VALIDATION REPORT

1.	Title of Programme(s): (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	Certificate in Marketing and Logistics Special Purpose Award (SPA)
2.	NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:	Level 7 15 ECTS
3.	Duration:	2 Semesters (26 weeks)
4.	ISCED Code:	0410
5.	School / Centre:	School of Business
6.	Department:	Business, Humanities and Technology
7.	Type of Review:	New Programme
8.	Date of Review:	2nd December 2021
9.	Delivery Mode:	Blended, Part-time
10	Proposed Student Intake:	24
11.	Proposed Start Date:	September 2022
12.	Panel Members:	Mr Gerard O'Donovan, MTU (Chair) Dr Janine McGinn, GMIT Dr Carina Ginty, GMIT Ms Anne Conlon, Castlebar Chamber of Commerce Mr Hugh Mc Bride, GMIT (Secretary)
13.	Proposing Staff:	Mr Michael Gill, GMIT Mr Declan Hoban, GMIT Dr Vicky O'Rourke, LyIT Ms Emer Ward, IT Sligo Ms Caroline Clarke, GMIT
14.	Programme Rationale:	The aim of the proposed programme is to prepare graduates for contemporary challenges and opportunities in marketing and logistics. It aims to demonstrate to learners that agility is vital to the innovation and competitive performance of all organisations, particularly in terms of using new skills and tools in marketing and logistics and how various organisations and partners collaborate to detect with speed new market opportunities. Organisations who are seeing success with agility are realigning their marketing and logistics activities to supply chains and value streams which has an immediate impact in terms of identifying new market opportunities and reaching markets faster. The interface between marketing and logistics must be core to operations to enhance the speed, precision and flexibility of moving products and services faster to the marketplace and to sustain and maintain customer satisfaction.

| | | The programme will demonstrate to learners the importance of using the tools of marketing and logistics in relation to reaching markets faster.

The proposed SPA has been approved for HCI funding under Pillar 3 – Innovation and Agility. Information on the HCI funding granted for the proposal is provided in an Appendix to the programme document.

The programme was designed in a partnership and collaboration among staff of GMIT, IT Sligo and Letterkenny IT. The nature of the collaboration was outlined by the programme team during the validation meeting. The intention is that the award be validated by GMIT, and if approved, will be offered and delivered across each of the three Institutes which are soon to be merged into the Atlantic Technological University (ATU). |
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| 15. | Stakeholder Engagement: | Evidence in support of the relevance of the programme is provided by quotations from several articles and reports. The proposal was reviewed very favourably by an external expert, Dr D. Fleming (IT Carlow). Letters of Endorsement for the proposal were provided by Ballina Beverages, Castlebar Chamber of Commerce, Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce, Local Enterprise Office Donegal and Hotel Westport.

There are no similar comparable programmes offered in Ireland. |
| 16. | Graduate Demand/Employment: | It is envisaged that graduates can seek employment in marketing and logistics roles across a variety of sectors and types of organisation. |
| 17. | Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer & Progression: | The programme is aimed at people working or aspiring to work in marketing and logistics. Potential students are likely to already be in employment, with some students coming from defined marketing and logistics roles. The programme will also appeal to candidates who have already achieved qualifications in business or other disciplines and are now interested in specialising in marketing and logistics. It will offer mature learners an opportunity to return to education. Students will come predominantly from the western/north western region but also from further afield.

Applicants for the proposed programme must have completed a Level 6 business programme or equivalent. Candidates not having the formal cognate qualification can be assessed for equivalence through RPL. There is no requirement that applicants be in employment or have a background or prior knowledge in marketing and logistics. |

