Independent Programme Review Report

Provider name	DBS
Date of site visit	21 May 2019
Date of report	11 June 2019

Principal programme	Title	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing
	Award	Higher Diploma in Science
	Credit	60
	Duration ¹	Full-time: 1 year (2 semesters of 12 weeks each)
	(years, months, weeks)	Part-time: 2 year (4 semesters of 12 weeks each)

Embedded	Title	Certificate in Information Technology
programme		
	Award	Certificate in Science
	Credit	15
	Duration	Full-time: 1 block of 6 weeks
		Part-time: 2 blocks of 12 and 6 weeks

1	Ir	troduction			
2 Ind		ndependent Review Process	5		
	2.1	Evidence Perused	5		
	2.2	Agenda	7		
	2.3	Persons Met	7		
	Staf	f, Students and Graduates with whom the Panel Met	7		
3	R	eview of the Programme Review Report	10		
	3.1	Fitness for Purpose of the Programme	10		
	3.2	Achievement of the Programme of its Stated Objectives	10		
	3.3	Learner Profile	11		
	3.4	Learner Performance	11		
	3.5	Quality of the Learning Environment	13		
	3.6	Suitability of Learner Workload	14		
	3.7	Quality Assurance Arrangements	15		
	3.8	Proposed Modifications	15		
4	E	valuation of the Modified Programme	16		
	4.1	Report	16		
5	0	Outcome of the Review	16		
	5.1	Summary	16		
	5.2	Recommendations	16		
6	Р	anel	16		
7	A	ppendix 1: Independent Programme Review Report	17		
Pa	art 1		17		
	Eval	luators	17		
	7.1	Principal Programme: Higher Diploma in Science in Computing	18		
	7.2	Embedded Programme: Certificate in Information Technology	20		
	Oth	er noteworthy features of the application	22		
Pa	art 2	Evaluation against the validation criteria	23		
	7.3	Criterion1: The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	23		
	7.4 QQI	Criterion 2: The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the awards sought	23		
		Criterion 3: The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, cational, professional and employment objectives)			
	7.6	Criterion 4: The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are			
	sati	sfactory	.27		

	7.7	Criterion 5: The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose.	29
	7.8 imple	Criterion 6: There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to ment the programme as planned	34
	7.9 planno	Criterion 7: There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as	35
	7.10 learne	Criterion 8: The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's	37
	7.11	Criterion 9: There are sound teaching and learning strategies	39
	7.12	Criterion 10: There are sound assessment strategies	40
	7.13	Criterion 11: Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared 43	for
	7.14	Criterion 12: The programme is well managed	45
8.	Ove	erall recommendation to DBS	48
	8.1	Reasons for the overall recommendation	48
	8.2	Summary of recommendations	49
	8.3	Summary of commendations	50
9	Dec	claration of Evaluator's Interests	51
	9.1	Disclaimer	51
Pa	art 3: P	roposed programme schedules	52
1(ο Δ	oppendix 2: Agenda	56

1 Introduction

The scope of the review encompassed the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme offered by DBS, which is placed at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications. Also under review is the Certificate in Information Technology, an embedded programme which supports a major EXIT award at Level 8 on the Framework. Programme approval and revalidation will be required for the programmes from 1st of September 2019.

The programmes detailed in this Terms of Reference document are due for review under the QQI requirement for periodic monitoring and review, which also requires review to conform with recent policies, including QQI Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training (QQI, 2016), Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines (QQI, 2016) and in accordance with the QQI Programme Review Manual 2016/2017.

As detailed in QQI's *Core Statutory Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines* (pp 11-12) and the *Programme Review Manual 2016/2017*, programme monitoring and review is taken as an opportunity to:

- Ensure that the programme remains appropriate, and to create a supportive and effective learning environment
- Ensure that the programme achieves the objectives set for it and responds to the needs of learners and the changing needs of society
- Review the learner workload
- Review learner progression and completion rates
- Review the effectiveness of procedures for the assessment of learners
- Inform updates of the programme content; delivery modes; teaching and learning methods;
 learning supports and resources; and information provided to learners
- Update third party, industry or other stakeholders relevant to the programme (s)
- Review quality assurance arrangements that are specific to that programme.

Objectives of the Programme Review

The QQI *Programme Review Manual 2016/2017* states that the specific objectives of a Programme Review are to evaluate the programme as implemented in light of the provider's experience of providing the programme over the previous five years with a view to determining:

- (1) What has been learned about the programme, as an evolving process (by which learners acquire knowledge, skill and competence), from the experience of providing it for the past five or so years?
- (2) What can be concluded from a quantitative analysis of admission data, attrition rates by stage, completion rates and grades achieved by module, stage and overall?
- (3) What reputation do the programme and provider have with stakeholders (learners, staff, funding agencies, regulatory bodies, professional bodies, communities of practice, employers, other education and training providers) and in particular what views do the

- stakeholders have about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats concerning the programme's history and its future?
- (4) What challenges and opportunities are likely to arise in the next five years and what modifications to the programme are required in light of these?
- (5) Whether the programme in light of its stated objectives and intended learning outcomes demonstrably addresses explicit learning needs of target learners and society?
- (6) What other modifications need to be made to the programme and its awards to improve or reorient it?
- (7) Whether the programme (modified or unmodified) meets the current QQI validation criteria (and sub-criteria) or, if not, what modifications need to be made to the programme to meet the current criteria?
- (8) Whether the provider continues to have the capacity and capability to provide the programme as planned (considering, for example, historical and projected enrolment numbers and profile and availability and adequacy of physical, financial and human resources) without risk of compromising educational standards or quality of provision in light of its other commitments (i.e. competing demands) and strategy?
- (9) What is the justification (or otherwise) for the provider continuing to offer the programme (modified or unmodified)?
- (10) What changes need to be made to related polices, criteria and procedures (including QA procedures)?

2 Independent Review Process

2.1 Evidence Perused

The review process for the programmes was led by the Programme Leaders with the Programme Team in order to critically analyse all aspects of these programmes. The consultation embraced a wide range of relevant issues including:

- Programme rationale
- Programme aims, objectives and learning outcomes
- Programme structure
- Module choice and content
- Teaching, learning and assessment methodologies
- Access, transfer and progression

The guiding principles underpinning this review were:

- That assessment of learning achieved shall adhere to the relevant QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013
- That the proposal for the programmatic review of the programmes has been developed and approved internally as a result of the DBS quality assurance procedures
- That the proposed programme will assist DBS and the School of Arts in the achievement of DBS's mission and strategy
- That the programme learning outcomes will meet the needs of current and future learners, employers and other stakeholders

 That teaching and learning or research activity at any level shall be conducted in a manner morally and professionally ethical.

The Programme Team has engaged in a significant consultative process to ensure that the programmes provide an appropriate and relevant mix of academic content and practical application to address the needs of the various stakeholders. This process was informed by consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including current learners, external examiners, placement and employer organisations, faculty, current reports by government agencies on labour force requirements, as well as a competitor analysis of similar programmes, in so far as these were available. The College's Teaching and Learning strategy and Assessment Strategy was used to inform the development of the programme. See Section 7.2 of this report for more information

The results and conclusions of this review process informed the proposed changes to the programmes which are outlined in this report. DBS provided the panel with a self-evaluation report for each programme (hereafter referred to as Programme Review Reports) and access to documentation before and during the site visit. Requests for further documentation were facilitated in a timely manner and supported by further explanations where appropriate.

Membership of Provider's Review Team

Name	Job Title with the Provider
David Williams	Course Director
Dr Shazia A Afzal	Programme Leader (Higher Diploma in Science in Computing and MSc
	in Information Systems with Computing)
	Lecturer: several modules within both programmes
Paul Laird	Team Lead (HDip Science in Computing revalidation)
	Lecturer
Dr Shahram Aziz Sazi	Lecturer: Data Analytics.
Clive Gargan	Lecturer: Principles of Programming, Object-Oriented Programming,
	Database Design and Development, Tools and Technologies for DevOps
Harnaik Dhoot	Lecturer: Object-Oriented Programming, Advanced Programming,
	Mobile Application Development, DevOps Practices and Principles,
	DevOps Project Management and Software Engineering
John Rowley	Lecturer and Subject Specialist: in the areas of Web, Mobile and
	Databases
Obinna Izima	Lecturer: Operating Systems and Networks, DevOps Practices and
	Principles, Tools and Technologies for DevOps
Rory O'Donnell	Lecturer: Principles of Programming, Object-Oriented Programming,
	Advanced Programming
Claire Caulfield	Lecturer: Object Oriented Programming, DevOps Project Management
Derek Mizak	Lecturer: Operating Systems and Networks, Tools and Technologies for
	DevOps
Maria Barry	Lecturer: Information Systems Development and Management
Brian Raymond	Lecturer: Information Systems Development and Management
Dermot Boyle	Lecturer: Information Systems Development and Management
Ehtisham Yasin	Lecturer: Mobile Application Development
Bernadette Higgins	Lecturer: Web Design and Development
Damien Kettle	Lecturer: Work Placement / Project
Lori Johnston	Registrar

Dr Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar
Dr Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Dr Lee Richardson	Data Analytics and Reporting Manager
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Jane Buggle	Deputy Librarian
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School Operations
Darragh Breathnach	Head of Academic Operations
Anita Dwyer	School Executive Officer
Eimear Forde /	Programme Coordinators
Viviana Montero	
Grant Goodwin	Quality Assurance Officer
Sarah Sharkey	Student Retention Officer

2.2 Agenda

See Appendix 2.

2.3 Persons Met

Staff, Students and Graduates with whom the Panel Met

1. Evaluation of Programme Proposed for Revalidation against QQI validation Criterion 1. The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programmes (s)

2. Evaluation of the Programme Review Process and Report

Name	Job Title with the Provider
Andrew Conlan-Trant	Executive Dean (for session 1 only)
David Williams	Course Director
Dr Shazia Afzal	MSc Programme Lead
Paul Laird	HDIP Programme Lead
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Lori Johnston	Registrar
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School (Acting)
Dr Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and
	Learning
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Dr Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer

3. Evaluation of Programme Proposed for Revalidation against QQI validation criteria- Programme Rationale and overall structure

Name	Job Title with the Provider
David Williams	Course Director
Dr Shazia Afzal	MSc Programme Lead
Paul Laird	HDip Programme Lead
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Lori Johnston	Registrar

Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School (Acting)
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Dr Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer
Tanya Balfe	Admissions Manager

4. Panel Meeting with Student and Graduate Representatives

Name and Status		
Martin Behan, HDip student - Part-time		
Coleman Ifeanyi, MSc current student - Sept Intake		
Pritesh Joshi, MSc current student - Sept Intake		
Naghma Khan, MSc current student - Jan Intake)		
Yamuna Kuberappa, HDip graduate - Full-time		
Nitanshu Rehani, MSc graduate		
Ruben Ruiz Torres, MSc current student - Sept Intake		
Gustavo Reis, HDip graduate - Part-time		
Nisar Sayed, MSc current student		
Niall Scannell, HDip student - Part-time		

