


1.	<b>Title of Programme(s):</b> (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	Diploma in School Age Childcare (60 ECTS)
2.	<b>NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:</b>	Level 7 60 ECTS
3.	<b>Duration:</b>	1 year
4.	<b>ISCED Code:</b>	0922
5.	<b>School / Centre:</b>	Mayo Campus
6.	<b>Department:</b>	Department of Nursing, Health Sciences and Social Care
7.	<b>Type of Review:</b>	Special Purpose Award
8.	<b>Date of Review:</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2021
9.	<b>Delivery Mode:</b>	Blended
10.	<b>Panel Members:</b>	Dr Sheila Flanagan, VP for Academic Affairs & Registrar, DKIT (Chair) Ms Roisin McGlone, Lecturer in Management & Leadership, IT Sligo Dr Louise McBride, Head of Department of Nursing and Health Studies, Letterkenny IT Ms Carmel Brennan, GMIT Assistant Registrar (Secretary)
11.	<b>Proposing Staff:</b>	Mr Justin Kerr Ms Louise Kilbane Mr Davy Walsh Mr Declan Hoban Ms Joanne Doherty Ms Mary Skillington Dr Sean Foy Ms Sharon Boyle

12.	<b>Programme Rationale:</b>	The Pobal Sector Profile 2017/2018 has shown that in the last 5 years there has been an increase by 11% of School Aged Childcare Settings to 1600 services in Ireland employing 9,978 staff within Ireland. To date there has not been any formal announcement of suitable qualifications required for staff working within the sector. Currently, in Ireland there is no similar programme.
13.	<b>Potential Demand for Entry:</b>	Consultations involved people who work across the School Aged Childcare Sector. A total of 104 persons participated in the survey representing 89 organisations and 18 individual responses. The organisations surveyed employed a total of 529 staff within the School Aged Childcare Sector in Ireland. Respondents were asked would they complete a qualification in School Aged Childcare 60% stated yes with a further 30% stating they would consider it. The proposed student intake is 25 students.
14.	<b>Stakeholder Engagement:</b>	In 2020 the Programme Board of Early Childhood Education and Care established a need to develop a School Age Childcare Programme following on from conversations with local employers. To ensure the development of the programme was both required and in line with sector needs a large survey of staff employed in the school age childcare sector was undertaken, and this was followed by a focus group. The findings of the survey established the need for the programme and strongly influenced the structure, content and delivery of the programme.
15.	<b>Graduate Demand:</b>	The Pobal Sector Profile 2017/2018 has shown in the last 5 years there has been an increase by 11% of School Aged Childcare Settings to 1600 services in Ireland employing 9,978 staff within Ireland. While no minimum qualification has been established for staff working in this area at the moment, this may change: "All regulated school-age childcare staff will hold a minimum qualification (level to be determined by DCYA by end 2019). An appropriate period will be provided to meet this requirement;" (First 5, 2018)
16.	<b>Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer &amp; Progression:</b>	The entry requirements for students entering the programme is a cognate higher education level 6 award. Recognition of Prior Learning can be used to meet the minimum entry requirements in line GMIT's policy.  Having completed the registration process students will be required complete the IT skills programme Course: 20-21: IT

		Skills (gmit.ie) to ensure the key digital skills required to undertake this programme.
17.	<b>Programme Structure:</b>	<p>The programme consists of six 10 ECTS modules with 30 ECTS being delivered each semester. The module themes are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Psychology</li> <li>2. Relationships, Partnership &amp; Well-Being</li> <li>3. Leadership</li> <li>4. Digital Technology</li> <li>5. Play, Rest and Relaxation</li> <li>6. Outdoor Learning</li> </ol>
18.	<b>Learning, Teaching &amp; Assessment Strategies:</b>	<p>The blended mode of delivery, or alternatively online (depending on public health indicators) will provide access to a wider net of prospective students, whilst enabling cost-efficient programme attendance and delivery.</p> <p>The blended format will permit learners to work, with minimal disruption to their working week, and to simultaneously gain further qualifications and apply their new skills into their workplace. Research based and learner focused periodic face-to-face contact will allow for the sharing and building of experiences and application within the group.</p> <p>The taught element of programme will be delivered through a combination of lectures, tutorials, workshops, readings, class discussion and experiential based learning. Students will be encouraged to participate in the classroom and to relate concepts to actual situations. A particular effort will be made to invite outside speakers from the School Aged Childcare sector of practice and from a variety of School Aged Childcare Settings.</p> <p>Lecturers will seek to combine conceptual understanding with an emphasis on applied knowledge. Efforts will be made to emphasise the inter-related nature of the various subject areas and to integrate their delivery, where relevant, through close coordination between lecturers. Case based teaching will be encouraged particularly as a mechanism for developing students' team-working, problem-solving and communication skills. The use of computers will be emphasised to produce graduates with good computer skills and the confidence to apply them.</p> <p>Assessment will include a mixture of formative and summative assessments. Formative assessments include e.g. self-reflection, study assignments and group work.</p>

