



Institute of Technology Sligo
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA SLIGEACH

PROGRAMME VALIDATION REPORT

Date of Evaluation: February 25th 2021

Programmes Evaluated: Postgraduate Diploma in Business in Financial Planning

Exit Award: Postgraduate Certificate in Financial Planning

Award title: Postgraduate Diploma in Business in Financial Planning

Unique Programme Reference Number PRN: SG BFINA 009

Panel of Assessors:

Name & title	Job title & place of work	Role on panel
Mr Billy Bennett	VP Academic Affairs & Registrar LYIT	Chairperson
Mr Trevor Prendergast	Head of Department of Accounting and Business Computing, AIT	Academic expert
Mr James Collins	Head of Dept, Business & Financial Services, LIT	Academic expert
Ms Brenda Rogan	Certified Financial Planner™ Professional, Wealth Alliance	Industry/ Employer representative
Dr Michele Glacken	VP Academic Affairs & Registrar	Recording secretary

Declaration Regarding Any Conflicts of Interest: The members of the Panel signed a form confirming that they did not have any conflict of interest.

Meeting groups

1. **Institute Management:** Head of Faculty of Business, Marketing & Social Sciences; Head of Department of Business
2. **Programme development team.** Head of Faculty of Business, Marketing & Social Sciences; Head of Department of Business external programme development team members and LIA representatives.

Persons met by validation panel

Name & title	Role in Institute	Rationale for presence at validation.
Dr Micheal Barrett	Head of Faculty of Business, social sciences	Faculty oversight
Ms Marie Moran	Head of Department of Business	Head of Department of Business
Mr. Pat O’Sullivan	Lecturer Former CEO LIA	Subject Matter Expert
Mr. Gary Connolly	Lecturer	Head of Investment Advisory & Education only - Davy
Mr. Bill Hannon	Chief Academic Officer, LIA	Chief Academic Officer
Mr. David Clancy	Lecturer	Director of Clancy & Associates – Tax Consultants
Mr. Brian Grimes	Lecturer	Head of Actuarial Function Inteasa Sanpaola Life
Mr. Paul Grimes	Lecturer	Chief Executive FPSB Ireland and Chairman of Council – FPSB International
Mr. Jim Connolly	Lecturer	Head of Retirement Planning – AIB Private Banking
Ms. Joanne Keane	Chief Executive Officer, LIA	CEO, LIA
Ms. Eva Lavin	Education Manager, LIA	Education LIA
Ms. Rosaleen Rooney	Quality Systems Collaborative Provision Administrator	IT Sligo Administrator

Validation criteria	Sufficient evidence / Insufficient evidence provided in programme documentation
<p>Rationale for the programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy underpinning the programme e.g. market for programme in the region and its relevance to the region • Graduate profile and employment opportunities for graduates • Rationale for the programme e.g. School's/Institute's strengths/opportunities • Programme Aims and Objectives • Expected intellectual development and Programme learning outcomes • Related existing programmes. 	<p>Clarity over award Title sought. Currently Exit award after successful completion of stage 1 of the programme. The programme teams desire for an embedded award raised.</p>
<p>Condition: If a Minor Award (as distinct from an Exit Award) is sought, a separate APS should be presented in the programme submission</p> <p>Recommendation: Programme title should be Postgraduate Diploma <u>in Business</u> in Financial Planning</p>	
<p>Programme structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery type (semesterised or stage-based) • Proposed mode of delivery (i.e. in-class, on-line, blended, full time and/or part time) • Planned intake numbers (over the full duration of the programme) • Role of placement (N/A) 	<p>Clarity over the duration of the programme number of modules per semester and sequencing of modules provided.</p>
<p>Resources (over the full duration of the programme)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities and human and material resources available to mount the programme • Clarification of any staffing requirements • Location of the delivery • Specific s requirements: lecture rooms, laboratories, library, Information technology and other student supports • Confirmation regarding any new facilities and staffing requirements 	<p>Sufficient evidence provided</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special requirements (e.g. remote access for distance learners) 	
<p>Commendation: Condition: Recommendation:</p>	
<p>Access, Transfer and Progression Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student admission requirements • Progression criteria from one stage to the next and to higher levels on the NFQ • Non-standard entry (e.g. mature candidates and candidates with experiential learning) • Transfer policy into the programme and onto other programmes 	<p>Clarity sought over how requisite IT skills were assessed on application and the requirement for same communicated to future students.</p>
<p>Recommendation: Review programme entry requirements to ensure that these requirements are at a sufficiently advanced level that processes are in place to assess entry requirements relating to IT (especially Excel), and that these requirements are clearly communicated to prospective students. Clarify any sequencing requirements in respect of students taking individual modules.</p>	
<p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A matrix exhibiting the academic pathway and the relationship between modules • The consistency between the programme content, teaching methods and the programme learning outcomes • Balance between the depth and breadth of the programme • Rigour of the academic standard in the final stage of the programme • Student workload • Practice: the role and management of placement or work-based projects. 	<p>Panel raised issues over the level of the Learning outcomes documented as evidenced by the verbs and language deployed in their construction.</p> <p>Potential student workload raised and the implications of same for students with less professional experience discussed with development team.</p> <p>Lecturer delivery time as per APS (2.5hrs per module per week) confirmed by Head of Department.</p>
<p>Recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all MLOs are written to reflect level 9 outcomes 2. Review the Tax and Estate Planning module to ensure it reflects higher order taxation planning and strategy, in addition to tax computations 	