5. Curriculum, Learning Teaching & Assessment - Proposed Programme: Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

Name	Job Title with the Provider
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Dr Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and
	Learning
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer
Dr Shazia Afzal	MSc Programme Lead, Lecturer, (HDip) Web and Cloud Application
	Development, Principles of Programming, (MSc) Programming for
	Information Systems, Advanced Databases
Paul Laird	HDip Programme Lead, Lecturer (HDip) Advanced Programming,
	(MSc) Enterprise Information Systems & Networks and Systems
	Administration

Faculty Team:		
Name	Job Title with the Provider	
Shahram Azizi Sazi	Lecturer (MSc): Data Analytics	
Maria Barry	Lecturer (HDip& MSc): Information Systems Development and	
	Management	
Claire Caulfield	Lecturer (HDip): Object Oriented Programming, DevOps Project	
	Management	
Dr Harnaik Dhoot	Lecturer (MSc): Object-Oriented Programming, Advanced	
	Programming, Mobile Application Development, DevOps Practices	
	and Principles, DevOps Project Management and Software	
	Engineering	
Clive Gargan	Lecturer (HDip): Principles of Programming, Object-Oriented	
	Programming, Database Design and Development, Tools and	
	Technologies for DevOps	

Lecturer (HDip& MSc): Web Design and Development	
(MSc) Project Supervisor	
Lecturer (MSc): Operating Systems and Networks, DevOps Practices	
and Principles, Tools and Technologies for DevOps	
Lecturer (MSc): Applied Research Methods	
Lecturer (HDip): Work Placement / Project	
Faculty Manager	
(MSc &HDip) Project Supervisor	
Lecturer (HDip): Principles of Programming, Object-Oriented	
Programming, Advanced Programming	
Lecturer (MSc): Research Methods, Dissertation Coordinator	
Lecturer (MSc): Web, Mobile and Databases	

6. College Tour for the Panel

Name	Job Title with the Provider
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience

7. Resourcing and Supports for Learners

Name	Job Title with the Provider	
David Williams	Course Director	
Dr Shazia Afzal	MSc Programme Lead	
Paul Laird	HDIP Programme Lead	
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes	
Lori Johnston	Registrar	
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School (Acting)	
Dr Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and	
	Learning	
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience	
Jane Buggle	Deputy Librarian	
Dr Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar	
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer	
Darragh Breathneach	Head of Academic Operations	

8. Oral feedback to Senior DBS Staff

Name	Job Title with the Provider
Andrew Conlan-Trant	Executive Dean
David Williams	Course Director
Dr Shazia Afzal	MSc Programme Lead
Paul Laird	HDIP Programme Lead
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Lori Johnston	Registrar
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School (Acting)

Dr Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and
	Learning
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Darragh Breathneach	Head of Academic Operations

3 Review of the Programme Review Report

In general the panel found that the documents provided were well structured, clear in the presentation of facts and easy to read.

The contents followed the template provided in Section 5.2 of the Programme Review Manual 2016/2017. The panel complemented the reflective nature of the review undertaken, and the SWOT analysis provided as prescribed by the guidelines.

There follows a summary of the commentary on nine major areas of the reports and findings in relation to each area.

3.1 Fitness for Purpose of the Programme

The panel evaluated the observations, comments and suggestions from internal and external stakeholders and these were duly factored into the review process. Internal stakeholders consisted of students and staff (academic, support and administrative).

The Programme Team have engaged with the professional bodies as well as within industry to ensure the programme is appropriate for graduates who wish to pursue a variety of paths. The key stakeholders in respect of programmes in computing are employers, with progression opportunities also an important consideration. In the design of the programme, Dublin Business School carried out consultations on the programme design and module content with a range of industry stakeholders, as identified in section 1.5 of the programme document.

The summary of employer feedback regarding the programme and its proposed new incarnation are contained in the Survey Report in the supporting documents folder.

The review process was also informed by the comparator analysis undertaken by DBS (with both national and international programmes), a review of External Examiner reports and feedback obtained from industry and professional organisations.

The panel found that the consultation process had been comprehensive and concluded that the proposed programmes were fit for purpose. Further commentary is provided in Sections 7.6 and 7.7 of this report.

3.2 Achievement of the Programme of its Stated Objectives The aims, objectives and graduate profiles of the programme were outlined.

It was stated that this programme is aimed at learners who wish to specialise in computing with a view to entering ICT industry, to progress professionally or to undertake further studies. The Higher Diploma in Science in Computing is designed for learners interested in pursuing careers in the increasingly diverse area of computing. It has been designed to enable learners to acquire core ICT skills and computing expertise which will enable graduates play an active role in Software Development, Mobile Applications Development, Web and Cloud, IT Infrastructure and Networking or DevOps.

The broad nature of this Higher Diploma in Science in Computing provides flexibility to learners as they have a theoretical knowledge of a range of computing disciplines combined with experience of designing technical solutions using a wide range of tools and communications. Learners will be capable of dealing with diverse intrinsic and extrinsic ICT realities in a creative manner to ensure sustainability and growth.

The panel found that the programme objectives and outcomes were clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought. Further commentary is included in Sections 7.6 and 7.7 of this report.

3.3 Learner Profile

This Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme is aimed at learners who wish to specialise in computing with a view to entering ICT industry, to progress professionally or to undertake further studies. The Higher Diploma in Science in Computing is designed for learners interested in pursuing careers in the increasingly diverse area of computing. It has been designed to enable learners to acquire core ICT skills and computing expertise which will enable graduates play an active role in Software Development, Mobile Applications Development, Web and Cloud, IT Infrastructure and Networking or DevOps.

The broad nature of this degree provides flexibility to learners as they have a theoretical knowledge of a range of computing disciplines combined with experience of designing technical solutions using a wide range of tools and communications. Learners will be capable of dealing with diverse intrinsic and extrinsic ICT realities in a creative manner to ensure sustainability and growth.

The Higher Diploma in Science in Computing is targeted at the following learners:

- Graduates with a Level 8 degree in a cognate or non-cognate discipline from a recognised third level institution who wish to specialise in this area.
- Candidates will ideally be able to demonstrate technical or mathematical problem-solving skills as part of previous programme learning.
- For candidates who do not have a Level 8 qualification the college operates a Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL) scheme meaning applicants who do not meet the normal academic entry requirements may be considered based on relevant work or other experience.

3.4 Learner Performance

A quantitative analysis was provided for the existing Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme covering the areas specified in the Programme Review Manual 2016/2017 Section 3.

Enrolments and Applications

Applications and enrolment numbers for the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing since the last programmatic review were provided in the documentation. A total number of 532 students have enrolled on the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme, in full-time and part-time mode, over the previous four academic years — with enrolments ranging from 79 in academic year 2015/16 to 143 in academic year 2018/19 (with the highest enrolment of 179 in 2017/18).

Data in the report was provided on the total enrolment numbers for the last four years broken down by mode, nationality, demographic and gender – the specific information for learner admission numbers per academic year, to 2018/2019 (including full-time and part-time mode), was provided in supporting documentation pack.

The majority of places on the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing are based on the Springboard tender. Therefore, the number of places available on the programme is based on HEA funding and so not all applicants are guaranteed places on the programme. Prior to 2017/18 the programme was aimed at Learners who were not in employment. In 2017/18 however, funding for the programme was offered to those in employment in the ICT sector who wished to upskill, which accounts for the increase in numbers from 2016/17 to 2017/18. In 2017/18 there was a reduction in funding for full-time ICT Learners as the economy was so buoyant, which accounts for the decrease in numbers from 2017/18 to 2018/19.

Further commentary is provided in Section 7.6 of this report.

• Attrition, Transfer, Progression, Completion, Drop Outs and Repeat Learners

Successful completion of each stage of the programme and progression through to graduation is a critical indicator of a successful programme. A comprehensive analysis was provided for the Higher Diploma in Science in Information Systems with Computing programme, including reasons for learners dropping out or being academically withdrawn. Data was provided for retention and progression statistics from 2015-2018, and the panel noted that some efforts had been made by the programme team to determine the rationale for learner drop-out/academic withdrawal.

The composition and role of the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU) was outlined to the panel. The panel considered this a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression.

The documentation indicated that the percentage of students who pass each programme year — which dropped from 78.5% in 2015/16 to 62% in 2017/18 [with a significant proportion of learners not actually taking the exams - 12.7% non-attendees in 2015/16 increasing to 26.3% in 2017/18]. Data was also provided for those learners who availed of the exit award (5.7% overall), and the leaner non activity rates on the programme.

Benchmarking of the programme's pass, fail and non-active rates in relation to entry qualifications for the academic years 2014/15-2017/18 was it conducted as this was not supported by the current learner management system – there are plans to replace this system in Autumn 2019.

Further commentary is included in Section 7.13 of this report.

Analysis of Grades and QQI Classifications

An analysis was provided for the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme grades and its QQI classifications, which included benchmarking of the programme's pass, fail and non-active rates in relation to entry qualifications for the academic years 2015/16-2017/18.

For the period 2015/16 to 2017/18 the programme shows a global pass rate of 67.35% (varying from 78.5% in 2015/16 to 62% in 2017/18) with 7.71% of Learners failing the programme and 24.94% of Learners non-active. This pass rate is well below the DBS benchmark of 80%, and pass rates fell somewhat with the change to PT, as the course is very intense for learners in employment along with their studies.

The overall award classifications by academic year from 2015/16 to 2017/18 are provided in the programme review documentation. Specifically, award classifications of the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing, for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18 as a whole, indicate that

- 53.91% of learners have graduated with first class honours
- 23.44% with upper second class honours
- 9.38% with lower second class honours
- 13.28% with a pass award

Analysis of this data reveals that the percentage of First Class Honours awards is higher than the DBS average of 38% for Higher Diploma programmes, and both are higher than the average for private providers (28%). In contrast, the percentage of Upper Second Class Honours awards is lower than the DBS average (45%) and the average for private providers (55%). Similarly, the percentage of Upper Second Class Honours awards (9%) is lower than the average for both the DBS Higher Diploma programmes (10%) and private provider Higher Diploma programmes (13%). In contrast, the percentage of Pass awards (13%) is higher than the average for both the DBS Higher Diploma programmes (8%) and private provider Higher Diploma programmes (4%). Due to the nature of Higher Diploma, it is considered that some learners have aptitude for ICT skills, particularly programming, and achieve good grades which contribute to these award classifications.

An exit award of a Certificate in Information Technology is embedded in the programme and is comprised of three 5 ECTS credit modules. Learners who do not complete the programme but successfully complete these three modules may choose to exit the programme with this 15 credit award in recognition of their learning. From 2015/16 to 2018/19, 22 Learners (5.66% of enrolled Learners) exited the programme with such a Certificate.

Refer to Section 7.12of this report for further background.

3.5 Quality of the Learning Environment

Commentary was provided on the teaching strategy, the use of guest speakers, the use of Moodle as a virtual learning environment and the current and planned developments for the blended learning elements of the programme.

A tour, including a short presentation of the facilities and services, was provided of the College library for the panel.

There appeared to be a difference between the College's perception of the DBS student laptop provision (mobile labs) and that of the students met by the panel. These particular students indicated that they had not used DBS laptops/mobile labs.

In the meeting with learners and graduates there were some resource issues identified, predominantly in relation to the technology set-up, and specific issues identified included as projectors not working, laptops for computer based exams not charged, Moodle not able to take assessment file (file size too large), and the timing of Moodle update in reading week (when learner access to class material required). Learners indicated that this is an area where improvement could be helpful.

