



VALIDATION REPORT

1.	Title of Programme(s): (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	MSc in Business Sustainability Leadership (90 ECTS, Level 9) Embedded Exit awards Certificate in Business Sustainability Leadership (30 ECTS, Level 9) Postgraduate Diploma in Business Sustainability Leadership (60 ECTS, Level 9)
2.	NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:	90 ECTS, 60 ECTS, 30 ECTS – all Level 9
3.	Duration:	3 Semesters Full -Time
4.	ISCED Code:	0410 – Business & Administration
5.	School / Centre:	School of Health Science, Wellbeing & Society
6.	Department:	Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences
7.	Type of Review:	New Programme Validation
8.	Date of Review:	31 st May, 2022
9.	Delivery Mode:	Blended, combination of on-site and on-online delivery
10.	Panel Members:	Professor Wendy Purcell (Chair) EAUC Leadership Academic Associate Professor John Cullen, Maynooth University Dr Etain Kidney, TU Dublin Dr Vincent O Malley, Head of Environmental Policy and Compliance TII Professor Graham Heaslip, Head of School of Engineering, Galway (Secretary)
11.	Proposing Staff:	Dr Justin Kerr Dr Deirdre Garvey Mr Michael Gill Ms Caroline Clarke Mr Shane Byrne Ms Clodagh Geraghty Mr Kevin O’Callaghan Dr John Scahill Ms Anne Wiseman Dr Mark Garavan
12.	Programme Rationale:	International and national policy contexts are driving the actions needed to limit the impacts of climate change by 2050. National policies outline the skills needed to manage the risks and develop opportunities for a more sustainable future. The need for a paradigm change and the distinctive needs of sustainability leadership in business provides the basis for this programme development. The National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development (Department of Education and Skills, 2018) describes how Education for Sustainability aims to ensure that education



		<p>contributes to sustainable development by equipping learners with the relevant knowledge (the 'what'), the key dispositions and skills (the 'how') and the values (the 'why') that will motivate and empower them throughout their lives to become informed active citizens who act for a more sustainable future. While the term 'sustainability' is open to different interpretations, QAA/Advance HE (QAA-HE, 2020, p. 6) highlight that "It is important to note that SD [sustainable development] is not purely about environmental issues as is commonly misconstrued. It includes a balance of economic, social, and environmental factors which are interconnected, overlapping and interdependent".</p> <p>The overall aim of this programme is to address these previous deficits and introduce a paradigm to provide the knowledge, skills, and competencies for sustainability leadership in businesses.</p>
13.	Proposed Student Intake:	24
14.	Stakeholder Engagement:	In preparation for the submission, stakeholder events took place and identified significant interest in this programme from government agencies and industry. The stakeholder engagement is well documented in the Appendices.
15.	Graduate Demand/Employment:	The programme is aimed at mid-career professionals, and therefore students will generally be in employment when they undertake this programme of study. Some students may wish to make changes in their career and employment and these programmes will support key career changes.
16.	Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer & Progression:	<p>Applicants must hold a level 8 Bachelor (Hons) degree with a minimum grade classification of H2.2 or equivalent. Given the cross disciplinary nature of the programme, applicants may be from a range of disciplines. It is expected that applicants will have experience in an organisational environment and will be able to lead a sustainability-related change.</p> <p>Applicants who do not meet the H2.2 performance standard in a Level 8 award will be required to pass a qualifying assignment at an H2.2 performance standard as established by the Programme Board for the programme in question and as approved by the Registrar.</p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be in accordance with the Code of Practice No. 6 and will be applied on a case-by case basis. Where required, the Department of Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences will also engage with GMIT's International Office to map progression from partner colleges abroad.</p> <p>Non-EU applicants who are not native English speakers must have a minimum score of 6.0 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or equivalent. All results must have been achieved within 2 years of application to ATU.</p> <p>EU applicants who are not native English speakers are recommended to have a minimum score of 6.0 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or equivalent.</p>

17.	Programme Structure:	The programme has been designed for delivery over 3 semesters for full-time students to achieve a Level 9 award, culminating in 90 credits.
18.	Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategies:	<p>This programme is designed as a full-time blended programme delivered over 3 semesters. However, the nature and extent of the proposed blend between on-site and online delivery, and the nature of the online elements, need to be explained more fully. Expectations regarding student workload must be stated clearly.</p> <p>The teaching and learning strategy needs to be described more fully, explaining the pedagogic approach adopted by the programme team overall. And, for each module, the approach used, e.g., dialogical, transformative etc.</p> <p>The assessment strategy need to be more clearly described and related directly to realisation of the programme aims. An overview of the approaches to be taken to assessment and the nature and scope of assessment mechanisms to be used should be included. The number of assessment items per module must be included in calculating the self-directed learning hours and effort required of a student.</p>
19.	Resource Implications:	<p>Additional staffing is requested for this programme, the equivalent of 18 contact hours over 3 semesters.</p> <p>The following costs are in addition to the normal delivery costs and will be covered in the pricing of the programme to students.</p> <p>Residential Weekend - €11,520 Psychometric analysis - €3,640 (excl. VAT) Library - €5,000</p> <p>Staffing The delivery of the programme will require the equivalent of 18 contact hours over 3 semesters. It is expected that some modules will be delivered in a cross disciplinary way, drawing from expertise across a number of departments. These hours may not require additional resources but may be provided from existing capacity and capability on the Mayo Campus.</p> <p>Residential element The requirement will be for bed, breakfast at a local hotel for one night (Thursday night) x 4 occasions. The costs per student associated with this are: 1-night Bed & Breakfast €80 per person (approx.) x 8 nights' accommodation (across the programme duration) x 18 students, estimation €11,520.</p> <p>Psychometric analysis It is proposed to complete Myers-Briggs participant profiling as part of the Sustainability Leadership module, estimated to €3,640 (excl VAT).</p> <p>Library Resources Presently, library facilities are adequate to support the proposed programme. However, considering the evolving awareness of global sustainability challenges, some additional resources will be</p>