<p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appropriateness of the modes of assessment to be used • The balance between the marks awarded for different assessment modes (e.g. continuous assessment, projects, reports, sit-down examination) • Confirmation that all of the programme learning outcomes are appropriately and adequately assessed within the set of module assessments. 	<p>Some issues raised in relation to balance and clarity of assessment modes.</p>
<p>Recommendation: Review the assessment strategy for the programme to ensure a range of appropriate assessment approaches are documented (e.g., open-book exams) and that details of what constitutes ‘in-class assessment’ is clearly articulated. Ensure that there is an appropriate balance between individual and group assessment</p>	
<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and specialities of staff available to support the programme • Technical and administrative support • Staff development • Industrial/commercial profile of staff • Research and publications 	<p>Due diligence exercised conducted in 2018/19 satisfied Institute of appropriate staffing and support.</p>
<p>Commendation: Condition: Recommendation</p>	
<p>Programme Administration and Quality Assurance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedure for managing programme • Student support student counselling and tutorial arrangements • Aspects of programme which highlight and foster study skills, independent learning and the inculcation of individual responsibility in students 	<p>Panel noted that a policy on linked provision is under development in the Institute. Panel advised Due diligence exercise completed in 2018/19.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU and international aspects if appropriate • Feedback mechanisms e.g. use of surveys, focus groups and follow-up actions. 	
Recommendation: Policy on linked provision be formally approved/adopted through the appropriate channels	

Overall decision of the panel	
<p>Panel outcome: Recommend to Academic Council the programme for approval.</p> <p>The panel commended the programme development team- for a timely well-presented programme proposal. (particularly challenging due to pandemic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rationale and demand for programme clearly articulated -Due diligence process undertaken by IT Sligo (reviewed staffing, resources and QA) - Positive engagement of programme team with panel 	

Chairperson:



Date: 8 March 2021

Secretary: Dr Michele Glacken



Date: 8 March 2021

Programme Schedule

Approved Programme Schedule - SG_BFINA_O09 Postgraduate Diploma in Financial Planning

Stage 1

Delivery	Code	Module Title	Level	Credit	M/E	IL	PT	OL	FO	CA	PF	EXAM	PROJ	PRAC	Total
SEM 1	LIA09001	Principles and Practices of Financial Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 2	LIA09002	Retirement Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 2	LIA09003	Investment Management	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
Credit Total				30											

Semesters Per Stage	Elective Rules Per Stage	Credits Required	Award Percentage
2	0	30	0

Special Regulation

The exit award SG_BFINA_S09 2020 is the embedded award in this programme. This award is achieved by completing the 30 credits in Stage one of this programme. Modules can be taken in any order, the module order in the stage set up is for administrative purposes only.

Stage Exit Award

Post Graduate Certificate in Financial Management

Key

M/E - Mandatory/Elective, PT - Part Time, OL - Online Learning, FO - Formative, CA - Continuous Assessment, PF - Pass/Fail, EXAM - Final Exam, PROJ - Project, PRAC - Practical,

Stage 2

Delivery	Code	Module Title	Level	Credit	M/E	IL	PT	OL	FO	CA	PF	EXAM	PROJ	PRAC	Total
SEM 3	LIA09004	Tax and Estate Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 4	LIA09005	Risk Management and Insurance Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 4	LIA09006	Integrated Personal Financial Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Credit Total				30											

Semesters Per Stage	Elective Rules Per Stage	Credits Required	Award Percentage
2	0	0	0

Special Regulation

Modules can be taken in any order, the module order in the stage set up is for administrative purposes only. Modules can also be taken in stage two without having completed stage one.

Key

M/E - Mandatory/Elective, PT - Part Time, OL - Online Learning, FO - Formative, CA - Continuous Assessment, PF - Pass/Fail, EXAM - Final Exam, PROJ - Project, PRAC - Practical,

Stage 2

Delivery	Code	Module Title	Level	Credit	M/E	IL	PT	OL	FO	CA	PF	EXAM	PROJ	PRAC	Total
SEM 3	LIA09004	Tax and Estate Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 4	LIA09005	Risk Management and Insurance Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	50	0	50	0	0	100
SEM 4	LIA09006	Integrated Personal Financial Planning	09	10	M	13.50	2.50	2.50	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Credit Total				30											

Semesters Per Stage	Elective Rules Per Stage	Credits Required	Award Percentage
2	0	0	0

Special Regulation

Modules can be taken in any order, the module order in the stage set up is for administrative purposes only. Modules can also be taken in stage two without having completed stage one.

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