Programme-specific arrangements for monitoring progress and guiding, informing and caring for learners were also discussed. An outline of physical facilities and resources was also included in the

documentation. The panel concluded that additional resources/oversight of the learning environment, and the development of a teaching and learning strategy for the programme, would support the College meet the needs of the learners.

Further commentary is provided in Section 7.11 of this report.

3.6 Suitability of Learner Workload

The suitability of the learner workload is one of the areas monitored by the programme team through feedback from learners, alumni, internal moderators, external examiners and through review and discussion at team meetings. The panel recommends that a diagram of programme structure (with regard to the streams) would be very helpful in programme documents to fully appreciate the overall programme structure and schedule. The overview of programme modules provided in the programme document would be very useful for the students in the Student Handbook.

The panel explored the learner contact hours for the individual module descriptors. From the discussions with the programme team, the panel considers that the scheduling of assessment across the programme's semesters needs to be defined by the programme team, and published for access by all relevant stakeholders. The students interviewed said that the hand-in times sometimes came too close together. A published assessment schedule may alert academic staff and students to deadlines/scheduling clashes or excessive clustering of due dates, and the need to provide timely feedback to learners to manage their time and performance.

Feedback from students and graduates indicated that the programme assessment workload was heavy and would be better supported with a more explicit statement of the assessment schedule, and the subsequent provision of timely feedback. The panel further noted the feedback from students confirmed the willingness of teaching staff to address any issues brought to them.

Refer to Sections 7.12 and 7.13 for further background.

The programme document stated that all assessment for the programme conforms to the DBS assessment regulations, which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013. The panel recommends that the assessment strategy is developed for the programme to provide clarity regarding examination and assessment processes and requirements for the all modules, and the programme in its entirety, and to ensure its compliance with the QQI requirements.

The evaluation of assessment is based on feedback from learners, external examiners, employers, as well as feedback from reviews and validations. It is the subsequent actions taken to 'close the loop' that should have a positive impact on improving the effectiveness of assessment procedures – the College needs to ensure that it is closing the loop and addressing the issues identified in feedback processes.

The panel found the assessment processes relating to the programme need to be reviewed, in the context of a programme assessment strategy and overall assessment schedule, to ensure it is appropriate.

Further commentary is provided in Section 7.12of this report.

3.7 Quality Assurance Arrangements

All DBS quality assurance policies and procedures are detailed in the Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH). This is the first point of reference for all stakeholders involved in the design and monitoring of programmes. The programmes under review have been designed to comply with the DBS QAH and, in turn, with QQI's statutory quality assurance guidelines with respect to governance; quality assurance; assessment; and access, transfer and progression. Programme-specific quality assurance considerations include supporting the research project/dissertation and work-based learning opportunities.

DBS participated in the Pilot Re-Engagement process for re-approval of QA procedures with QQI in 2017/18 and has submitted an application for full Re-Engagement to QQI in early 2019. Process, policies and procedures were reviewed and the QAH is being updated as part of the re-engagement application and self-evaluation process.

Evidentiary documentation of the implementation of the programme quality assurance arrangements were provided for the panel in the documentation pack. The panel concluded that the quality assurance arrangements applied to the programmes are generally effective, however, the College needs to ensure that it is taking all the steps to close the quality assurance loop and address the issues identified through the application of the quality assurance feedback processes.

A new mechanism for processing external examiners comments was identified to the panel—this process will serve to close the loop on addressing the issues identified during the process.

3.8 Proposed Modifications

These following changes are proposed by the programme review. The implementation of these changes is considered in the review of the programme document in Section 4.

Overview:

- The programme will now be mapped to both the Science and Computing Award Standards.
- The existing Software Development, Web and Cloud Technologies, IT Infrastructure and Networking specialisations are to be kept in their current form on this programme;
- It is proposed that two new elective specialisations will be introduced in Development and Operations (DevOps) Management and Mobile Application Development.
- All modules will be updated as appropriate in relation to content, syllabus, reading lists, etc.

Detail of proposed changes to modules and content:

The new Development and Operations (DevOps) Management specialisation is built around specialist modules of 20 credits which will be delivered in Semester 2 Block 1 (Full-Time) as detailed in the Programme Document.

Special Consideration: To consider objective 10 having regard to the new QQI QA guidelines which were published since the programmes were last validated.

Professional Consideration: There are no professional considerations. The programme is not recognised by or affiliated to or accredited by any professional body.

4 Evaluation of the Modified Programme

4.1 Report

See Appendix 1.

5 Outcome of the Review

5.1 Summary

5.2 Recommendations

Principal	Title	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing
programme		
	Award	Higher Diploma in Science
	Credit	60
	Recommendation	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions

Embedded	Title	Certificate in Information Technology	
programme			
	Award	Certificate in Science	
	Credit	15	
	Recommendation	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions	

6 Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Marion Palmer	Chair	Former Head of Department of Technology
		and Psychology, Institute of Art, Design and
		Technology (IADT), Dún Laoghaire
Dr Brendan Ryder	Academic in	Head of Department of Visual and Human
	Subject area	Centred Computing, Dundalk Institute of
		Technology (DkIT)
Dr Simon Caton	Academic in	Assistant Professor, School of Computer
	Subject area	Science, University College Dublin
Deirdre Casey	Academic in	Lecturer of Mathematics and Effective
	Subject area	Learning and Development, Griffith College
		Cork
Thomas Dowling	Academic in	Head of Department of Computing,
	Subject area	Letterkenny IT
Catherine Sweeney	Professional/	Manager Production Engineering,
	Employer	Facebook Ireland, Dublin
	Representative	
Joshua Cassidy	Learner	BSc in Computing, National College of
	representative on	Ireland, Mayor Square, Dublin
	the panel	
Mary Doyle	Secretary	Independent Academic QA Consultant

All members of the panel have declared that they are independent of DBS and have no conflict of interest.

7 Appendix 1: Independent Programme Review Report

Part 1

Provider name	DBS
Date of site visit	21 May 2019
Date of report	

	First intake	Last intake
Proposed Enrolment interval	September 2019	September 2023
Maximum number of annual	3 intakes:	
intakes	September	
	January	
	JanuaryMarch/April	

Principal	Title	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing	
programme			
	Award	Higher Diploma in Science	
	Credit	60	
	Duration ²	Full-time: 1 year (2 semesters of 12 weeks each)	
	(years, months, weeks)	Part-time: 2 year (4 semesters of 12 weeks each)	
	Recommendation	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions	

Embedded	Title	Certificate in Information Technology
programme		
	Award	Certificate in Science
	Credit	15
	Duration ³	Full-time: 1 block of 6 weeks
	(years, months, weeks)	Part-time: 2 blocks of 12 and 6 weeks
	Recommendation	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions

Evaluators

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Marion Palmer	Chair	Former Head of Department of Technology
		and Psychology, Institute of Art, Design and
		Technology (IADT), Dún Laoghaire
Dr Brendan Ryder	Academic in	Head of Department of Visual and Human
	Subject area	Centred Computing, Dundalk Institute of
		Technology (DkIT)
Dr Simon Caton	Academic in	Assistant Professor, School of Computer
	Subject area	Science, University College Dublin
Deirdre Casey	Academic in	Lecturer of Mathematics and Effective
	Subject area	Learning and Development, Griffith College
		Cork

 $^{^{2}\}mbox{Expressed}$ in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion

³Expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion

Thomas Dowling	Academic in	Head of Department of Computing,
	Subject area	Letterkenny IT
Catherine Sweeney	Professional/	Manager Production Engineering,
	Employer	Facebook Ireland, Dublin
	Representative	
Joshua Cassidy	Learner	BSc in Computing, National College of
	representative on	Ireland, Mayor Square, Dublin
	the panel	
Mary Doyle	Secretary	Independent Academic QA Consultant

7.1 Principal Programme: Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

Names of Centres Where the Programmes are to be provided		Maximum number of learners	Minimum number of learners
DBS: Dublin Campus		300	10
Target learner groups	The Higher Diploma in S learners with the followir Level 8 primary honou level in any disciplin institution or equivale	ng entry qualificat ors Bachelor's deg e from a recogr	ions: ree at least pass
	 Candidates will ideally or mathematical pro- previous programme le technical, numerate de ranking in any orde programme. 	be able to demo oblem-solving sk earning. Typically, egrees are likely	ills as part of holders of more to gain a higher
	 For candidates who d the college operates a Learning (RPEL) schem meet the normal acad be considered base experience. 	Recognition of Formation of Formati	Prior Experiential ants who do not quirements may
	The Higher Diploma in Sci course for non-computin core ICT skills and comp graduates play an active Mobile Applications De Infrastructure and Netwo	ng graduates who uting expertise w e role in Softwar velopment, Web	wish to acquire which will enable bevelopment,
	Graduates will, upon conhave the skills necessary computations and informapplication development infrastructures and particle career path in the technology.	ary to carry ou mation processing ent, support cipate in ICT proje	nt industry-level ng, system and modern IT cts and pursue a
	The Higher Diploma in graduates capable of d		

	extrinsic technological realities in a creative manner to ensure sustainability and career growth. In this way, this programme is aimed at those who wish to specialise in the field of ICT with a view to entering industry, progressing professionally or to undertake postgraduate studies in a related field.
Number of learners per intake	
Countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and Part-time
The teaching and learning	Classroom lectures
modalities	Case-based learning
	Practical skills sessions
	Workshops
	Tutorials
	Individual and group work
	Synchronous and asynchronous learning
Brief synopsis of the programme	Ireland has an exceptionally strong ICT services sector with
(e.g. who it is for, what is it for,	a highly creative and talented workforce, an open economy
what is involved for learners, what	and a competitive corporate tax environment. As a result,
it leads to.)	there is a continuing need for well-educated staff that have
	skills and competencies in a wide range of ICT management,
	innovation and operational areas. Ireland is a very profitable
	location for ICT services, due to the combination of high
	productivity and a cost base that is very competitive with other locations, which have similarly sophisticated
	ecosystems.
	Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 and the Expert Group
	on Future Skills Need 2019 identify a need for further
	education in this area to fill the skills gap, which arises in start-up, indigenous and multinational companies. The
	shortage of ICT talent is potentially significant for a number
	of sectors where ICT professionals (e.g. programmers,
	software engineers, web designers and others), ICT
	managers and ICT technicians are required.
	The programme is aimed at both domestic and international learners who seek an underpinning in key ICT theories,
	concepts as well as ICT processes and skills. The programme
	accommodates a wide audience of learners whose specific
	interests in Computing and specific ICT areas, such as
	Software Development, Mobile Technologies, Web and
	Cloud, IT Infrastructure and Networking or DevOps. This
	ensures learners acquire an integrated, balanced, and
	dynamic ICT education enabling the development of ICT
	knowledge, including previously acquired knowledge and
	experience. The programme engenders an awareness of the
	importance of transferable and cross enterprise skills
	required of competitive organisations and which stimulate
	sustainable and diverse careers in ICT. This programme is a
	1-year full-time or 2- year part-time programme.