		required and also to ensure core texts are available through on-line access. Library resource estimated at €5000.
20.	Synergies with Existing Programmes:	None
21.	Findings and Recommendations:	<p>The External Validation Panel expressed their sincere thanks to the Programme Team for preparing a comprehensive set of documents and for their engagement in discussion. The Panel agree fully with the Programme Team that the programme seeks to meet an unmet market need and they supported the interdisciplinary approach proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key aspects of the planned programme were commended by the Panel (see 'Commendations'). • However, the Panel expressed some material concerns (see 'Conditions') about several key aspects of the programme. The conditions listed below need to be addressed before recommending validation at this time. • The Panel also made a suite of suggestions to further develop the programme (see 'Recommendations'). <p>The Panel were confident that the Programme Team were well-positioned to address the issues in a timely manner. IN turn, the Panel would remain in situ to support the ongoing validation process in reviewing documents revised considering their feedback, as follows:</p> <p>Commendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The quality of the documentation. 2. The level of external stakeholder engagement. 3. The identification of three cross-cutting themes (i.e., intrinsic responsibility, inter-connectedness, bringing the outside in). 4. Interdisciplinary natures and use of the UNESCO competencies. 5. The commitment of the University, School and Department teams to the development, delivery, and resourcing of this contemporary programme. <p>Conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the programme learning outcomes (PLO) for the Certificate, Diploma and Masters. Currently the PLOs are the same and not reflective of progression from 30 to 60 to 90 ECTS. 2. Review the programme title. The content of the programme does not warrant the proposed title "Business Sustainability Leadership". The programme is light on Business content to justify having Business in the title. Some suggestion to renaming the programme include Organisation Sustainability Leadership or Sustainability Leadership. 3. The panel were not convinced that a detailed capstone handbook was in place. The handbook should address how the capstone module will be assessed, how students who are not in employment will be accommodated and address how a business mentor from industry will utilised. These handbook is required to be in place before offering the programme to students.

Recommendations:

1. Explain the nature and extent of the proposed blend between on-site and online delivery, explaining more fully the nature of the online elements and the expectations regarding student time commitments.
2. Describe the teaching and learning strategy to explain why the pedagogic approach adopted by the programme team was chosen for the programme. And, for each module state the approach used, e.g., dialogical, transformative etc.
3. Explain how business/organizational leaders will be involve in the programme beyond being guest speakers, e.g., an Advisory Group etc.
4. Provide details of the assessment strategy that accord with the highly applied nature of the programme, showing how each of the learning outcomes will be assessed.
5. State the number of assessment items per module and include in calculating the self-directed learning hours and effort required of a student.
6. Check that the repeat assessment strategy of each module is suitable and does assess the learning outcomes not achieved by the earlier assessment.
7. Clarify how the sustainability challenge from 'outside in', which is an integrated challenge, will be realized through a modular programme and include adaptation (not simply mitigation).
8. Ensure the scientific underpinning of the module 'Understanding the Sustainability Challenge' is fully included in the description.
9. Demonstrate how the 'Strategic Management for Sustainability' module will incorporate consideration of new business models and the centrality of innovation for sustainability.
10. Consider moving the module 'Critical Thinking' to earlier in the programme delivery and/or moving to be an elective.
11. Consider amending the title of the module 'Assessing the Impact' to include reporting and metrics, e.g., 'Sustainability Reporting, Metrics, and Impact Assessments'.
12. Consider offering electives within the programme.
13. Refer to engagement with the ATU Centre for Sustainability in the programme documentation.
14. Carefully review the workload element for a prospective student and show an indicative time commitment for a student over the course of the programme.
15. Review all the module learning outcomes to ensure they are appropriate to the level of the module and are outcome based and not descriptive.
16. Explain the arrangements planned to support and enable students not in suitable employment or those unemployed to comply with the applied and work-related aspects of the programme.

		<p>17. Consider including a matrix for transferable skills and a sample CA schedule, which would enhance the document.</p> <p>18. Ensure that there is a tri-partite agreement in place to ensure that employers and students are clear about expectations and responsibilities prior to the work-based project commencing.</p> <p>19. Update section 2 to reflect the transition from GMIT to ATU.</p>	
22.	FAO: Academic Council:	Approved:	
		Approved subject to conditions and/or recommended changes:	X
		Not approved at this time:	
	Signed:		
		Chair	Secretary