		Summative assessment includes projects, e-portfolios, practical demonstrations. The programme will not include end of term examinations. The assessment schedule will be agreed by the programme board at the beginning of the academic year and will be made available to the students.
19.	<b>Resource Implications:</b>	<p>This will be self-financing programme. All costs including the costs associated with the residential delivery of the programme will be covered by the programme price.</p> <p>The programme can be delivered within existing resources in 2021-22, but thereafter it is likely that an additional lecturer will be required.</p>
20.	<b>Synergies with Existing Programmes:</b>	None.
21.	<b>Findings and Recommendations:</b>	<b>General:</b>
		<p>The panel approved the programme subject to the conditions (0) and recommendations (17) outlined below.</p> <p><b>Commendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The team are to be congratulated on developing a highly innovative, learner centred programme that our School Age children richly deserve and reflects a market need.</li> <li>2. The level of consultation and engagement with stakeholders in developing and informing this programme is to be commended.</li> </ol>
		<b>Special conditions attaching to approval (if any):</b>
		None.

		<p data-bbox="582 398 1369 432"><b>Recommendations of the panel in relation to award sought:</b></p> <ol data-bbox="592 443 1398 1944" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further clarify the entry criteria for this programme, specifying the cognate nature of the HE Level 6 award needed and that RPL can be used to meet the minimum entry requirements.</li> <li>2. The programme themes - reflection, play, empowerment and participation - should be evident throughout the programme documentation and modules.</li> <li>3. Ensure that the programme is consistently referred to as 'School Age Childcare' and not 'School Aged Childcare' throughout the documentation.</li> <li>4. Review the programme title to consider whether 'play' can be incorporated into it.</li> <li>5. Ensure that the hours for each module are recorded as blended learning and appear correctly on the APS.</li> <li>6. Ensure that the module titles are consistently used and are as explicit as possible.</li> <li>7. Provide further clarity on the work placement for students not working in the industry and its alignment with the timeline for assessment completion. Clarify the requirements for Garda vetting for students undertaking the work placement element of the programme and whether this can be achieved in time to allow students to undertake the practical assessments described in the first semester modules.</li> <li>8. Consideration should be given to external moderation from a visiting tutor for the learners completing their practical experience in their own place of work.</li> <li>9. Mandatory training in areas such as personal manual handling should be considered for all students.</li> <li>10. Ensure that there is clear communication with students and module lecturers around integrated assessments and that the marking scheme is clearly outlined in the programme handbook. It would be useful to develop a workload matrix to give students clarity about assessment components linked to specific module learning outcomes, particularly where assessments cross more than one module.</li> <li>11. Clarify the number of repeat opportunities that are available to students.</li> </ol>
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		<p>12. Consult with the Tusla Children’s Inspectorate in relation to the programme content and the capacity of learners to risk assess.</p> <p>13. Consider the development of progression pathways in the future for students who complete this programme.</p> <p>14. Consider the possibility of offering some of the modules as CPD, to promote the programme to a wider target market.</p> <p>15. Undertake a full edit of the programme document to remove errors and inconsistencies.</p> <p><b>Modules:</b></p> <p>16. Leaders of Today and of the Future: Reflective Practice should appear in the reading material for this module. The assessment strategy for this module should be clarified.</p> <p>17. Applied Psychology Middle Child: Consider the sequencing of the coursework for this module with the theory assessment taking place first followed by the reflective assignment.</p>	
22.	FAO: Academic Council:	Approved:	
		Approved subject to recommended changes:	X
		Not approved at this time:	
	Signed:		
		Chair	Secretary