Specifications for teaching staff	Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma or Masters and/or PhD in the following areas: • Software Engineering & Development		
	 IT Infrastructure and Networking Cloud Computing Web Development Data Management & Analytics Information Security Individuals with Level 8 honours bachelor degrees in the above disciplines, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue 		
	of significant senior industry experience may also be considered.		
Specifications for the ratio of	Staff to learner ratio	Learning activity type	
learners to teaching-staff	1/50 Classroom sessions		
	1/25	Workshops	
	1/25	Practical lab sessions	
	2.84/60 =	0.047: 1	

7.2 Embedded Programme: Certificate in Information Technology

Names of Centres Where the Programmes are to be provided		Maximum	Minimum	
		number of learners	number of learners	
DRS: Dublin Compus		300	10	
DBS: Dublin Campus Target learner groups	The Certificate in Information	mation Technolo	gy is aimed at	
	level in any disciplin	 Level 8 primary honours Bachelor's degree at least pass level in any discipline from a recognised third level institution or equivalent qualification. 		
	or mathematical pr previous programme more technical, num	 Candidates will ideally be able to demonstrate technical or mathematical problem-solving skills as part of previous programme learning. Typically, holders of more technical, numerate degrees are likely to gain a higher ranking in any order of merit in selection for the programme. 		
	For candidates who can the college operates and Learning (RPEL) schen meet the normal acan considered based on the considered bassed on the considered based on the considered based on the consi	a Recognition of F ne meaning applic demic entry requi	Prior Experiential cants who do not rements may be	
	award within the Higher which is a conversion cou who wish to acquire core which will enable graduate Development, Mobile Ap	The Certificate in Information Technology is an embedded award within the Higher Diploma in Science in Computing, which is a conversion course for non-computing graduates who wish to acquire core ICT Skills and computing expertise which will enable graduates play an active role in Software Development, Mobile Applications Development, Web and Cloud, It Infrastructure and Networking or DevOps.		

	The Certificate comprises of Principles of Programming, Information Systems Development and Management, Database Design and Development, offering learners skills in development of Information Systems in a modern computing environment, database knowledge and the fundamentals of object-oriented programming.
	Graduates will, upon completion of this programme, will have the skills necessary to carry out industry-level computations and information processing, system and application development, support modern IT infrastructures and participate in ICT projects and pursue a career path in the technology-driven world.
	The Certificate in Information Technology graduates will have the skills to design and develop structured programs in a modern programming environment utilising appropriate languages, design and implement a robust database system, and understand the software development life cycle across the ICT industry.
Number of learners per intake	N/a
Countries for provision	Ireland
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and Part-time
The teaching and learning modalities	 Classroom lectures Case-based learning Practical skills sessions Workshops Tutorials Individual and group work Synchronous and asynchronous learning
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	Ireland has an exceptionally strong ICT services sector with a highly creative and talented workforce, an open economy and a competitive corporate tax environment. As a result, there is a continuing need for well-educated staff that have skills and competencies in a wide range of ICT management, innovation and operational areas. Ireland is a very profitable location for ICT services, due to the combination of high productivity and a cost base that is very competitive with other locations, which have similarly sophisticated ecosystems.
	Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 and the Expert Group on Future Skills Need 2019 identify a need for further education in this area to fill the skills gap, which arises in start-up, indigenous and multinational companies. The shortage of ICT talent is potentially significant for a number of sectors where ICT professionals (e.g. programmers, software engineers, web designers and others), ICT managers and ICT technicians are required.
	This programme accommodates a wide audience of learners who wish to upskill in ICT and Computing, but who find the specialised and advanced technical content of the streams

	1 .	tho need to withdraw from the ons. The cert will not directly
Specifications for teaching staff	Postgraduate Diploma or Modeling following areas: Software Engineering & Development Cloud Computing Web Development Data Management & Analyte Information Security Individuals with Level 8 hone above disciplines, who are ex	rking
Specifications for the ratio of	Staff to learner ratio	Learning activity type
learners to teaching-staff	1/50	Classroom sessions
	1/25	Workshops
	1/25	Practical lab sessions
	0.48/60 =	= 0.008:1

Other noteworthy features of the application

Part 2 Evaluation against the validation criteria

7.3 Criterion1: The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub criteria
Yes		a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44 (7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.
Yes		b) The application for validation is signed by the provider's chief executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed.
Yes		c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. ⁴

As an established provider of higher education programmes, DBS has met the prerequisites (section 44 (7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of these programmes. It was noted that DBS has in place procedures for access, transfer and progression.

DBS has also established arrangements for the Protection of Enrolled Learners (PEL) which have been approved by QQI.

DBS participated in the Pilot Re-Engagement process for re-approval of QA procedures with QQI in 2017/18 and has submitted an application for full Re-Engagement to QQI in early 2019. Process, policies and procedures were reviewed as part of the re-engagement application and self-evaluation process.

Within the programme documentation provided, DBS provided a copy of the letter to be submitted to QQI with the application for the revalidation of the programmes. The letter contained the signature and declaration required under sub-criteria 1b) and 1c).

Commendation (s): #1 (reference section 8.3)

7.4 Criterion 2: The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria	
Yes		 The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly. 	
Yes		b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.	
Yes		(i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.	
Yes		c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award (s).	

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		d) The award title (s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of
res		QQI's Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.
		e) The award title (s) is otherwise legitimate for
Yes		example it must comply with applicable statutory,
		regulatory and professional body requirements.
		f) The programme title and any embedded
		programme titles are
Yes	Typo regarding embedded award	(i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award
165	programme title was noted in the	sought.
	Programme Schedule – Certificate	(ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the
Yes	in Information Technology to be	purpose of informing prospective learners
	reflected in amended programme	and other stakeholders.
	document (Ref <i>Rec #1</i>).	
		g) For each programme and embedded programme
		(i) The minimum intended programme learning
Yes		outcomes and any other educational or
		training objectives of the programme are
		explicitly specified. ⁵
		(ii) The minimum intended programme learning
Yes		outcomes to qualify for the QQI award
		sought are consistent with the relevant QQI awards standards.
		h) Where applicable, the minimum intended module
Yes		learning outcomes are explicitly specified for each
		of the programme's modules.
		i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who
Yes		complete the modules are specified, where
		applicable.
		(i) For each minor award specified, the minimum
		intended module learning outcomes to qualify for
Yes		the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor
		awards standards. ⁶

The panel found that the aims, objectives and rationale for the programmes were expressed clearly in the context of the QQI award (s) being sought. The rationale for the embedded exit award is not clear as there is little (obvious) discussion in the documentation of the frequency of its use as an exit award, however, the learners and graduated praised it existence and formal the recognition of effort for those not completing the full award.

The MIPLOs were informed by the QQI aligned to Science Award Standard, while also mapped to the Computing Standard. It was concluded that the MIPLOs and MIMLOs have been clearly outlined and are appropriate to the level of the award. The programme titles are appropriate.

The panel queried the absence of a Mathematics-related module, in the context of the QQI awards standards - computing for level 8 which requires that learners have knowledge of "Mathematical Foundations and Techniques". There is currently no requirement for a previously obtained qualification in a technical or numerate discipline and no minimum entry expectation of

mathematics. If it is intended that appropriate mathematics is embedded in other modules it needs to be more explicit in the programme documentation.

There appears to be a heavy reliance on knowledge and skills, with lesser indication of the achievement of competence/insight. This is evident in the mapping which is identified in the programme document.

Recommendation (s) #1 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #2 (reference section 8.3)

7.5 Criterion 3: The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives).

Satisfactory	,	Sub-criteria
Satisfactory	Comment	
Yes		a) The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives. ⁷
Yes		b) The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched; considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes.
Yes		(i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
Yes		(ii) The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find.
Yes		(iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
Yes		(iv) There is evidence ⁸ of learner demand for the programme.

Yes	(v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant ⁹ .
Yes	(vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs. 10
Yes	c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
Yes	d) Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.
Yes	e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

The Higher Diploma in Science in Computing programme was originally developed for, and is predominantly funded through, the Springboard+ initiative. Overall the programme seems to meet a current need in Irish society. The modules included seem very relevant and the overall award should be of great value to learners.

The learner, employment-related and educational demands are well-evidenced within the programme documentation, and the programme seems to address a need within the market for such skills conversion courses which should offer graduates good employment opportunities. Within the programme documentation, the graduate destination surveys for the 2018 graduates indicates that 100% of graduates surveyed were in employment within 6 months of course completion.

In the meeting with learners and graduates, they described their time at DBS on this programme as an 'Amazing experience – an opportunity!'. This reflects the impact that the Springboard+ programmes, in general, and this programme specifically makes on an individual's life!

A review process appears to be in place to keep the course current and up to date. The programme appears to be well-informed by research on the needs of relevant stakeholders and stakeholders' opinions have been sought and commented on. Where applicable their suggestions are mostly taken on board. The suggestions around pace, and reviewability of assessments by learners and the external examiner (s) could be better addressed. There seem to be some concerns raised by stakeholders over the block structure of the programme, and this was further explored by the panel in terms of the delivery structure of the programme.

The panel recommend that the programme team revise and develop Teaching and Learning Strategy required for the programme, to clarify (as a group) how the programme goals identified in the document are realised.

The QQI award standards for both Science and Computing standards have been used in reviewing the programme. MIMLOs as well as MIPLOs are mapped. The panel stated that some modules (e.g. 2-6, 8, 10, and 13) appear to not be mapped to at least 3 of the 7 areas of the standards, and there also seems to be a slight imbalance with regard to the quantity of MIMLOs mapped. The programme

team recommend that the programme team revisit all of the programme modules to review MIMLOs, and their mapping.

Some consideration is made with other providers' comparable programmes.

There has been feedback from employers regarding the requirement of programmes in the area of DevOps. In addition, feedback from employers confirms the ongoing requirements for soft skills in graduates. The embedding of soft skills in individual modules rather than having a specific standalone module was recognised as an institutional decision but where these skills are currently developed cannot be vague within the impacted modules – the development of these skills within the modules need to reflect back to the mapping (of MIMLOs) against the framework (competence and insight). The impact on student workload – with assignments, exams, and workshops needs to be considered.

Condition (s): #1, #2 (reference section 8.1)

Recommendation (s) #1 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #3 (reference section 8.3)

7.6 Criterion 4: The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

	satisfactory	
Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in QQI's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied ¹¹ .
Yes		b) Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats.
Yes		c) If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL ¹²) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
Yes		d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that target

27

	learners are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
Yes	e) The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.
Yes	f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
Yes	(i) Reflects the core intended programme learning outcomes, and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title (s) and their class (es).
Yes	(ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners;
Yes	(iii) Has long-lasting significance.
Yes	g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

The panel were of the opinion that the programme information provided to learners is appropriate, and the MIPLOs and title convey an accurate reflection of the programme, its content and the outcomes for graduates.

The access, transfer, progression, RPL, and entry requirements are documented and appropriate. However, it is not clear whether applicants with an NFQ level 8 Computing (or similar) qualification would be admitted (arguably, as the Higher Diploma is a conversion programme, they shouldn't).

Regarding entry requirements, the programme document states that any level8 degree is accepted. However there is also mention of how candidates would 'ideally be able to demonstrate technical or mathematical problem-solving skills as part of previous programme learning'. There is no indication in the admission section how candidates with such skills from numerate disciplines would be assessed or ranked in terms of entry to the programme.

The programme team stated that Mathematics material is covered in the modules, and additional support is provided for learners through the DBS Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU).

