# EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT OF NEW PROGRAMMES

| 1. | Title of Programme(s): | BB (Hons) in Retail Management<br><br>**Embedded Exit Awards:**<br>BB in Retail Management (Exit Award)<br>Higher Certificate in Business in Retail Management (Exit Award) | | | | |
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| 2. | School / Centre: | College of Tourism & Arts | | | | |
| 3. | Duration: | 4 years Level 8<br>3 years Level 7 (Award and Exit Award)<br>2 years Level 6 (Exit Award) | | | | |
| 4. | NFQ Level:<br><br>ISCED Code: | Level 8<br>Level 7 (Award and Exit Award)<br>Level 6 (Exit Award)<br>0416 | | | | |
| 5. | Type of Review: | New Programme: | Yes: | X | No: | |
| | | Differential Validation: | Yes: | | No: | X |
| 6. | Date of Review: | 28th March 2017 | | | | |
| 7. | Delivery Mode: | Full-time | X | Part-time | | Blended | |
| 8. | Panel Members: | Mr Billy Bennett, Registrar, LYIT<br>Mr Damien Courtney, Retired Head of Faculty, CIT<br>Dr Sean Duffy, Head of School of Tourism, LYIT<br>Ms Triona Gannon, General Manager, The G<br>Ms Carmel Brennan, Secretary | | | | |
| 9. | Proposing Staff: | Gerry Talbot<br>Marie Burke<br>Suzanne O'Reilly<br>Ann O'Leary<br>Orla O'Doherty | Tom Conlon<br>Sally Reidy<br>Tom Edwards<br>Gerry O'Neill | | | |

| 10 | Programme Rationale: | The Irish retail industry employs almost 275,000 people i.e. 14% of the total jobs in Ireland (Retail Ireland 2015.) Retail remains Ireland's largest industry and largest employer. There are approximately 42,000 active wholesale and retail enterprises in Ireland located in almost every community, right across the country. |
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| | | The significant growth in the importance of the retail sector to the Irish economy has been matched by major structural changes in the sector in Ireland over the last decade. This is evidenced in the development of larger sized outlets, variations in formats to meet locational and demographic needs and the growth of symbol groups. Structural change is being driven by the search for economies of scale, increased market share, vertical integration of the supply chain, consolidation among major companies and the integration of information and communications technologies. The last ten years has witnessed a dramatic increase in the internationalisation of large retailers across Europe. In particular, Ireland, has experienced an increasing flow of international retailers into the Irish marketplace. A major strategic challenge for the third-level education sector in Ireland is how to respond to the dynamic educational requirements brought about by this significant evolution in the Irish retail sector. |
| | | As a result of changes in the industry, including the impact of digital technologies, retailers are looking to up-skill staff and recruit employees with relevant skill levels for a changing industry. |
| | | The proposed programme will provide a level 8 route for CAO applicants, but will also provide a relevant progression pathway for students and graduates of the existing Bachelor of Business in Retail Management, level 7 programme. |
| 11. | Potential Demand for Entry: | 40 students per annum.

In addition to a CAO entry for Year 1 of this programme, it is planned to offer Year 4 of this programme in 2017-18, to provide a progression opportunity for students on the |

| | | existing level 7 programme. Research into existing students on the level 7 programme show a viable cohort wishing to progress to the final stage of the level 8 programme. |
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| 12. | Stakeholder Engagement: | Employers, students and graduates were consulted as part of the research into the viability and design of the proposed programme. Findings from the focus groups strongly influenced the content of the programme and its modules. |
| 13. | Graduate Demand: | Graduates of this programme will be highly employable and will have a wide range of opportunities to choose from. The programme is designed to equip graduates to be able to take up positions in general retail store management and in specialised functional areas such as merchandising, purchasing and customer services management. Graduates with retail management competence can expect to find employment in a variety of enterprises such as food, fashion, DIY, furniture, electrical and electronic retailing. In addition, there are opportunities for graduates in consultancy, franchising, self-employment, research, and postgraduate education. |
| 14. | Entry Requirements: | Standard entry requirements for a level 8 degree apply, as outlined in GMIT's Code of Practice No. 4 – Access, Transfer and Progression. |
| 15. | Programme Structure: | This programme will be delivered over eight semesters, with a work placement in semester 5. The modules are organised under nine thematic areas: Retailing, Customer Care and Service, Marketing, HRM/Law, Finance, IT, Management, Research and Languages. |
| 16. | LTA: | Pedagogically, the design features of this programme and its constituent modules may be represented thus:<br>(a) lectures will be designed to provide the student with the fundamental knowledge of the given syllabi<br>(b) practical classes will provide the student with the opportunity to apply the theory, concepts and principles in practice<br>(c) group work, workshops and discussions will facilitate peer-supported learning and team-working |

(d) projects, scenarios and case studies will provide the student with the opportunity to gain an understanding of the practical application of theory in a cross-functional setting

(e) student presentations will facilitate the building of student confidence and self-esteem through the deployment of effective communication techniques.

