

**QQI**Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

Independent Evaluation Report on an Application for Differential Validation of a Programme of Education and Training

Part 1A

Provider name	Dublin Business School
Date of site visit	12 December 2022
Date of report	24 February 2023
Previous Validation	April 2019

This report reflects the findings of an evaluation panel in respect of the differential validation of two programmes previously validated. The focus of the differential validation has been on the new context of provision, i.e. the collaborative and transnational arrangements being proposed.

This report is an updated version of the original and identifies the differential aspects associated with collaborated transnational provision of a programme already validated for delivery in DBS' Dublin campus. The report of the original panel is available on the [QQI website](#).

It should be noted that all conditions specified in the original report were subsequently addressed by DBS to the satisfaction of the panel.

Overall recommendations – original evaluation

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Business Analytics
	Award	Master of Science in Business Analytics
	Credit	90
Recommendation		Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions ¹

Embedded programme	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics
	Credit	60
	Exit award only	Yes

¹ Note that conditions of validation identified in this report were subsequently addressed by DBS to the satisfaction of the panel

Recommendation	Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions ²
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Overall recommendations – differential evaluation of transnational collaborative version

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Business Analytics
	Award	Master of Science in Business Analytics
	Credit	90
Recommendation		Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Embedded programme	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics
	Credit	60
	Exit award only	Yes
Recommendation		Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions

Panel – differential evaluation

Name	Role	Principal occupation
Dr. Tara Ryan	Chair / Secretary	Registrar, Irish Management Institute
Eva Juhl	Quality Assurance Expert (including contexts of collaborative and transnational provision)	Institutional Review Facilitator, Munster Technological University, Cork
Dr. Cathy Peck	QA Expert	Independent Education Consultant
Mr. Stephen McManus	QA Expert	Independent Consultant. Former Registrar, DKIT
Aimi Amirah Muhammad Khalid	Student	Student in DBS Malaysia programme

² Note that conditions of validation identified in this report were subsequently addressed by DBS to the satisfaction of the panel

Part 1 B

Principal Programme: Master of Science in Business Analytics

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Intakes per annum	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
University of New York, Prague under collaborative arrangement with Dublin Business School	2 f/t + 2 p/t	120 per intake	5 per intake

Enrolment interval (normally 5 years)	Date of first intake	September 2023
	Date of last intake	August 2028
Maximum number of annual intakes	2 p/t and 2 f/t intakes of 120:	
Maximum total number of learners per intake (over all centres)	120	
Programme duration (<u>months</u> from start to completion)	Full-time 12 months Part-time 18 months	

Target learner groups

The Master of Science in Business Analytics is aimed at learners with any of the following entry qualifications:

An Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level 8 primary undergraduate honours Bachelors degree with a minimum second class second division classification (2.2) in a cognate area (computer science, IT, science, mathematics, statistics, finance, economics, business, engineering, and management information systems) or equivalent;

OR

A European Framework of Qualifications (EFQ) Level 6 Bachelors degree with a minimum o GPA 3.0 (or equivalent) in a cognate area (computer science, IT, science, mathematics, statistics, finance, economics, business, engineering, and management information systems) or equivalent;

OR

An Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Level 8 primary undergraduate honours Bachelor degree with a minimum second class second division classification (2.2) in a non-cognate area, plus three to five years' experience of business analytics;

OR

A European Framework of Qualifications (EFQ) Level 6 Bachelors degree with a minimum GPA 3.0 (or equivalent) in a non-cognate area, plus three to five years' experience of business analytics.

English Language requirements:

International applicants whose first language is not English and who have not previously undertaken a degree taught in English must provide evidence of proficiency in English language equivalent to B2+ or above on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This must be evidenced through a recognised English Language test such as IELTS,

Cambridge Certificate, or DBS English Assessment. Test certificates should be dated within the last two years to be considered valid.

The programme is aimed at learners who wish to specialise in the field of business analytics with a view to entering industry, or those who require a qualification in this area in order to progress professionally. Learners will achieve the business expertise and analytics competencies to take a strategic view and effectively integrate cutting edge analytics into decision-making in their company. Through the research project, learners will develop independent research and problem-solving skills which will be valuable in a variety of contexts in the workplace.