The panel were advised that when recruiting staff, the Faculty manager identifies new staff to the academic appointments sub-committee. The establishment and role of this committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned. The committee also identifies the requirements for each newly appointed member of staff to be supported through their orientation at the College.

Of note is the change in mode of delivery; from exclusively full-time in 2015/16 to exclusively part-time in 2018/19. The number of full-time learners had dropped, based on the 2017/18 reduction in Springboard+ funding for full-time ICT Learners as the economy was so buoyant. Programme pass

rates fell somewhat with the change to PT, as the course is considered to be very intense, with the focus for many learners on employment alongside studies, which may put pressure on or compromise their academic performance.

DBS currently do not undertake of analysis of learner performance against entry qualifications. The panel noted that with the planned introduction of a new Student Information System in November 2019 this type of analysis will be possible and should be undertaken for the 2018/19 intake onwards. The panel recommends that analysis of learner performance versus their entry profile should be conducted particularly, as in this case, for programmes where non-standard and RPL admissions are permitted.

With the programmes transition to part-time delivery only, there is a growing international learner cohort i.e. those whose first language may not be English. In the meeting with learners and graduates, it was stated that it would be beneficial if the basics for each topic could be prepared and made available on Moodle to learners in advance of their lectures, rather than having to research programme content themselves. This would be particularly supportive of learners whose first language was not English in engaging with class material.

Progression opportunities for programme graduates seem good and clear examples are given.

The programme learners and graduates particularly praised the existence of the (15 ECTS) exit award option which provided an opportunity for learners to recognise their efforts, even/especially if not completing the full award.

Recommendation (s) #2, #3, #4 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #2, #4, #5 (reference section 8.3)

7.7 Criterion 5: The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions.
Yes		b) In so far as it is feasible the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs.
Yes		c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended programme learning outcomes.
Yes		d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.

Yes	e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles ¹³ .
Yes	f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
Yes	g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
Yes	h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
Yes	i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
Yes	j) The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation. ¹⁴

The panel was generally satisfied that the programmes and their modules were appropriately structured and scheduled. The rational for the inclusion of new modules, and the stakeholder engagement which informed their content and that of the revised modules, was discussed with the programme team.

The programme team outlined how the programme was reviewed and developed. There appeared to be a heavy reliance on /deference to the material in the previously approved programme.

The panel indicated that it got little sense of the programme team's cohesiveness, and recommends that the management of the programme be strengthened – there currently appears to be a disconnect between the lecturer, the programme and the college. This would require the programme team to meet to review and 'personalise' their modules (recognising the ownership of the module by the lecturer). The programme team meetings would reinforce the coherence/cohesiveness of the modules within the programme. In addition, clarity is required on the specific programme management roles of Course Director and Programme Leader.

Notwithstanding, the panel commends the lecturer commitment to the programme and its learners, and the technical expertise of the team. The support of learners and accessibility of the programme staff to learners was evident in the documentation, in the engagement with both the staff and the learners at the panel.

The panel were of the opinion that the choice offered to learners seems to be good, and that the balance between covering the basics and allowing choice of modules seems to be well considered.

While learners register on a named stream, Block 1 is common to facilitate their changing programme after Block 1 if the wish to change their area of focus.

The panel considered the mapping of the MIMLOs to the MIPLOs for the programme is unclear and very broadly grouped. It is difficult to see vertical alignment from the documentation provided. Learners are afforded significant choice of streams, and some detail on supports for how learners are guided through the elective stream choice is needed in the documentation (currently noting only advice from course director and programme lead). The panel recommends that a diagram of programme structure (with regard to the streams) would be very helpful in programme documents to fully appreciate the overall programme structure and schedule. The overview of programme modules provided in the programme document would be very useful for the students in the Student Handbook.

The module descriptors provide clear information regarding the syllabus and learning outcomes. The panel were concerned that the programme team may have chased the technology rather than competence and depth. The learning required to successfully progress from intake to completion is substantial, but this is in keeping with the type of conversion course that this is.

In the module descriptors, the e-learning it states that "contact hours are therefore defined to mean either the traditional class-room setting or synchronous live online classes, where learners log in to an online room and the lecture is delivered to the group in real time, with the opportunity for questions, discussion and break-out activities". The programme document in its breakdown of the contact hours for students also describes "class or equivalent contact". However in the teaching and learning strategy there is no evidence of consideration of the large differences (and breakdown) between face to face contact and online/blended learning, or how formative feedback is facilitated in an online setting. The panel require the programme team to revise and develop the Teaching and Learning Strategy required for the programme, to clarify (as a group) – how are the programme goals identified in the document realised - the eLearning content, the module class contact time, the Workshop requirements.

The panel recommends that staff training be developed and provided to support teaching, learning and assessment objectives. This would serve to support staff in module design and address issues such as what's a fair workload both for staff and learners. In reviewing the programme structure the panel noted that DBS have recently recruited a Learning Technologist and are intending to recruit an Instructional Designer to support lecturers' teaching and learning strategies.

The panel noted the strong focus on practice and experiential development, which is appropriate as this is a conversion programme (there are 24 hours contact per week). The embedding of soft skills in individual modules rather than having a specific stand-alone module is an institutional policy, with supplementary workshops. The additional workshops and their impact on student workload, in light of contact time, assignments and exams, needs to be considered. A Workshop List of the relevant support resources available is needed by the programme team, and required by the learners, and should be part of the development of the teaching and learning strategy.

Module ECTS credit allocation seems appropriate. However in some instances contact time needs to be restated to ensure its accuracy and consistency in relation to ECTS versus total expended time.

There are several modules that seem quite similar to modules on the MSc in Information Systems and Computing programme which was also under review by the panel, and these similarities were explored in discussion of the individual modules. In particular the panel queried the depth of the

specialisation of the Web Technologies specialisation of the programme with regard to the level of the programme (level 8).

The different programming languages utilised across the modules to develop learners programming knowledge and skills within the programme was discussed (in general). Of particular merit is the degree of programming learners will be exposed to - many of the programming modules emphasise C#, Intro to Programming notes Python, C# and (possibly) Java in its descriptor. OOP is C#. Advanced Programming is C#. However, Mobile App Development is Java, whilst the similarities between Java and C# are high, a novice learner may not cope with this transition. Clarity around the rationalisation for such choices was provided by the programme team.

The Block structure was explored. There are some concerns over pace, stemming from the six-week block structure, and the module assessments, which could be better justified in the documentation, and reflect on lessons learned from previous cohorts to substantiate this structure. Clarity around the scheduling of blocks, and when their relevant examinations take place, would be beneficial. In general, the block structure is not the issue, but rather the corresponding assessment strategy.

Many of the sample assessments provided in the programme documentation pack are terminal examinations. More samples of (group) continuous assessment material would be welcomed, to better delineate individual vs. group assessments as well as give an impression of individual projects.

Clarity around the strategy for continuous assessment for the programme is required. The assessment schedule for the programme needs to be developed to identify the learner assessment burden. In addition, the opportunities for students to receive feedback in a timely fashion to improve their work within that module should be identified and adhered to by the programme team.

In managing learner assessment workload, and supporting programme cohesiveness, there seems to be a missed opportunity with regard to implementing integrated assessments within the blocks, and across modules.

The panel requires that the full programme team come together to develop an Assessment Strategy for the Programme, which would incorporate all modules, their CA deadlines, reassessment mechanisms, etc. to facilitate management of the learner workload. This document should provide clarity regarding the preference for written examinations over practical laboratory-based exams for the programming modules, examination duration, etc. It would also identify in which modules is group assessment undertaken, and what structures are in place to ensure individually appropriate grades - group project guidelines should be developed. The review of CA material by the extern (in advance) should be considered. In addition, in developing the Strategy, the programme team should review lecturer workload in terms of assessment workload, to facilitate provision of formative and constructive feedback to learners in a timely fashion during the academic year to allow learners to manage their assessment performance. The output of this activity should also include an assessment schedule to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year.

The panel recommends that the reading list for each module be reviewed to ensure they are up to date.

Some module-related specific comments included:

• Information Systems Development and Management

This module seems more management and design focused than development, what development do students undertake?

• Database Design and Development

The panel queried if NoSQL databases really necessary in this module, as they are quite extensively covered in the follow-up module.

• Object-Oriented Programming

The panel queried what happens (support/mentoring) if a learner fails the Introduction to Programming with respect to this module, while it is not a formal pre-requisite, the risk of failure is likely to be higher if programming is a challenge.

Advanced Programming

The panel queried what happens (support/mentoring) if a learner fails the Introduction to Programming with respect to this module, while it is not a formal pre-requisite, the risk of failure is likely to be higher if programming is a challenge.

• Cloud Infrastructure and Virtualisation

The containers/virtualisation part of this module seems to cover many aspects at a case study level – it was unclear if one would be done in depth.

• Advanced Web Technologies

This module seems a little repetitive of Web Design and Development module.

• System Administration

It is unclear why the AWS book is on the reading list, as the module syllabus doesn't seem to cover much cloud material. If cloud material is to be covered the module descriptor should be updated (and would benefit the learner if taught via cloud).

Advanced Networks and Security

This module seems very similar to that in the Computer Systems Security module of the MSc in Information Systems with Computing. It contains more or less the same 10 indicative syllabus items (only ordered differently). The panel queried how the modules will differ in their delivery to ensure that the different MIMLOs are attained appropriate to their NFQ levels.

• Tools and Technologies for DevOps

The panel queried is 8 MIMLOs are really needed and necessary for this module?

• Placement or Project

Full-time learners undertake the placement and part-time do a capstone project for students to apply their learning— the duration of the placement is missing in the module descriptor for the part-time programme — clarity required.

There is also a requirement for information regarding how the college prepares the learner for, and subsequently manages, the placement. With 4 hours contact, and an extensive workload to be completed by the learner following that time, assurance is required as to whether it is possible for the learner to achieve all necessary knowledge and facilitation in the allocated time.

As a conversion programme will the learner have sufficient knowledge/skills to complete the project within the timeframe allowed?

Condition (s) #1, #2, #3 (reference section 8.1)

Recommendation (s) #1, #4,#5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #1, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8 (reference section 8.3)

7.8 Criterion 6: There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also unit (7.14c).
Yes		b) The programme has an identified complement of staff ¹⁵ (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
Yes		c) The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.
Yes		d) There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development ¹⁶ opportunities ¹⁷ .
Yes		e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
Yes		f) Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

The necessary qualification profile for academic staff is identified within the modules, and is appropriate.

34

Specifications for programme staffing requirements seem appropriate and realistic.

The staff CVs provided show excellent qualifications and experience to provide such a programme, with staff also showing plenty of experience in lecturing.

While the staff scholarship scheme was outlined in the documentation, there is little evidence of staff engagement with research.

There is an opportunity to focus on the development of teaching and learning-related qualifications within the programme team. This would support staff in the engagement with programme management, the teaching and learning strategy, the assessment strategy and the organisation of both learner and staff workload.

The specific contract s arrangement (hours and teaching requirements) of academic staff were outlined for the panel. Specific contractual arrangements are in place to facilitate academic staff supervising learners' projects. [Reference Special Consideration of Programme Review]

The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned. The committee also identifies the requirements for each newly appointed member of staff to be supported through their orientation and professional development at the College. However, the panel cautioned that sourcing staff primarily through referrals and recommendations may not be a sustainable method of assuring externality and a challenging and supportive academic environment.