18.	Programme Structure:	The proposed programme comprises a single 15 credit module, 'Marketing and Logistics', at Level 7.
		It incorporates three themes: agility – getting products and services to markets faster; use marketing and logistic tools to manage emerging trends and new markets; supply chain management. Sustainability is also referenced as a key theme.
		The programme will be delivered over 2 semesters (26 weeks), requiring 117 student contact hours in total (a weekly average of 4.5 hours) comprising 39 hours of face-to-face lectures (a weekly average of 1.5 hours) and 78 hours of online learning (a weekly average of 3 hours).
19.	Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategies:	The delivery mode will be blended, involving a mix of face-to-face and online delivery.
		The blended format responds to the needs of students in the workplace and the employers supporting them. It permits learners to work, with minimal disruption to their employment, and to simultaneously gain further qualifications and apply their new skills into their workplace.
		The face-to-face element is considered particularly important for engaging students and encouraging peer learning.
		For the face-to-face element of delivery, it is proposed that students will attend for one full-day every four weeks throughout the academic year (8 attendance blocks in total). A residential weekend is also planned to facilitate group work and networking. During the validation meeting, the programme team indicated that the full-day delivery for each entry cohort would be scheduled for provision sequentially in four campus locations (in Sligo, Letterkenny, Galway and Mayo).
		Little if any detail is provided about the online delivery element.
		It is envisaged that a programme team of staff from each of the collaborating Institutes will be involved in delivery. Guest speakers from industry with discipline specific expertise and practical experience will be regularly invited to contribute. In addition, the programme includes an experiential workshop in which guest speakers will play a key role. The programme will work with professionals, companies and organisations in the region to build a professional community.
		Assessment will be entirely by continuous assessment. It will consist of a group project (60%), group presentation (10%) and an online quiz (30%). The assessment is formative in nature with the primary purpose of providing the learner with feedback and encouraging engagement. Feedback will be communicated using an assessment clinic.

		Assessment is designed to assess the student's knowledge and understanding of innovative and new concepts in marketing and logistics and the application of these to their work environment. The project allows the students the opportunity to link their learning on the programme back to their organisation and to make connections between theory and practice.
20.	Resource Implications:	Delivery of the programme will involve a staff team from across GMIT, Sligo IT and LyIT. Staff skilled and knowledgeable in the area of marketing and logistics are available to teach the programme. No additional staffing or other resources will be required to deliver the programme; it will be provided from within existing resource capacity. The programme has been approved for HCI funding.
21.	Synergies with Existing Programmes:	None identified.
22.	Findings and Recommendations:	The Panel commends the programme team for undertaking this inter-institutional collaboration and for the innovative cross-disciplinary nature of the programme proposal. The Panel recommends approval of the proposed programme subject to the conditions and recommendations outlined below. Conditions: 1. Rewrite the intended programme learning outcomes ensuring clarity and alignment with the stated programme themes and the module descriptor. 2. Review the intended module learning outcomes. 3. Document the proposed inter-institutional collaborative provision, including arrangements for programme management, co-ordination, staffing and resourcing. 4. Clarify the proposed delivery model, including the multi-campus delivery element, the scheduling for face-to-face contact time and the online element. 5. Review the module content and the teaching and learning strategy to incorporate a greater emphasis on practical application and the use of digital technologies. 6. Clarify the arrangements planned to support and enable students not in employment, or not in employment in a marketing or logistics role, to engage with, contextualise and apply knowledge to practice in the workplace. 7. Reconsider the assessment strategy, including the proposed % weighting for each assessment element, the appropriateness of an online quiz for the level, and the nature and authenticity of the group project and its relevance to the learner's workplace. 8. Edit the programme document, removing reference to 'HCI micro-credential requirements', and clarifying the stakeholder consultation and market research actually undertaken.

		Recommendations:
		1. Reconsider the award and module title. For example, consider whether the title 'Logistics and Marketing' might be more reflective of the aim, themes and content of the proposed programme.
		2. Reconsider the indicative content to address possible gaps in the logistics element, including tendering, health and safety, and border controls.
		3. Strengthen the commitment to using guest lecturers from industry in the teaching and learning strategy outlined in the module descriptor.
		4. Consider establishing an Industry Advisory Panel to support the programme provision, drawn from the professionals, companies and organisations in the region that the programme team plans to work with.
		5. Include staff with specialist expertise in logistics in the programme delivery team.
		6. Review the required reading book list.
22.	FAO: Academic Council:	Approved:	
		Approved subject to recommended changes:	
		Not approved at this time:	
	Signed:		
		Chair	Secretary