Approved countries for provision	Czech Republic – pending Czech national approval
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and part-time
The teaching and learning modalities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classroom lectures 2. Case-based learning 3. Practical skills sessions 4. Workshops 5. Tutorials 6. Individual and group work 7. Online synchronous and asynchronous
Brief synopsis of the programme	
<p>The Master of Science in Business Analytics is a one year full-time or two-year part-time programme of nine taught modules (65 ECTS) plus project (25 ECTS) totalling 90 ECTS. Learners may also exit with a Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics having successfully achieved 60 ECTS if they are unable to complete the full Master of Science in Business Analytics.</p> <p>This is an interdisciplinary programme that focuses on business management, data analytics and computing. It is designed to appeal to graduates seeking to gain exposure to the technology and data-enabled business model. The programme is designed with the aim of providing learners with the knowledge, skills and research capability to critically analyse, implement and evaluate big data concepts and techniques in order to generate valuable insights, thereby assisting with strategic business decisions, increasing productivity, profitability and an organisation’s value and market share.</p>	
Summary of <u>specifications</u> for teaching staff	<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a NFQ Level 9 (EFQ Level 7) equivalent award such as a Postgraduate Diploma or Masters in the following areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Computing Science 2. Business including quantitative methods and project management 3. Data mining and business intelligence 4. Finance 5. Mathematics and Statistics Finance
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff	<p>1/50 Classroom sessions 1/25 Workshops 1/30 Practical sessions</p>

Embedded programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics ³

Names of centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners (per centre)	Minimum number of learners
This programme will not be offered independently of the principal programme. It is to be an exit award.		

Other noteworthy features of the application

Not applicable

Part 1C Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision (where applicable).

Not Applicable – DBS is already approved for transnational and collaborative provision – Malaysia and Munich.

³ This only needs to be completed where embedded programmes may be offered independently of the principal programme. Add more subsections if there are more than one embedded programmes proposed to lead to QQI awards.

Part 2A Evaluation against the validation criteria

As this is a differential validation of an already validated programme, the findings of the original panel will be restated. Where there are different findings arising from the differential validation, they will be stated underneath.

Criterion 1

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme. 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. c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. ⁴	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

The panel met with the DBS Senior Team, the programme team and various other members of staff to consider the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics.

DBS already delivers a range of QQI Approved programmes in Psychology, Business and IT up to NFQ Level 9 and has recently engaged in a pilot for institutional re-engagement with QQI (Appendix 1 and <https://www.dbs.ie/courses>). This programme is seen as an appropriate addition to the already validated Masters of Science in Data Analytics ([https://www.dbs.ie/course/postgraduate/master-of-science-\(msc\)-in-data-analytics](https://www.dbs.ie/course/postgraduate/master-of-science-(msc)-in-data-analytics)).

The panel was provided with a copy of a letter to QQI dated 1 October 2018 detailing several documents included (including PEL arrangements, Deed of Guarantee pursuant to Section 65 of the Education and Training Act 2012).

It was confirmed that this programme was not being developed with a view to being offered as a Springboard programme.

⁴ This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics

The Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics is considered by the panel to be a suitable embedded award.

Master of Science in Business Analytics

The content and level of the programme is assessed by the panel to be leading to the specific QQI award as applied for.

The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

Differential Validation Findings:

There are no additional considerations relevant to the differential validation under this criterion.

Criterion 2

The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought

- a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.
- b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme.
 - (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.
- c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).
- d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.
- e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.
- f) The programme title and any embedded programme titles are (i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
 - (ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
- g) For each programme and embedded programme
 - (i) The **minimum intended programme learning outcomes** and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified.
 - (ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are **consistent with** the relevant QQI awards standards.
- h) Where applicable, the **minimum intended module learning outcomes** are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
- i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.

For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

Prior to the meeting the panel asked DBS to confirm that the Business Award Standards were appropriate for the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics rather than the Computing Award Standards. The DBS response was received and the panel were content with DBS' selection of the Business Award Standards (section 2.2).

Prior to the panel meeting the panel asked DBS to confirm the correct ISCED code had been selected for both the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics. DBS confirmed that the incorrect code (0747) had been used and this would be addressed in the revised document (section 1.2.1 and 1.2.2).