Condition (s) #1 (reference section 8.1

Recommendation (s) #5, #8 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #6, #7, #8, #9 (reference section 8.3)

7.9 Criterion 7: There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
		a) The specification of the programme's physical
		resource requirements (physical resources
		required as part of the programme and
Yes		intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and
		consistent with the programme, its defined
		purpose and its resource/learner-ratio
		requirements. See also (7.14d).
		b) The programme has an identified complement
		of supported physical resources (or potential
		supported physical resources) that are
		available in the context of existing
		commitments on these e.g. availability of:
Yes		(i) suitable premises and accommodation
		for the learning and human needs
		(comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of
		learners (this applies to all of the

		programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
Partially	In the context of the resource issues identified by learners and graduates, which were predominantly in relation to issues with technology set-up	(ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
Yes		(iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
Yes		(iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
Yes		(v) technical support
Yes		(vi) administrative support
Yes		(vii) company placements/internships – if applicable
Yes		c) If versions of the programme are provided in parallel at more than one location each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment).
Yes		d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
Yes		(i) Planned intake (first five years) and
Yes		(ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
Yes		e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

The panel noted that a five year plan had been provided for each of the programmes under review.

From the documentation provided, there appears to be sufficient and appropriate physical resources available within DBS to support delivery of the programme. A tour of the library facilities in the Aungier Street Campus was undertaken, and the open meeting and study areas throughout the campus to facilitate group work and peer study support were acknowledged.

The panel were advised of the mobile IT laboratory facility, whereby charged laptops are available within classrooms to provide a flexible, responsive computer laboratory option.

To support their course work, each learner is provided with their own cloud space, and specific software availability is provided here.

In the meeting with learners and graduates there were some resource issues identified, predominantly in relation to the technology set-up, and specific issues identified included as projectors not working, laptops for computer based exams not charged, Moodle not able to take assessment file (file size too large), and the timing of Moodle update in reading week (when learner access to class material required). Learners indicated that this is an area where improvement could be helpful.

Recommendation (s) #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.3)

7.10 Criterion 8: The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes.
Yes		b) Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors.
Yes		c) The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace.

From the documentation provided, support systems for learners sound exemplary, and generally appear to be sufficient to support delivery of the programme and meet learner needs. The programme team is strong and supportive.

The panel noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review. The panel also noted the recent update of the DBS strategic plan, and were advised that the development of eLearning/blended learning programmes is a strategic objective of the College.

A description of the learning environment in place to support students is provided in Section 3.5 of this report. A tour of the physical facilities in the Aungier Street Campus, particularly the library, was undertaken.

To support their course work, each learner is provided with their own cloud space, and had access to the necessary software required to engage with the programme.

The workload created by the implementation of the assessment strategy, for both lecturers and students was highlighted within the sessions with the panel. An Assessment Strategy for the Programme, which would require the full programme team coming together to schedule their individual assessment requirements, to incorporate all modules, CA deadlines (to prevent deadlines falling on examination dates), group project guidelines, reassessment mechanisms, reference /citation system used in the programme, etc. is essential to facilitate management of the learner workload. This Strategy should also provide clarity regarding examination duration. Its preparation should also necessitate a review of lecturer workload in terms of the assessment workload (and

feedback provision). The output should include an assessment schedule to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year. It was queried if there is scope for reducing some of the programme content and/or assessment elements?

The embedding of soft skills in individual modules rather than having a specific stand-alone module was recognised by the panel as an institutional decision, but where these skills are currently developed cannot be vague within the impacted modules – the development of these skills within the modules need to reflect back to the mapping (of MIMLOs) against the framework (competence and insight). The impact on student workload – with assignments, exams, and workshops needs to be considered.

In meetings with students and graduates, the panel were advised that the HDip requires an enormous amount of knowledge to be developed, and that sometimes it can feels a bit rushed and as if pushing through material to get it covered. Learners felt that it would be beneficial if the basics for each topic could be prepared and made available on Moodle to them in advance of their lectures, rather than having to research programme content themselves. This was particularly requested by learners whose first language was not English, as a support to their engaging with material on delivery in class.

The panel found that the students and graduates were very positive about the level of support received from lecturers and other staff. They appreciated the easy access to teaching staff who were generally very responsive to requests for support. However, it was also noted that in some instances, issues raised at meetings between the learners and the College may not be resolved in a timely manner, and also that some learners were reluctant to approach lecturers for fear of imposing on their time (as they always seemed to be under pressure to get work done).

The level of feedback provided on assignments appeared to be very helpful when received, but several incidents were cited where this was not provided in a timely fashion – this was particularly challenging for learners in the context of the short delivery block. Learners appeared satisfied that they could meet with lecturers for further feedback if they so desired. As far as possible, it would be beneficial if learners received feedback on assignments within the recommended four week timeframe. This is especially important where there is an assignment component and a written exam – learners should be made aware of their results in an assignment prior to sitting their exam.

The panel also recommends that learners receive an assessment deadlines' schedule for the programme modules at the commencement of the semester/stage.

In addition, the panel recommends that the programme team consider clarifying the re-assessment strategy for the modules in the programme document into clearly articulated and standard format to ensure consistency.

The panel noted that additional classes (Workshops and tutorials) are held to support learners' engagement with learning material during the academic year. A Workshop List of the relevant support resources available is needed by the programme team, and required by the learners, and should be part of the development of the teaching and learning strategy.

The existence of the (15 ECTS) exit award option to provide an opportunity to recognise the efforts of learners, even/especially if they are not completing the full award, was particularly praised by the learners and graduates.

Condition (s) #1, #2, #3 (reference section 8.1)

Recommendation (s) #1, #4, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #2, #3, #5, #6, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.3)

7.11 Criterion 9: There are sound teaching and learning strategies

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
		a) The teaching strategies support achievement
Partially	Reference condition #1	of the intended programme/module learning
		outcomes.
		b) The programme provides authentic learning
Yes		opportunities to enable learners to achieve the
		intended programme learning outcomes.
		c) The programme enables enrolled learners to
		attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum
Yes		intended programme learning outcomes
163		reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall
		learner effort and a reasonably balanced
		workload).
Yes		d) Learning is monitored/supervised.
		e) Individualised guidance, support ¹⁸ and timely
Yes		formative feedback is regularly provided to
162		enrolled learners as they progress within the
		programme.

The College has developed a Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy which was provided in the documentation pack for the panel, and appropriate extracts and references were included in the programme documentation. The purpose of this strategy is to support the enhancement of learning and teaching at DBS by establishing a framework, aligned with the overall College Strategy.

The module descriptors provide clear information regarding the syllabus and learning outcomes. Teaching and learning strategies are also provided within each of the module descriptors. Many modules, however, appear to use the same base text, and there is little individualisation at the module or stream level, this could be improved, specifically how each module will apply directed elearning. The learning required to successfully progress from intake to completion is substantial, but this is in keeping with the type of conversion course that this is.

In the teaching and learning strategy there is no evidence of consideration of the large differences (and breakdown) between face to face contact and online/blended learning, or how formative feedback is facilitated in an online setting. The panel require the programme team to revise and develop the Teaching and Learning Strategy required for the programme, to clarify (as a group) – how are the programme goals identified in the document realised - the eLearning content, the module class contact time, the Workshop requirements.

The panel recommends that staff training be developed and provided to support teaching and learning objectives. This would serve to support staff in module design and address issues such as

39

what's a fair workload both for staff and learners, and problem based learning. In reviewing the programme structure the panel noted that DBS have recently recruited a Learning Technologist and are intending to appoint an Instructional Designer to support DBS and the lecturers' teaching and learning strategies. The programme team should define the e-learning element of each module within the module descriptor for clarity. This need not be identical for each module.

It was stated that the team is well practiced in supporting a diverse collection of learners within the programme through the use of practically-focused videos (YouTube). There is a strong culture of collaborative learning and supportive practice within the programme team.

In meetings with students and graduates, the panel found that they were very positive about the level of support received from lecturers and other staff. However, it was also noted that in some instances, issues raised at meetings between the learners and the College may not be resolved in a timely manner, and also that some learners were reluctant to approach lecturers for fear of imposing on their time (as they always seemed to be under pressure to get work done).

The level of feedback provided on assignments appeared to be very helpful when received, but several incidents were cited where this was not provided in a timely fashion – this was particularly challenging for learners in the context of the short delivery block.

The strategy for the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU) is also aligned with the Teaching and Learning Strategy. The establishment of the SESU, as a multidisciplinary intervention to support non-engaging students, was considered a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression.

Feedback from students and graduates also confirmed that the workload was appropriate but that more structure and communication around this workload was required. The panel were of the opinion that this could be further supported by the creation of an assessment schedule, to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year, which would be visible/accessible to all.

The panel further noted the feedback from students confirmed the willingness of teaching staff to address any issues brought to them.

Condition (s) #1, #2, #3 (*reference section 8.1***)**

Recommendation (s) #1,#4,#5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #1, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.3)

7.12 Criterion 10: There are sound assessment strategies

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
		a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with
Vos		Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and
Yes		Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI
		Awards ¹⁹

Partially		b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
Partially		c) The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme. ²⁰
Partially		d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
No	Reference Condition #3	e) There is a satisfactory written programme assessment strategy for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules. ²¹
Partially		f) Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable.
Yes		g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
Yes		h) The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award. ²²

The panel was advised that all assessment for the programmes conforms to the DBS Assessment Regulations which are informed by QQI's Assessment and Standards, revised2013, and QQI's Effective Practice Guidelines for External Examining, revised February 2015.

While the programme teaching and learning strategy is briefly articulated in 5.6 of the programme document. There is little detail on the mention of the overall programme assessment strategy. An Assessment Strategy for the Programme, which would require the full programme team coming together to schedule their individual assessment requirements, to incorporate all modules, CA deadlines, group project guidelines, reassessment mechanisms, etc. is essential to facilitate management of the learner workload. This Strategy should also provide clarity regarding examination duration. Its preparation should necessitate a review of lecturer workload in terms of the assessment workload (and feedback provision). The output should include an assessment schedule to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year.

The panel are of the opinion that it is imperative that learner workload is appropriately managed, particularly in the context of assessment scheduling and cross-offered electives. With 24 hours of scheduled class contact time, there are in essence only 16 hours available for assessment work, etc.

The programme team stated that a large proportion of supported CA is undertaken within the class/laboratory sessions.

The programme team stated that there is little overlap between assessment components — integrated assessment is not a feature of the programme. The panel considered that there may be opportunities in the programme to have integrated and serial assessments between core modules, e.g. progressing projects from one block to another for additional augmentation and further, deepen learning.

Following feedback from students, the panel stated that it is important, where learners are required to complete continuous assessment assignments, that feedback is provided in a timely and effective fashion. The level of feedback provided on assignments appeared to be very helpful when received, and learners appeared satisfied that they could meet with lecturers for further feedback if they so desired, but several incidents were cited where feedback was not provided in a timely fashion – this is particularly challenging for learners in the context of the programme's short delivery block and being able to improve their performance within the module. As far as possible, it would be beneficial if learners received feedback on assignments within the recommended four week timeframe. This is especially important where there is an assignment component and a written exam – learners should be made aware of their results in an assignment prior to sitting their exam.

