VALIDATION REPORT

1.	Title of Programme(s): (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	BSc (Hons) in Medical Science Higher Certificate in Science (exit award)
2.	NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:	8 240 ECTS
3.	Duration:	4 Years
4.	ISCED Code:	0914
5.	School / Centre:	School of Science & Computing
6.	Department:	Department of Biopharmaceutical and Medical Science
7.	Type of Review:	Differential Validation
8.	Date of Review:	7th December 2020
9.	Delivery Mode:	Full-time
10.	Panel Members:	Ms Deirdre Lusby, Head of Department of Business & Accounting, GMIT (Chair) Mr Michael Gill, Head of Department of Business, Humanities and Technology/Academic Council, GMIT Dr Carmel Heaney, Lecturer, GMIT Ms Irene Regan, Chief Medical Scientist, Children's Health Ireland at Crumlin Ms Carmel Brennan, Assistant Registrar (Quality), (Secretary)
11.	Proposing Staff:	Dr Des Foley Dr Eugene McCarthy Dr Eleanor Rainsford Dr Debbie Corcoran Ms Helen Cregg Dr Joan O'Keeffe Dr Declan Maher Ms Mary McGrath Dr Orla Slattery Dr Sheila Faherty Dr Emer Quirke Dr Trish O'Connell Dr Brian Moran Ms Terri Muldoon Dr Sharon Duffy

12.	Rationale for Changes:	The Medical Science Honours degree programme commenced in September 2005 following accreditation by both HETAC and the Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine (ACSLM). It has since been re-accredited by the ACSLM and was also validated by the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) in the UK, 2011. The current Medical Science programme was developed following an in-depth consultation with the medical science profession and maintains its relevance through continuous engagement with various stakeholders. Learners enrolled on the Medical Science programme complete a unique programme, leading to highly skilled graduates who can practice as Medical Scientists. In 2005, The Health and Social Care Professional Act was introduced, which provides for the establishment of Registration Boards, to establish and maintain registers for a range of health and social care professions. The objective of the Registration Board is to ensure high standards of professional conduct and education, training and competence among registrants are maintained. Distinct from academic accreditation, regulatory approval of a programme must demonstrate that it meets the criteria for education and training programmes through its design and management, including the standards of proficiency medical science graduates must possess on completion of the programme. GMIT is currently preparing its application to CORU, the registration board, for approval of the BSc in Medical Science programme. The amendments proposed for Differential Validation of the programme relate to a review of the current programme and the mapping of the standards of proficiency for Medical Scientists. It was the intention of the Programme Board to present the proposed changes for consideration through programmatic review in the Spring of 2020 in advance of its application to CORU, however, this process was suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
13.	Overview of Changes:	The proposed changes include a new 5 credit module 'Professional Practice in Medical Science' to be delivered at stage 1 of the programme. This module will provide learners an introduction to the various disciplines within the medical science profession as well as providing an introduction to some of the standards of proficiency that are required in order to practise as a medical scientist. Other proposed changes at stage 1 include the development of new 10-credit module 'Physics for Medical Science' which is an updated version of the current 15-credit Physics 1.1 module delivered across all programmes within the department. The proposed module is more tailored to the Medical Science programme and with the reduction of credit weighting ensures the integration of the new proposed Professional Practice in Medical Science does not impact the overall number of credits delivered at stage 1.

		The Clinical Placement in stage 3 of the programme has an increased number of proposed new learning outcomes to reflect the detailed profession-specific criteria for education and training programmes outlined by CORU and the module title has been changed to align with CORU terminology. There are a number of other minor changes, with the current module learning outcomes re-articulated to demonstrate the alignment to the standards of proficiency detailed by CORU. Module titles for a number of modules have been retitled to provide clarity. The programme board recognises that the proposed changes will positively impact the learning and teaching strategy of the programme ensuring that leaners meet the high standards expected within the medical science profession.
14.	Transition Arrangements	Some of the material involved in the Healthcare Structures module has been delivered to year 3 students in anticipation of changes. See also recommendation below.
15.	Resource Implications:	If the proposed changes for clinical placement are approved, it is expected that hours equivalent to a half-time lecturer will be required to oversee the management of this module once the programme is approved by CORU.
16.	Findings and Recommendations:	General:
		The panel approve the changes with the commendations (2) listed below and subject to the following condition(s) (3) and recommendation(s) (16):
		Commendations:
		The panel commended the proposing team on the following: 1. The clarity of documentation provided which made the identification of changes and their rationale very easy to comprehend. 2. The constructive engagement of the team with the panel during the Differential Validation meeting.
		Special conditions attaching to approval (if any):
		1. Given the proposal is to roll out changes to all stages at once, devise a transition plan to ensure that students are not disadvantaged and that they meet all of the module and programme learning outcomes. 2. Ensure that the APS correctly reflects the delivery of the programme. Identify and rectify any variations. 3. Review the module learning outcomes and content of the 'Physics for Medical Science' module to ensure that the workload attached to this module is appropriate for the reduced credit weighting.
		Recommendations of the panel in relation to award sought:

1. The panel strongly recommends that the additional resources required in the delivery of this programme are clearly articulated, and that this should include identifying the drivers for the additional resources including inter alia changes as a result of the DV, increasing student numbers and all of the requirements of the practice placement including site supports and administrative supports. All requests for additional resources must be approved by the Executive Board.
2. Articulate the fact that the proposed changes are influenced by industry engagement as well as being relevant to CORU requirements. Describe the stakeholder engagement that has taken place (including students and professional body/panel membership by programme lecturers) in the document.
3. Reflect on the mapping of module learning outcomes and assessments particularly where there are 'compulsory components' and apparent duplication of assessments to achieve same learning outcomes.
4. Reflect on wording of the logbook in the context of what the Programme Board is trying to achieve; in particular with regard to competency assessment. Articulate the requirements/registrations the person assessing the logbook should have.
5. Document more clearly how the Professional Practice module was informed and how it aligns to CORU requirements.
6. Document the CORU advising proficiency more clearly and the rationale for its inclusion in the areas it is inserted.
7. Consider formalising the documentation relevant to the Clinical Placement meetings and the assessment of placement.
8. Consider creating a senior stakeholder placement group to inform the Programme Board.
9. Consider identifying the practice education coordinator and the team that supports the coordinator in their work.
10. During Programmatic Review consider the development of a level 7 exit award.
11. Review the module learning outcomes to ensure that they appropriately articulated using measurable active verbs in all instances.
12. Review all reading lists to ensure that they are up-to-date and consider whether there are relevant e-resources that can be listed.
13. Consider generating documentation/protocol to support the Practice Placement module that will provide a pathway for students who are struggling to achieve competency/learning outcomes (e.g. 'An Action Plan').

Individual Modules

		14. Quality Management – articulate the teaching, learning and assessment strategies in the module descriptor. 15. Applied Immunotechnology – articulate the teaching, learning, assessment and repeat assessment strategies in the module descriptor. 16. Research Project – expand on the assessment strategy for this module and the management of the research project.

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