EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT OF NEW PROGRAMMES

1.	Title of Programme(s): (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	BSc (Hons) in Furniture Design and Manufacture BSc in Furniture Design and Manufacture Higher Certificate in Furniture Design and Manufacture BSc (Hons) in Furniture Making and Architectural Woodworking BSc in Furniture Making and Architectural Woodworking Higher Certificate in Furniture Making and Architectural Woodworking BSc (Hons) in Furniture and Digital Manufacturing BSc in Furniture and Digital Manufacturing Higher Certificate in Furniture and Digital Manufacturing (In each case the level 6 and 7 awards are exit awards for the level 8 award, and the level 6 award is an exit award of the level 7 programme). It is proposed that initially the programmes will be listed on the CAO using the following undenominated programme titles: BSc (Hons) in Furniture, Design, Making and Technology BSc in Furniture, Design, Making and Technology
2.	NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:	240 ECTS (Level 8) 180 ECTS (Level 7) 120 ECTS (Level 6)
3.	Duration:	4 years (Level 8) 3 years (Level 7) 2 years (Level 6)
4.	ISCED Code:	0212
5.	School / Centre:	School of Design and Creative Arts
6.	Department:	GMIT Letterfrack, National Centre for Excellence in Furniture Design and Technology
7.	Type of Review:	New Programme
8.	Date of Review:	7th May 2019

9.	Delivery Mode:	Full-time	X	Part-time		Blended	

10.	Panel Members:	Dr Joe McGarry, Chair (Higher Education Consultant)
		Mr Michael Beasley, Limerick Institute of Technology
		Mr Martin McGinn, Ulster University
		Mr Liam McDonagh, Castlebrook
		Ms Carmel Brennan, Secretary (GMIT)
11.	Proposing Staff:	Dr Patrick Tobin
		Mr Dermot O'Donovan
		Mr Anthony Clare
		Mr Davin Larkin
		Mr Sean Treacy
		Mr James Corbett
		Mr Paul Leamy
		Dr Kate Dunne
		Mr Sean Garvey
		Mr Jeremy Madden
		Mr Thomas Shepherd
		Dr Susan Rogers
		Mr Sean Breen
		Mr Des Kelly
		Mr Kevin Maye
		Dr Marion McGarry
		Mr Finian Sheridan
		Mr Hugh Mullan
		Ms Geraldine O'Brien
12.	Programme Rationale:	This proposed new suite of programmes results from a review of existing programmes with a view to providing more choice to students and more clarity to employers on specialist graduate skills and knowledge. The programme redesign also takes into account a number of other issues, both academic and resource-centred, that have been considered by the Programme Boards over the past year.
		Over the past 3 years graduate employment from the existing programmes has been 100% for those wishing to enter the wood and furniture manufacturing industry. Every week, companies are contacting the campus seeking graduates to fill a range of positions. This is reflected across the sector and highlighted by the emerging skills gap within the construction industry as outlined in a report by the construction Industry Federation: *Demand for Skills in Construction to 2020 Addressing the Challenge.* Many of GMIT Letterfrack graduates enter careers in jobs categorised as the 'second generation' suppliers linked to

| | | construction projects (i.e. indirect employment generated off-site within firms providing specialised inputs to various construction projects.) There is also a recognised need for graduates with skills in design as referenced in the *Policy Framework Design In Enterprise In Ireland* and in advanced technologies such as CAD / CNC Operations and Lean production systems as referenced in *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025.* Lastly, these programmes are strongly focused on STEM-based and digital skills and therefore support government strategies in this area as identified in *STEM Education Policy Statement 2017–2026* and *Towards a National Digital Skills Framework for Irish Higher Education*

This new programme design has emerged from Programme Boards through a significant consultation process with lecturers, students and industry. It provided an opportunity to rethink, rebrand, rewrite and reinvigorate the programme offerings, acknowledging their strengths as a small and dynamic campus and our unique selling points in design and technology related to furniture and wood manufacturing. It provides greater differentiation of their programme offerings while delivering more choice to students in selecting their career paths. |
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| 13. | Potential Demand for Entry: | 18 students for each programme (combined level 7 and 8) per annum. |
| 14. | Stakeholder Engagement: | GMIT Letterfrack have a strong collaborative links with the wood and furniture manufacturing industry, both in Ireland and overseas. These links have been established over a 30-year period and allow ongoing dialogue with industry. Specific consultation for this programme development took place with industry partners invited to provide feedback on programme outlines, and a subsequent industry skills analysis workshop with 14 companies in collaboration with Regional Skills West Forum.
Feedback from both influenced the programme design and content. |
| 15. | Graduate Demand: | To-date there has been a very strong demand for Letterfrack graduates with very high levels of employment reported both nationally and internationally. Graduates will be equipped to seek roles such as designer/maker, technical designer, CAD Technician, commercial fitouts, project manager, furniture designer and design consultancy.
Others can go on to start up their own companies in areas |