In addition, the panel recommends that the programme team considers clarifying the re-assessment strategy for each of the modules in the programme document into clearly articulated and standard format to ensure consistency. They need not be the same for each module. The re-assessment strategy should be reflected in the programme assessment strategy.

With extensive CA/project work involved in the programme, the panel explored how the programme team ensured that the work is the learners own. DBS utilises Plagiarism Detection Software, but also employs a number of initiatives to support learners and proved their engaging in academic impropriety, such as the new library website with resources to assist students with the essay writing process; referencing, avoiding plagiarism etc.

The CA material (and descriptor) is only provided to the extern post-assessment completion. It was recommends that the module specification could be provided to the external examiner at the commencement of the academic year. Feedback can be obtained and utilised to improve the assessment in the current or subsequent block/semester/year. A new mechanism for processing external examiners comments was identified to the panel—this is being introduced in academic year 2019/20 — this process will serve to close the loop on addressing the issues identified during the process.

The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was particularly commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned (including assessment). The committee also identifies the requirements for each staff to be supported through their orientation and professional development at the College.

Conditions #2, #3 (reference section 8.1)

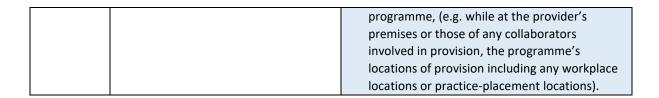
Recommendation (s) #1, #4, #5, #8 (reference section 8.2)

7.13 Criterion 11: Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments.
Yes		 b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
Yes		 c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.
Yes		 d) If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways.
Yes		e) The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities.
Yes		f) There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it.
Yes		 g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
Yes		h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities ²³ .
Yes		i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i> ²⁴ and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme.
Yes		 j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the

²³For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²⁴See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)



The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website contain information on the supports and services available to students. The panel recommends that a diagram of programme structure (with regard to the streams) would be very helpful in programme documents to fully appreciate the overall programme structure and schedule. The overview of programme modules provided in the programme document would be very useful for the students in the Student Handbook.

In the meeting with learners and graduates, they described their time at DBS on this programme as an 'Amazing experience – an opportunity!'. This reflects the impact that the Springboard+ programmes, in general, and this programme specifically makes on an individual's life!

Owing to the nature of the programme and the second intake, those in part-time mode indicated that they are currently scheduled for classes every single week to December – some vacation time would be good. The overall scheduling and workload of the learners and academic staff should be considered as part of the programme management.

During the feedback from the learners and graduates, they indicated that it would be beneficial if the basics for each topic could be prepared and made available on Moodle to learners in advance of their lectures, rather than having to research programme content themselves. This would be particularly supportive of learners whose first language was not English in engaging with class material.

However, it also noted that where learners are required to complete continuous assessment assignments, the programme team should develop an Assessment Strategy for the Programme, which would require the full programme team coming together to schedule their individual assessment requirements, to incorporate all modules, CA deadlines, group project guidelines, reassessment mechanisms, etc. is essential to facilitate management of the learner workload. This Strategy should also provide clarity regarding examination duration. Its preparation should necessitate a review of lecturer workload in terms of the assessment workload (and feedback provision). The output should include an assessment schedule to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year.

The panel considered the establishment of the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU) a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression.

The learners and graduates that met with the panel spoke extremely positively and impressively about the programme. It appeared they were well informed of what was required of them in class and for assessments, and they praised their lecturers highly. The positive employment prospects of the programme's graduates were a significant driver of learners' satisfaction with the programme.

Learners are provided with Career Search Support through workshops, which cover development of CVs, relevant job sites, etc. These workshops run twice per week over the academic year. In addition the College hosts two careers weeks per year – these consist of subject-specific recruitment events to optimise learners, graduates and employers time and efforts.

The quality assurance of the placement requires further clarity within the programme documents, the student handbook and in the Work Placement Handbook itself (particularly in the context of the indication of the company placement resources being N/A in the programme document). A Workshop List of the relevant support resources available is needed by the programme team, and required by the learners, and should be part of the development of the teaching and learning strategy. This is particularly relevant within the context of the career development requirements in advance of placement engagement/commencement.

It appeared that the lecturers were very dedicated to lecturing on the programme, and to the learning of their students.

Condition (s) #1, #2, #3 (*reference section 8.1*)

Recommendation (s) #1, #4, #6, #7, #9, #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #3, #5, #6, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.3)

7.14 Criterion 12: The programme is well managed

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
Yes		b) The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programmespecific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
Yes		c) There are explicit and suitable programme- specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
Yes		d) There are explicit and suitable programme- specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.

Yes	e) Quality assurance ²⁵ is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
Yes	f) The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
Yes	g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
Yes	h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

The documentation suggests a well-conceived programme management strategy and structure.

The programme development team have completed an extensive review of the programme in accordance with the programmatic review terms of reference and QQI programme validation criteria.

The panel were satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programmes under review. The QAH contains the governance structures for the College and procedures for access, transfer and progression, learner assessments and supports, and teaching and learning.

With that in mind, the panel indicated that it got little sense of the programme team cohesiveness, and recommends that the management of the programme be strengthened – there currently appears to be a disconnect between the lecturer, the programme and the college. This would require the programme team to meet to review and 'personalise' their modules (recognising the ownership of the module by the lecturer). The programme team meetings would reinforce the coherence/cohesiveness of the modules within the programme. In addition, clarity is required on the specific programme management roles of Course Director and Programme Leader.

Notwithstanding, the panel commends the lecturer commitment to the programme and its learners, and the technical expertise of the team. The support of learners and accessibility of the programme staff to learners was evident in the documentation, in the engagement with both the staff and the learners at the panel.

Owing to the nature of the programme and the second intake, those in part-time mode indicated that they are currently scheduled for classes every single week to December – some vacation time would be good. The overall scheduling and workload of the learners and academic staff should be considered as part of the programme management.

It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines, and that DBS have submitted an application to QQI for reengagement. The process for interim programme change was outlined to the panel by the programme team. The

programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are outlined in Section 3.8 of this report. There is an extensive cohort of staff in place to manage the quality assurance and enhancement aspects of the programme which appears to be well managed in terms of staffing and quality assurance.

In relation to areas for improvement, the conditions and recommendations identified in this report capture the feedback from the panel.

The identified commendations provide areas of enhancement that serve to continuously enhance the College's activities.

Condition (s) #1, #2, #3 (*reference section 8.1*)

Recommendation (s) #1, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.2)

Commendation (s) #1, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 (reference section 8.3)

8. Overall recommendation to DBS

Higher Diploma in Science in Computing

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the
	context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of
	programmes of education and training;
X	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (<u>minor</u>) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination); ²⁶
	Not satisfactory.

Certificate in Information Technology

Select one	
	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that QQI can be satisfied in the
	context of unit 2.3) of Core policies and criteria for the validation by QQI of
	programmes of education and training;
	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions (specified with timescale for
	compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation
X	conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that
	almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a
	determination); ²⁷
	Not satisfactory.

8.1 Reasons²⁸ for the overall recommendation

More revision of the programme (some serious gaps)

Conditions

#1: Revise and develop Teaching and Learning Strategy required for the programme, to clarify (as a group) how the programme goals identified in the document are realised –with particular reference to the module class contact time (versus ECTS), the eLearning content, the Workshop requirements, placement, project, etc.

#2: The embedding of soft skills in individual modules rather than having a specific stand-alone module was recognised as an institutional decision but where these skills are currently developed cannot be vague within the impacted modules – the development of these skills within the modules need to reflect back to the mapping (of MIMLOs) against the framework (competence and insight). The impact on student workload – with assignments, exams, and workshops needs to be considered.

#3: An Assessment Strategy for the Programme, which would require the full programme team coming together to schedule their individual assessment requirements, to incorporate all modules, CA deadlines, group project guidelines, reassessment mechanisms, etc. is essential to facilitate management of the learner workload. This Strategy should also provide clarity regarding examination duration. Its preparation should necessitate a review of lecturer workload in terms of the assessment workload (and feedback provision). The output should include an assessment schedule to be provided to learners at commencement of the block/semester/year.

8.2 Summary of recommendations

- **#1:** The panel strongly recommends that the programme team revisit all of the programme modules to review MIMLOs, the assessment instruments, and the indicative content, to facilitate deep learning and to ensure there is sufficient differentiation between the modules.
- **#2:** The panel recommends that Admission requirements for the programme be revisited to ensure that appropriate Mathematics and prior learning, knowledge and skills requirements are identified for applicants; and that RPL decisions are appropriate, fair and consistently applied.
- **#3:** The panel recommends that analysis of learner assessment performance versus their entry profile should be conducted particularly, as in this case, for programmes where non-standard and RPL admissions are permitted.
- #4: The panel recommends that the basics for each topic could be prepared and made available on Moodle to learners in advance of their lectures, rather than having to research programme content themselves. This would be particularly supportive of learners whose first language was not English in engaging with class material.
- #5: The panel recommends that the management of the programme be strengthened there currently appears to be a disconnect between the lecturer, the programme and the college. This would require the programme team to meet to review and 'personalise' their modules (recognising the ownership of the module by the lecturer). The programme team meetings would reinforce the coherence/cohesiveness of the modules within the programme. In addition, clarity is required on the specific programme management roles of Course Director and Programme Leader.
- **#6:** The panel recommends that a diagram of programme structure (with regard to the streams) would be very helpful in programme documents to fully appreciate the overall programme structure and schedule. The overview of programme modules provided in the programme document would be very useful for the students in the Student Handbook.
- **#7:** Module ECTS credit allocation the panel recommends that in some instances contact time needs to be restated to ensure its accuracy and consistency in relation to ECTS versus total expended time.
- **#8:** The panel recommends that staff training be developed and provided to support teaching, learning and assessment objectives. This would serve to support staff in module design and address issues such as what's a fair workload both for staff and learners.

- **#9:** A Workshop List of the relevant support resources available is needed by the programme team, and required by the learners, and should be part of the development of the teaching and learning strategy.
- **#10:** The panel recommends that the reading list for each module be reviewed to ensure they are up to date.
- 8.3 Summary of commendations
- **#1:** The panel commended the process of the review undertaken within the College, as outlined both in the documents and to the panel, and the Immense amount of work undertaken in compiling the extensive templates and documents generated and presented to the panel.
- **#2:** The existence of the (15 ECTS) exit award option to provide an opportunity to recognise the efforts of learners, even/especially if they are not completing the full award, was particularly praised by the learners and graduates.
- **#3:** The employment outcomes for graduates of the programme are commendable and meet national needs evidenced in the graduate employment outcomes and employers feedback.
- **#4:** The student supports available within DBS, including career development, academic writing, and mathematics workshops, and the commitment of module leaders to academic process and student development were particularly remarked upon.
- **#5:** The establishment of the Student Engagement and Success Unit (SESU), as a multidisciplinary intervention to support non-engaging students, was considered a very positive move by DBS to support learner engagement, retention and progression.
- **#6:** The panel commends the lecturer commitment to the programme and its learners, and the technical expertise of the team.
- **#7:** The establishment and role of the academic appointments sub-committee was commended in terms of assuring that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement the programme as planned, and identifying the requirements for each newly appointed staff member to be supported through their orientation at the College and CPD.
- #8: The appointment of a Learning Technologist and the recent recruitment of an Instructional Designer to support the college's ambitions in relation to blended and e-learning, and support staff in its implementation, was commended by the Panel.
- **#9:** The support of learners and accessibility of the programme staff to learners was evident in the documentation, in the engagement with both the staff and the learners at the panel.
- **#10:** The student experience and student contribution to the processes within DBS were particularly remarked upon.

