



Report of External Peer Review Group for the Programmatic Review of:

Named Award:	Bachelor of Engineering
Programme Title(s):	Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Services & Automation Engineering L7 (3 years)
Exit Award(s):	Level 6
Award Type:	Ordinary Degree
Award Class:	Major
NFQ Level:	Level 7
ECTS / ACCS Credits:	180
Minor Award(s):	None
Location:	Galway

Panel Members

Name	Position	Organisation
Dr Brendan McCormack	Chairperson	Institute of Technology Sligo
Gerry Talbot	Secretary	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Dr Daniel O'Brien	IOT Member	Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dr Alan Morrison	University Member	University College Cork
Buddy Wright	Institute Graduate	

Programme Board Team

Gerard MacMichael	Tom Mullin
Des O'Reilly	Pat Lardner
Mairtin Ó Conghaile	Barry Finnegan
Ray Weldon	Sean O'Donovan
Rachel Gargan	Dr PJ McAllen
Gabriel Costello	Dr Oliver Mulryan
Willie Geraghty	Michel Fitzgerald
Clare Lundon	Marto Hoary
Seamus Leonard	

1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on the approval of the programme Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Services & Automation Engineering

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Background to Proposed Programme
- General Findings of the Validation Panel
- Programme-Level Findings
- Module-Level Findings

2 Background to Proposed Programme

See Programme Self Evaluation Report (SER) for more detailed information.

3 General Findings of the External Peer Review Group

- The External Peer Review Group (EPRG) has come to the conclusion that they reapprove the programme for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner, subject to a number of recommendations.
- The EPRG commend the ethos, enthusiasm and passion of the programme board staff and the belief they show in their students' abilities.
- The EPRG feel that the engagement and enthusiasm of the programme board in this process was commendable.
- The EPRG commend that the clarity of focus on career objectives achievable from this programme is a real strength.
- The EPRG were impressed with the civic engagement module and found it very beneficial to the students

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the External Peer Review Group recommends the following:

Bachelor of Bachelor on Engineering in Electrical Services & Automation Engineering

Place an x in the correct box.

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	
Accredited subject to recommendations	X
Re-designed and re-submitted to the same External Peer Review Group after additional developmental work	
Not Accredited	

Note:

Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below and a response document describing the actions of the Department to address the conditions and recommendations made by the External Peer Review Group (EPRG). In this report, the term Recommendation indicates an item to which the Programme Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of on-going monitoring.

4 Programme-Level Findings

This section of the report addresses the following programme level considerations:

- Evidence of reflection by the programme board to include, where relevant evidence of collaboration and engagement with other programmes from a similar discipline area within GMIT
- Demand
- Award
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and progression
- Retention
- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Learning and Teaching Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Research Activity
- Quality Assurance
- Internationalisation
- Professional Practice (Work Experience / Internship etc)

4.1 Reflection, including internal and external engagement

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there evidence of reflection in the SER of how the programme performed since the last programmatic review.
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation:

- The EPRG commend the clarity and presentation of the SER document and the level of detail and insight shown by the programme board.

4.2 Demand

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is there a need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

4.3 Award

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
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<i>panel:</i>	
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

Recommendation:

- The panel believe this course deserves professional accreditation at Levels 7 and 8 from Engineers Ireland and recommend the programme board consider seeking accreditation for this programme in 2 years' time. At that stage there will be graduates who have completed the programme to level 8.
They suggest planning this from now by aligning the current programme with the professional accredited programme.

4.4 Entry Requirements

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate? Is there a relationship with this programme and further education?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommend that the programme board consider facilitating the entry of phase 4 electrical apprentices to year 1 of the course even if they have not completed the leaving certificate.

4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme incorporate the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the HEA and as contained in the Institute's Quality assurance Framework (QAF) COP No.4?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

4.6 Retention

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme comply with the Institute norms for retention, both in first year and subsequent years? Are both elements of the First Year Experience {(i) Learning to Learn (now Learning and Skills Innovation) and (ii) PASS} embedded in this programme? Evidence of other retention initiatives?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

It was noted that retention rates for this programme are very good.

Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommend that a full induction into GMIT should be provided to advanced entry phase 6 electrical apprentices in year 2. This should include Information Technology and Communication supports especially for the use of excel and Moodle.

4.7 Standards and Outcomes

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme meet the required award standards for programmes at the proposed NFQ level (i.e. conform to QQI Award Standards)? For parent award? For exit award (if applicable)? For Minor Award (if applicable)? For Special Purpose Award (if applicable)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at http://www.hetac.ie/publications_pol01.htm

4.8 Programme Structure

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated programme intended learning outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

Recommendation:

- The panel recommend that the contact hours across all years of the programme be reviewed as they are high at present, with a view to reducing the work load on students.