		related to and servicing the furniture and wood products industries. Currently all graduates looking for work have job opportunities when leaving the programme.
16.	Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer & Progression:	Level 6/7: The minimum entry requirements are those stated by the Institution in its Access, Transfer and Progression Policy at any given time. At present they are a Grade O6/H7 or better in five Leaving Certificate subjects including English or Irish and Mathematics with a minimum of 160 points. OR Equivalent qualifications and scores from other countries which will be assessed and scored by the Institute. OR A Pass in any QQI FET Major Award at level 5 or 6. OR A Pass in a QQI FET Foundation Certificate, the NUIG/GMIT Foundation Certificate or any Foundation Certificate delivered by the regional cluster (GMIT, NUIG, IT Sligo or IT Letterkenny). Level 8: The minimum entry requirements are those stated by the Institution in its Access, Transfer and Progression Policy at any given time. At present they are a Grade O6/H7 or better in six Leaving Certificate subjects including English or Irish and Mathematics. Two of the six Leaving Certificate subjects must be passed in higher level papers at Grade H5 or higher. OR Equivalent qualifications and scores from other countries which will be assessed and scored by the Institute. OR A Pass in any QQI FET Major Award at level 5 or 6 with distinction grade in at least three components. OR A Pass in a QQI FET Foundation Certificate, the NUIG/GMIT Foundation Certificate or any Foundation Certificate delivered by the regional cluster (GMIT, NUIG, IT Sligo or IT Letterkenny). Further details of entry requirements are provided in the programme documentation. Transfer to any of the other listed programmes is available on successful completion of stage 1.

		Students completing the level 6 programme can progress to stage 3 of the level 7/8 programme, and students completing the level 7 programme can progress to stage 4 of the level 8 programme.
17.	Programme Structure:	The distinguishing features of the programme structure are the common first year between all programmes, and the year-long placement with concurrent online module delivery in the third stage of the programmes.
18.	Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategies:	Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning as active knowledge seekers. They construct and share knowledge through interaction with peers and lecturers to solve problems. Lecturers recognise that students learn in different ways and teaching responds to different learning styles. These include audio visual, aural, verbal, social and kinaesthetic learning strategies and resources.

In the workshop pedagogical model, students learn by doing through enquiry based creative problem solving. In this process of guided inquiry students' capacity for independent thinking and problem solving is refined and through discussion of problems they learn the techniques and practices of an expert.

Formative assessment provides feedback on student progress in constructing knowledge, reflection on how they learn and how they understand is developed and applied. Both formative and summative assessment are used throughout the programme. This is particularly evident in the assessment of technical skills whereby lecturers provide continuous feedback to student at each stage of their projects prior to receiving a summative mark for their performance. Students are encouraged to design assessment criteria for projects undertaken and to self-assess themselves against these criteria.

All of the modules are assessed fully via some element of continuous assessment. Continuous assessment in the context of the programme refers to every assessment component and instrument other than the terminal examination component. In stages one and two all modules will have assessments that support and link to the Projects module outputs. This will enable students to see the relevance of all modules to their core subjects and also to |

		ensure that there is a coherence to assessment, and a developed rationale for each assessment project.
19.	Resource Implications:	No additional resources are required to deliver these programmes.
20.	Synergies with Existing Programmes:	Many modules are common and will be commonly delivered between these programmes. There will be some commonality with the Teacher Education Programme.
21.	Findings and Recommendations:	General:
		This programme was approved subject to the following conditions (0) and recommendations (7):
		Special conditions attaching to approval:
		None.
		Recommendations of the panel in relation to award sought:
		1. Ensure that all first-year students are informed clearly and regularly about their year 2 programme choices and the mechanism that will be used to allocate places on programmes in instances of over-subscription. Graduates in relevant roles should be involved in the communication process about pathways.
		2. Ensure that first year students are aware of how the course content and assessment in year 1 relates to each of the programme pathways and are provided with regular feedback on their progress which will facilitate informed pathway choice.
		3. Engage with students and placement employers to ensure that all parties are aware of the benefits to both student and placement company of the student returning to GMIT Letterfrack to complete the fourth stage of the programme.
		4. The calculation of the award percentage for each programme should be reflected on the APS.
		5. Consider a strategy for facilitating students at the start of stage 2 who have concerns about their programme pathway choice.
		6. Amend the hours on the 'Industry Placement' module to read 1.17 rather than 1.7 hours and separate out the taught and supervisory hours.
		7. Establish a project plan to ensure that necessary online resources to deliver the blended modules in stage 3 are available in a timely fashion.

22.	FAO: Academic Council:		
		Approved:	
		Approved subject to recommended changes:	X
		Not approved at this time:	
	Signed:		
		Chair	Secretary