9 Declaration of Evaluator's Interests

Panel secretary, Mary Doyle has previously held the position of Registrar at Dublin Business School. Since leaving this role, in 2009, she has not engaged in any professional relationship with the College and/or its staff. In addition, there have been extensive changes at senior/middle management within DBS in the interim and Ms Doyle has not had any professional relationship with the incumbents, during or prior to their taking up their roles at DBS.

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.

Panel chairperson: Dr Marion Palmer Date: 25 June 2019

Signed:

9.1 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

Part 3: Proposed programme schedules

Name of Provide	r		Dublin E	Business Sch	nool										
Programme Title			Higher Diploma in Science in Computing												
Award Title			Higher Diploma in Science in Computing												
Stage Exit Award	Title		N/A												
Mode of Delivery	<i>/</i> :		Full-time	Full-time											
Teaching and Lea	rning modalities		As per n	nodule des	criptors										
Award Class	Award NFQ Level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage N	Q Level		Stage El	Q Level	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effe	ective	ISCED Su	bject Code
Major	8	6	Award			8			6		60	01/09/20	019	0613	
Module Title			Block	Module		Credit Num- ber	Total Stu	udent Effor	t Hours (M	odule)		(M	Allocation odule Asses	n of Marks sment Strat	egy)
				Status	NFQ Level where specified	Credit Units ECTS	Total Hours	Class or equivalent contact	Directed e-learning	Independent Learning	Work-based Learning Effort	CA%	Supervised Project	Proctored practical demonstration	Proctored Written Exam %
Information Syste	ems Development a	ınd Management	S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Principles of Prog	gramming		S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50		50	
Database Design	and Development		S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Operating System	ns and Networks		S1, B2	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Web Design and	Development		S1, B2	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50	50		
Object Oriented	Programming		S1, B2	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50		50	
IT Project Manag	ement		S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Advanced Progra	mming		S2, B3	E	8	10	250	96	40	114		50		50	
Mobile Application	on Development		S2, B3	E	8	10	250	96	40	114		70		30	
Web and Cloud A	pplication Develop	ment	S2, B3	E	8	10	250	96	40	114		70		30	
Cloud Infrastruct	ure and Virtualisati	on	S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Advanced Web T	echnologies		S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50	50		
System Administ	ration		S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Advanced Netwo	rks and Security		S2, B3	E	8	10	250	96	40	114		50			50
DevOps Practices	and Principles		S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50	50		
Tools and Techno	logies for DevOps		S2, B3	E	8	10	250	96	40	114		50	50		
DevOps Project N	/Janagement		S2, B3	E	8	5	125	48	20	57		50	50		
Project			S3, B4	E	8	10	375	18	0	357			100		
Placement			S3, B4	E	8	10	375	4	0	131	240		100		
Special regulation				-		·	·	-		-	-			-	

Name of Provider				Dublin Business School											
Programme Title				Higher Diploma in Science in Computing											
Award Title				Higher Diploma in Science in Computing											
Stage Exit Award	Title		N/A												
Mode of Delivery	/ :		Part-time	e											
Teaching and Lea	rning modalities		As per m	odule des	criptors										
Award Class	Award NFQ Level	Award EQF Level	Stage			Stage NI	Q Level		Stage El	Q Level	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effe	ective	ISCED Su	bject Cod
Major	8	6	Award			8			6		60	01/09/20		0613	
Module Title			Semeste	Module		Credit Num- ber	Total St	udent Effor	t Hours (M	lodule)		(M		n of Marks ssment Strat	tegy)
				Status	NFQ Level where specified	Credit Units	Total Hours	Class or equivalent contact	Directed e-learning	Independent Learning	Work-based Learning Effort	CA%	Supervised Project	Proctored practical demonstration	Proctored Written Exam %
Information Syste	ems Development a	and Management	1	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Principles of Prog	gramming		1	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50		50	
Database Design	and Development		1	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Operating System	ns and Networks		2	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Web Design and	Development		2	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50	50		
Object Oriented I	Programming		3	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50		50	
IT Project Manag	ement		3	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Advanced Progra	mming		4	E	8	10	250	78	40	132		50		50	
Mobile Application	on Development		5	E	8	10	250	78	40	132		70		30	
Web and Cloud A	Application Develop	ment	4	E	8	10	250	78	40	132		70		30	
Cloud Infrastruct	ure and Virtualisati	on	4	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Advanced Web Te	echnologies		5	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50	50		
System Administr	ration		4	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Advanced Netwo	orks and Security		5	E	8	10	250	78	40	132		50			50
DevOps Practices	and Principles		4	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50	50		
Tools and Techno	logies for DevOps		5	E	8	10	250	78	40	132		50	50		
DevOps Project N	Management		4	E	8	5	125	39	20	66		50	50		
Project			6	E	8	10	375	18	0	357			100		
			6	E	8	10	375	4	0	131	240		100		

Name of Provider	Dublin Business School												
Programme Title	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing												
Award Title	Certifica	te in Scienc	ce in Comp	uting									
Stage Exit Award Title	Certifica	te in Scienc	e in Comp	uting									
Mode of Delivery:	Full-time	<u>.</u>											
Teaching and Learning modalities	As per module descriptors												
Award Class Award NFQ Award EQF Level Level	Stage			Stage NF	Stage NFQ Level Stage			Stage EFQ Level Stage Credit (ECTS)		Date Effective		ISCED Subject Code	
Major 8 6	Award			8			6		15	01/09/20)19	0613	
Module Title	Block	Module		Credit Num- ber	Num-			Hours (Module)			Allocation of Marks (Module Assessment Strategy		
		Status	NFQ Level where specified	Credit Units	Total Hours	Class or equivalent contact	Directed e-learning	Independent Learning	Work-based Learning Effort	CA%	Supervised Project	Proctored practical demonstration	Proctored Written Exam %
Information Systems Development and Management	S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Principles of Programming	S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50		50	
Database Design and Development	S1, B1	М	8	5	125	48	20	57		50			50
Special regulations:													
The Certificate in Information Technology is an exit awa	rd and will	only be aw	varded afte	r the succe	essful com	oletion of t	hree mand	latory mod	ules.				

Name of Provider	Dublin Business School												
Programme Title	Higher Diploma in Science in Computing												
Award Title	Certificate in Science in Computing												
Stage Exit Award Title	Certificate in Science in Computing												
Mode of Delivery:	Part-time												
Teaching and Learning modalities	As per module descriptors												
Award Class Award NFQ Award EQF Level Level	Stage			Stage NFQ Level Stage EFQ Level		Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective		ISCED Subject Code				
Major 8 6	Award			8			6		15	01/09/20)19	0613	
Module Title	Module Credit Total Student Effort Num- ber			Hours (Module)		Allocation of Marks (Module Assessment Strategy)							
				Credit Units		#:							_
		Status	NFQ Level where specified	ECTS	Total Hours	Class or equivalent contact	Directed e-learning	Independent Learning	Work-based Learning Effort	CA%	Supervised Project	Proctored practical demonstration	Proctored Written Exam %
Information Systems Development and Management	1	М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50
Principles of Programming		М	8	5	125	39	20	66		50		50	
Database Design and Development 1 M 8		8	5	125	39	20	66		50			50	
Special regulations:													
The Certificate in Information Technology is an exit award and will only be awarded after the successful completion of three mandatory modules.													

10 Appendix 2: Agenda

DUBLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

DUBLIN BUSINESS SCHOOL

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LAW PROGRAMME REVIEW AND REVALIDATION

MSc in Information Systems with Computing (with embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Information Systems with Computing)

Higher Diploma in Science in Computing (with embedded Certificate in Information Technology)

Agenda: Monday, 21st May 2019

[Room 3.6, DBS, 13/14 Aungier Street, Dublin 2]

Time	Location	Item	DBS Attendees
08.30hrs		Panel Private Meeting (with Tea & Coffee)	N/a
	Location		
		assessment of learners including summative and formative assessment of learners and external examining procedures; (h) the quality assurance arrangements that are specific to the programme; (i) the proposed modifications to the programme.	 Experience Dr Martin Doris, Assistant Registrar Grant Goodwin, QA Officer
10.30hrs		Break – Tea & Coffee	N/a
10.45hrs		3. Evaluation of Programme Proposed for Revalidation against QQI validation criteria	David Williams, Course Director

Time	Location Item		DBS Attendees
	- Pro Criterion clear and Criterion strategy are well Criterion	gramme Rationale and overall structure 2: Programme objectives and outcomes are d consistent with QQI awards sought. 3: Programme concept, implementation and interpretation of QQI award standards informed and soundly based 4: Access Transfer & Progression ments are satisfactory	 Dr Shazia Afzal, MSc Programme Lead Paul Laird, HDIP Programme Lead Dr Kerry McCall Magan, Head of Academic Programmes Lori Johnston, Registrar Emma Balfe, Head of Faculty and School (Acting) Shane Mooney, Head of Student Experience Dr Martin Doris, Assistant Registrar Grant Goodwin, QA Officer Tanya Balfe, Admissions Manager
11.30hrs		l Meeting with Student and Graduate	Student names to be
		esentatives	confirmed
12.00hrs	- Pro Syste Posts Criterion fit for pu Criterion strategie	9: There are sound learning and teaching	 David Williams, Course Director Dr Shazia Afzal, MSc Programme Lead Paul Laird, HDIP Programme Lead Teaching Faculty (list tbc separately)
13.00hrs	Private F	Panel Discussion (and Lunch)	N/a
13.30hrs	- Pro Scien Certi Criterion fit for pu Criterion strategie	9: There are sound learning and teaching	 David Williams, Course Director Dr Shazia Afzal, MSc Programme Lead Paul Laird, HDIP Programme Lead Teaching Faculty (list tbc separately)
14.30hrs	Private F	Panel Discussion	N/a
15.00hrs	6. Colle	ge Tour for the Panel	
15.10hrs	Criterion program	urcing and Supports for Learners 6: There are sufficient qualified and capable me staff available to implement the me as planned	David Williams, Course Director

Time	Location	Item	DBS Attendees
		Criterion 7: There are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned Criterion 8: The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme learners Criterion 11: Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed and cared for Criterion 12: The programme is well managed	 Dr Shazia Afzal, MSc Programme Lead Paul Laird, HDIP Programme Lead Dr Kerry McCall Magan, Head of Academic Programmes Lori Johnston, Registrar Emma Balfe, Head of Faculty and School (Acting) Dr Tony Murphy, Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning Shane Mooney, Head of Student Experience Jane Buggle, Deputy Librarian Dr Martin Doris, Assistant Registrar Grant Goodwin, QA Officer Darragh Breathneach, Head of Academic Operations
15.30hrs		Deliberation of the panel	N/a
15.45hrs- 16.00hrs		Oral feedback to Senior DBS Staff	