patient counselling or consultation activities, health promotion activities, *etc.*

To examine the teaching and learning strategies to ensure that they are sound

The Panel noted the proposed approaches to teaching and learning.

The Panel agreed that they are appropriate to enable the learners to achieve the minimum intended programme learning outcomes.

The Panel noted and commend the proposed assessment feedback mechanisms.

The Panel had concerns about the low number of contact hours for students on this programme. Following discussion, it was noted that students will be supported by staff on an ongoing basis through-out their studies. Students will be expected to undertake guided independent learning. The panel ask that this support by staff is clearly documented in both the application process and in the submission document.

The panel acknowledged the use of 'Blackboard' in the virtual learning environment at the Institute of Technology Carlow.

To examine the teacher-learner dialogue process and to ensure that learners will be well informed, guided and cared for.

The Panel noted that the proposed modes of communication and interaction between academic, technical and administrative staff and the learners themselves are excellent.

The Panel noted that learner representatives will have the opportunity to sit on their Programme Stream Board and also on the Institute's Academic Council and Governing Body.

The Panel commend the positive services provided to the learners of IT Carlow by Student Services, Sports & Recreation, Library, Computer Services, Restaurant, *etc.*

The Programme Team to outline the extended campus support that will be available to learners on this programme.

To ensure the programme is well managed and resourced

The Panel noted the additional academic lecturing resource requirement to enable the delivery of this programme.

The Panel encourage the use of guest lecturers and 'patient' involvement in programme development and delivery.

The Panel noted the role of the Programme Board in the ongoing monitoring of programmes at IT Carlow.

The Panel recommend that the programme syllabus be reviewed on a continuous basis, in collaboration with community practice, hospital and industry/regulation, to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that it is appropriate to a level 7 award.

Staffing and physical resources to be reviewing on a continuous basis, to ensure the sufficient delivery of this programme.

The Panel met with the staff who were involved in the design of this programme. They were impressed with their levels of qualification, competence and their enthusiasm. To remain at the cutting edge, these staff must be encouraged to participate on continuing professional development programmes and to engage in research.

The Panel were brought on a short tour of the Institute. Overall the Panel are happy that the necessary physical facilities and resources are available at the Institute of Technology Carlow to deliver this new level 7, 60 credit programme.

3. DECISIONS (For the attention of Institute of Technology Carlow Academic Council)

3.1 Determination

The evaluation panel recommend the validation of the following programmes:

Type of Award	Level	Approved Programme Title	Total Credits	Approved Embedded Exit Award	Exit Credits
Major	7	Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy Technician Studies	60	NONE	

Subject to the following listed under 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 below.

3.2 Conditions

The evaluation panel require that the Programme Development Team 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 Academic Council of the Institute.

1. Review the learning outcome verbs throughout the documentation to ensure constructive alignment, in consultation with the Institute's Centre for Teaching and Learning, between learning outcomes and assessment.
2. Ensure the total learning hours for each module are aligned to ECTS norms.
3. Quality Management and Research Methods in Pharmacy: review the assessment methodologies to include cross-module assessment and remove the written paper.

3.3 Recommendations

Recommendations are suggestions made by the Programme Evaluation Panel in the spirit of improving the proposed programme. While these are not binding, the reasons for not incorporating a recommendation have to be clearly stated by the Programme Development Team in its response to the Evaluation Report.

1. Recommend the establishment of an Industry Advisory Board, with representation from hospital, community and pharmaceutical industry/regulation, with a view to ongoing development of the programme.
2. Clearly communicate to students the following expectations:
 - a) That they must carry out relevant work in a related sector whilst undertaking this programme.
 - b) Of the total workload including guided independent learning.
3. Consider the initial offering to be on a part-time basis.
4. Outline the extended campus support that will be available to the students.
5. Consider making the following clinical modules mandatory, e.g., Respiratory/Allergy Patient Care, Dermatology and Wound Care and Nutrition. The following modules to become elective: Pharmacy First Aid and Emergency Medicine and Mental Health Awareness.
6. Consider replacing Animal Remedies with another clinical area, e.g., clinical lab tests, basic clinical skills, palliative care, pain and analgesia, gastroenterology,
7. Consider including OSCE as an assessment mode.
8. Incorporate cross-module assessment in the programme.
9. Encourage 'patient' involvement in programme development and delivery.
10. For work experience, clearly specify the role of the 'employer', the 'student' and the 'Institute' within the programme submission (project related to the work experience to facilitate the employer and the student).

3.4 Programme Schedules and Programme Abstracts

Amended Programme Schedules, to incorporate the above, and the Programme Abstract, must be submitted with the Response to this Panel Evaluation Report.

3.5 Approval

Programme Evaluation Report Approved by:

Dr Breda Brennan
Chairperson to Panel
*(Assistant Registrar
Dundalk Institute of Technology)*

Date: _____

Mr David Denieffe
Secretary to Panel
*(Vice President for Academic Affairs & Registrar
Institute of Technology Carlow)*

Date: _____