

## VALIDATION REPORT

1.	<b>Title of Programme(s):</b> <b>(incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)</b>	Master of Science in Digital Media and Marketing  Certificate in Digital Media and Marketing (30 ECTS Special Purpose Award)  The Certificate in Digital Media and Marketing will also serve as an exit award for the MSc in Digital Media and Marketing.
2.	<b>NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:</b>	9 90 ECTS (MSc), 30 ECTS (Certificate)
3.	<b>Duration:</b>	2 Years
4.	<b>ISCED Code:</b>	0610
5.	<b>School / Centre:</b>	Mayo Campus
6.	<b>Department:</b>	Department of Business, Humanities and Technology
7.	<b>Type of Review:</b>	New Programme
8.	<b>Date of Review:</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
9.	<b>Delivery Mode:</b>	Blended
10.	<b>Panel Members:</b>	Dr Michael Barret, Head of School of Business, IT Sligo (Chair) Mr Glenn Mehta, Head of Department of Marketing and Business Computing, TU Dublin Ms Fiona McMahon, Lecturer in Advertising, Marketing and Digital Media Communication, Ulster University Ms Helen Gavin, Bold Craft Marketing, Westport Ms Carmel Brennan, Assistant Registrar (Quality) (Secretary)
11.	<b>Proposing Staff:</b>	Mr Michael Gill Dr Janine McGinn Ms Laura Hegarty Ms Sharon Boyle Ms Noreen Henry Dr Yvonne McDermott

<p>12.</p>	<p><b>Programme Rationale:</b></p>	<p>The Skills Agenda for Europe has established the need to improve the digital skills of people across Europe. “In the future all jobs will require digital skills, and despite continued high levels of unemployment there could be 756,000 unfilled jobs for ICT professional by 2020”.</p> <p>Over half of large and medium sized enterprises in Ireland conducted their sales electronically and these accounted for an average of 31% of their total sales. On average, more is purchased over the internet by Irish companies than is sold (Information Society Statistics for Enterprises, December 2018, CSO). The digital economy represents 6% (€12.3bn) of GDP and it is expected to grow to 7.9% (€21.4bn) by 2020. Currently 68,000 Irish jobs are directly linked to those employing digital skills and tools with approximately one in seven Irish people (13.5% of the adult population) making a supplementary income on the internet. Irish consumers spend around €850,000 per hour online, 24 hours a day (Department of Communications, Climate Action &amp; Environment, 2016).</p> <p>Despite this growth in digital employment, a prominent evidence-based digital skills gap has been identified in Irish organisations. The research to support this assertion was conducted by the Digital Marketing Institute (DMI) in 2016 and is reinforced by current statistics in the Digital Economy and Society Index, 2019 Country Report Ireland. DMI evaluated digital marketing skills among marketing professionals across a variety of industries in the USA, UK, and Ireland (Digital Marketing Institute, 2016). They reported that while 59% of marketers in the USA, 47% in the UK and 51% Ireland perceived themselves as very or reasonably competent in digital marketing. Yet, the actual level of their skills, when assessed, was equally low across all three countries -scoring 38% on average. In fact, only 8% of marketers tested achieved entry level skills. In Ireland, digital strategy and planning was cited as the leading digital skills gap in organisations. The report concluded that there needs to be a fundamental readjustment of the outlook on skills training in order to really take advantage of the economic opportunities that digital marketing can offer.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>Potential Demand for Entry:</b></p>	<p>24 places will be offered on this programme. There is evidence for demand based on the numbers undertaking the Certificate programme.</p>