The learning and teaching strategies employed by the programme team will aim to help students achieve module and programme learning outcomes. Inevitably, there will be variations in the methodologies employed by lecturers, however a common theme would be interactive, student centred approaches. Each lecturer strives to motivate students to learn, and plans and organises their teaching to guide and assist student learning. Students are informed of the context of what they are studying and what they aim to achieve in the class session, with material linked to any prior learning as relevant. Methodologies include traditional lecturing, practical tasks, discussions, and presentations as appropriate to the topic/discipline. Increasingly, lecturers are using technology to enhance student learning. For example, lecturers use Moodle to direct students to learning resources, or use online quizzes to motivate learning providing instant feedback.  The Programme Board is aware that the dynamic employment environment means that students need to be equipped with the ability to think critically, analyse, problem solve and engage in lifelong learning. It endeavours to equip students with these skills. It is also well recognised that students learn better through 'doing' rather than hearing or reading, and all modules involve elements of discussion and 'doing'.

The focus of the Programme Assessment Strategy is to promote effective teaching and learning and to ensure the programme and module learning outcomes are achieved. All modules contribute in an integrated manner to the achievement of the programme learning outcomes.  The programme uses both continuous assessment and terminal

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| | | examinations to assess students, and uses a range of methodologies. |
| 17. | ATP: | GMIT's Code of Practice No 4 on Access, Transfer and Progression applies.<br><br>Students who successfully complete the level 7 programme will be eligible for entry to the final stage of the level 8 programme. |
| 18. | Resource Implications: | No additional resources, including staff, are required to deliver this programme. |
| 19. | Synergies with existing programmes: | Many of the modules on this programme are common with other programmes within the College of Tourism & Arts. |
| 20. | Findings and Recommendations: | Special conditions attaching to approval (if any):<br>1. Include an embedded Higher Certificate exit award at level 6.<br><br>Recommendations of the panel in relation to award sought:<br>1. Revise the programme proposal submission (AQA2) to ensure the rationale, industry data, student numbers, regional context and consultation process are up to date.<br>2. Revise the programme learning outcomes to ensure they are written as level 8 outcomes and using measurable, active verbs.<br>3. Revise the module learning outcomes to ensure all outcomes are written using suitable language, at the appropriate level, and using measurable, active verbs. Consider having greater consistency in the number of learning outcomes per module.<br>4. Consider a more generic title for the proposed Higher Certificate exit award, appropriate to the programme learning outcomes and programme content.<br>5. Adopt a consistent approach to the presentation of book titles/reading list, including publication year. |

6. Adopt a consistent approach to the presentation of syllabi; consider whether it would be useful to include percentage weightings for syllabus topics.
7. Include breakdown for assessment where modules are 100% continuous assessment.
8. Increase the number of 'retail' credits in the final stage of the programme to 30 credits, perhaps by making 'International Retailing' mandatory.
9. Consider further opportunities for cross modular assessment, particularly in stage 4 of the programme.

Module Specific Recommendations:

10. Review modules to ensure appropriate layout and remove typos, ensuring that modules are complete including teaching, learning, assessment and repeat assessment strategies.
11. Revise the title and content of the 'Facilities Management for the Licensed Trade' module to reflect the retail orientation of this programme.
12. Revise the title and content of 'Negotiation Skills' to 'Selling and Negotiation Skills' and consider including it as a mandatory module in stage 4.
13. Revise the title of 'Managerial Retail Finance' to 'Retail Finance', and enhance the application of the module learning outcomes and content to the retail industry.
14. Consider renaming 'E-tailing' module to 'Digital Retailing' or similar title.
15. Reconsider the title of 'Fashion Fabric and Retail', perhaps to 'Fashion Retail – Textiles and Design'.
16. Replace Learning & Innovation Skills EDUS06002 with Learning & Innovation Skills EDUS06001.
17. Ensure the following are further integrated into the existing modules:
- Sales skills, the sales experience, sales targets
- People management, performance management
- Merchandising/Graphic design
- Health & Safety (manual handling)
- Cultural awareness

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