4.9 Learning and Teaching Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have appropriate learning and teaching strategies been provided for the proposed programme that support Student Centred Learning (SCL)? Evidence of consideration of flexible delivery methods including eLearning?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendations

Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommend the programme board develop a process to allow later years students to support both 1st year and 2nd year advanced entry students. This could include supervising them in labs for extra credits, and engaging in the PASS module.

4.10 Assessment Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI/HETAC Assessment
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	and Guidelines, 2009)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

Assessment strategies are required in line with HETAC's Assessment and Standards and should be considered by the programme EPRG. See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 4.6.1, page 33). Accordingly the assessment strategy should address the following (See (HETAC (2009) Assessment and Standards, Section 2.2.5, page 13) :

- Description and Rationale for the choice of assessment tasks, criteria and procedures. This should address fairness and consistency, specifically their validity, reliability and authenticity;
- Describe any special regulations;
- Regulate, build upon and integrate the module assessment strategies;
- Provide contingent strategy for cases where learners claim exemption from modules, including recognition of prior learning;
- Ensure the programme's continuous assessment workload is appropriately balanced;
- Relate to the learning and teaching strategy;
- Demonstrate how grading criteria will be developed to relate to the Institutional grading system.

Recommendation:

- The EPRG recommend the development of an assessment matrix by the programme board for all of the modules of the programme to include typical due dates for assignments and assessment dates. This should be made available for each student early in the year.

4.11 Resource Requirements

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

It was noted that resources for this programme are limited and the programme board would like to see more equipment. Industry is constantly changing and using different equipment which the staff would like to see made available to the students.

Recommendation:

- The panel recommend that consideration should be given to allow a number of programmable logic controllers (PLCs) be available to students for practice, alternatively they should make the equipment available in an open lab for the students.

4.12 Research Activity

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Evidence that Learning & Teaching is informed by research? Number of staff engaged in institutional/pedagogical research?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

It was noted however that there are no staff on this programme currently engaged in research for a PhD.

4.13 Quality Assurance

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures (QAF) have been applied and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes to include 1 recommendation

Recommendation:

- If the proposed level 8 programme is to be accredited, there should be staff career development plans put in place to ensure they meet the required academic standards of the Level 8 programme.

4.14 Internationalisation

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the syllabi represent an international dimension? Is there evidence of approaches to induct international students?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

4.15 Professional Practice (Work Experience / Internships etc)

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Does the proposed programme incorporate professional practice as per the Institute's policy on professional practice (PP)? If not, is there evidence that PP is under consideration by the programme board?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Commendation:

- The EPRG acknowledge the great efforts that staff have gone to in securing work placements for the students on this programme and find it very commendable.

5.0 Module-Level Findings: General

Recommendations:

- The panel recommend that if the proposed Level 8 programme gets accredited, consideration should be given to incorporate 6 months of work placement for students that is
 1. Adequately resourced and
 2. Has a robust assessment strategy developed

5.1 Module Assessment Strategies

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in each Module Descriptor?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

6.0 Student Findings

2 students attended the meeting.

The students were phase 6 electrical apprentices and so had advanced entry to year 2. They felt that there was a wider range of career objectives covered and they learnt more on the programme than they expected. They said there was a balance of both management and technical knowledge gained. They commented that the soft skills they developed were very beneficial to them and feel they have a more professional way of dealing with people at work than they previously had. The students supported each other with IT issues as they did not have a great knowledge of computers when they started. They suggested that a module or even an evening programme be made available for students who need assistance with their computer skills and other practical skills.

Commendation:

The EPRG complimented the Quality of the students and said they were excellent representatives for GMIT.

7.0 Stakeholder Engagement

The programme board engaged with current students, graduates of the programme, qualified electricians and had consultations with industry.

They found that industry wanted to keep students on after their work placement due to the quality of their work. They are building relationships with companies and this is very beneficial for the future of this programme and for the profile of the graduates.

8.0 Future Plans

<i>Consideration for the panel:</i>	Evidence that the programme board considered and identified opportunities and signalled proposals for related new programme and award development.
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Recommendation:

- The panel recommend that the programme board have a relook at the title of this programme and consider choosing a title for the programme in the context of the change in cohort of students (i.e. from apprentice electricians to direct CAO students)

Validation Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:



Brendan McCormack

Date:

24/4/15