14.	<b>Stakeholder Engagement:</b>	There were six rounds of consultation conducted in the period December 2017 to February 2019, four of which were specific to Digital Media Expertise requirements and one, which included an open focus group discussion with representatives from regional businesses from various sectors and then, finally, a survey was conducted of the current cohort of postgraduate students in the digital media and marketing discipline. The focus groups also included regional government agency representatives such as local employment agencies; Mayo LEO; Enterprise Ireland; Mayo County Council and Community and Public-sector representatives.
15.	<b>Graduate Demand:</b>	An analysis of job vacancies shows clear and significant demand for staff with digital media and marketing knowledge and skills.
16.	<b>Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer &amp; Progression:</b>	<p>Candidates must hold a level 8 Bachelor (Honours) degree with a minimum grade classification of H2.2 or equivalent in Marketing, IT/Computing, Business or cognate area. In line with GMIT's policy Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be used to gain entry or exemption from this programme.</p> <p>English language requirements are those approved by the Institute at any given time.</p>
17.	<b>Programme Structure:</b>	The design of this structured M.Sc. comprises two stages: The initial 40 credit stage is driven by digital technologies applied to the strategic marketing function and is the applied stage of this structured master's programme. The applied stage also provides a strong foundation in research theory and critical analysis. The second stage concentrates on applied research, comprises 50 credits, and centres specifically on scholarly research practice with a defined, specialist industry and/or societal focus. The output of this second stage is the submission of a formal thesis and viva examination.
18.	<b>Learning, Teaching &amp; Assessment Strategies:</b>	This curriculum is innovative. Unlike other more theoretical master's in digital marketing, active digital marketing applications are analytically driven; industry focused; employed live in the technology laboratories and demonstrated in showcases in the 'applied stage' of this programme. The live experiential approach within this discipline is distinctive in the Irish marketplace, adding

		significant value to learning within this increasingly technology-orientated profession. Learners will have the opportunity to pursue pioneering research initiatives; develop a strategic applied digital marketing plan and progress an independent, scholarly research portfolio advancing the boundaries of the digital media and marketing discipline. It is envisaged that innovative digital outputs; industry relevant research proposals and globally relevant inquiry findings will be publicly showcased in student research conferences within the programme structure.
19.	<b>Resource Implications:</b>	This programme will be delivered on a self-financing basis. Licences costing approximately €3,500 are required, as is further staff training in supervisory ethics and practice (€2,000).
20.	<b>Synergies with Existing Programmes:</b>	The 30 ECTS Certificate is approved and currently being delivered.
21.	<b>Findings and Recommendations:</b>	<p><b>General:</b></p> <p>The panel approve the programmes with the commendations (6) listed below and subject to the following condition(s) (0) and recommendation(s) (6):</p> <p><b>Commendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The team were commended on the volume of work that was evident in the development of the programme and in the comprehensiveness and quality of documentation received.</li> <li>2. Teamwork was very evident in the engagement with the panel and in the coherent nature of programme and the integration of module content and assessments.</li> <li>3. The clear use of a model throughout the programme which includes theory and how this is applied in practice is welcomed.</li> <li>4. These programmes' graduates are needed by industry and the content that the proposing team have included is very relevant to the market right now to ensure sustainable growth in the region and beyond.</li> <li>5. The team were commended on their forward thinking to the Technological University and their ongoing work with partner colleges.</li> <li>6. The learning plans presented were welcomed and will be very useful to learners on the programmes.</li> </ol>

		<b>Special conditions attaching to approval (if any):</b>	
		None.	
		<b>Recommendations of the panel in relation to award sought:</b>	
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This programme deals with a very fast changing discipline so the Programme Board are encouraged to ensure they keep up to date with developments in this area and ensure that the programme is flexible and responsive to industry needs. Emerging technologies and trends should be explored within the programme.</li> <li>2. Ensure that supervisors have gone through research supervisor training and mentors are provided for first time supervisors. Reconsider the use of the term 'viva' to describe the end of dissertation interview that students are required to undertake.</li> <li>3. Consider giving stronger weighting within the programme to the analysis of data and to decision-making using data, as this will add enhanced value to employers recruiting graduates of this programme.</li> <li>4. Review the documentation so that the cross pollination between modules which currently exists is better captured. Use the term 'Capstone Project' within the 'Marketing Strategy Theory and Application' module and ensure that the horizontal integration of module content relating to this project is explicit.</li> <li>5. Review the module titles to ensure that they clearly explain what the students will know and be able to do on completion of each module. Exclude 'in digital marketing' from the titles of the Research Methods and Dissertation modules.</li> <li>6. Ensure that both 'Marketing' and 'Marketing Technology' (MarTech) are explicitly embedded within the content of the programme.</li> </ol>	
22.	FAO: Academic Council:	<b>Approved:</b>	
		<b>Approved subject to recommended changes:</b>	X
		<b>Not approved at this time:</b>	
	<b>Signed:</b>		
		<b>Chair</b>	<b>Secretary</b>