The Panel and the programme team discussed the possibility of the title of the programmes (MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics) as being "Business and Analytics" rather than the titles as proposed. The programme team reported that this had been considered at length internally and the rationale for the title was that the programme team wanted a holistic view of the subject area to be perceived by the learners rather than the two and separate "silos" of business and data analytics. In light of this discussion the panel made a number of

recommendations and conditions to reflect the name of the programme (see criterion 5).

The Panel considered that the programme learning outcomes of the principal and embedded programmes (section 2.4) should be revised to ensure that ethics was specifically included in the Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics. The programme team were encouraged by the panel to also include a greater degree of „business„ in the MIPLOs. The panel also commented on the absence of teamwork within the MIPLOs.

The relative amounts of content of business and data analytics was discussed. The programme team highlighted the relevant modules. The programme team may wish to include a diagrammatic representation of this to enhance the programme document and aid the understanding of learners.

The Panel queried the graduate attributes (section 3.3) as being for the embedded award or the principal award. During the visit a revised set of graduate attributes for the embedded award was provided which DBS confirmed would be included in the revised documents.

The Panel sought clarification as to the maximum enrolment on the principal per annum (section 1.2.2). DBS is applying for a maximum enrolment of three intakes of 150 per year on or around September, January and March or April to a total of 450 learners. Enrolment to the embedded award is not being applied for.

The panel proposes as a special condition of validation that:

- The correct ISCED code must be stated in the revised programme document for both the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics
- The programme learning outcomes for the embedded award and principal award must be reviewed to ensure that ethics (research ethics and ethics related to data) and teamwork are included in the embedded award MIPLOs. Following the updates of the MIPLOs and any required amendments to MIMLOs and module content, the mapping exercise for the MIMLOs to the MIPLOs must be updated.
- The maximum possible enrolment per annum on the MSc in Business Analytics must reflect 450 rather than the current 150 in the documents. For example, sections 1.2.2 „Proposed first year (i.e. new learner) enrolment over five Year” and 3.13 „Five-year plan for the proposed programme„ of the programme document.

Differential Validation Findings:

There are no additional considerations relevant to the differential validation under this criterion.

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)

- 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.
- 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.
 - (i) There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme.
 - (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.
 - (iii) There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies).
 - (iv) There is evidence of learner demand for the programme.
 - (v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant.
 - (vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs.
- c) There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- 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.
- e) The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

As discussed in the validation document (section 3.7), DBS has conducted research with stakeholders on the proposed principal and embedded programme. DBS drew upon evidence of published research on skills gaps and labour market requirements when considering the programme (sections 1.1 and 3.1). The panel was supplied with sample industry feedback and an indication of graduate jobs. The programme team should include these in the revised documents as it supports the claim that there is considerable demand for graduates from this programme.

An oversight of similar programmes was provided including how the DBS programme would be distinct from competitor offerings (section 2.7).

Overall the Panel is satisfied that graduates of the principal and embedded programme will have the knowledge, skills and competences required to follow a career in a related field or indeed progress to further study however the panel felt that graduates may not have the development skills necessary to move into a graduate developer role and this should be amended in the document (section 2.7).

Differential Validation Findings:

UNYP provides a number of undergraduate programmes in related fields meaning that there is a stream of potential students already within UNYP. It is noted that the student numbers have been lower in recent years, but given the market research which indicates there is a need for persons with digital marketing and analytical skills in the labour market, and the post pandemic recovery, the Colleges' view that there is learner demand is reasonable.

Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 (CEFR) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
- d) The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that **target learners** are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
- 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.
- f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
 - (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).
 - (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners; (iii) Has long-lasting significance.
- g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

The panel considered the access, transfer and progression arrangements for the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics.

The programme team mentioned the provision of a short bridging programme for accepted entrants onto the MSc in Business Analytics programme. This was supported by the Panel and should be detailed in the programme document.

In the context of admissions, the Panel found that the specific required IELTS level (6.5) is not provided in the programme document (section 4.2). The Panel sought assurances as to the required level and suggested this be stated for clarity.

The subject of minimum mathematical proficiency requirements was discussed (section 4.2.6). The Panel sought more clarification as to what the minimum proficiency was in terms of stage within a degree.

The panel suggest that engineering be included as a cognate area from a recognised third level institution with regard to entry requirements (section 4.2).

It was confirmed by the programme team that internal students on a study visa would not be able to attend the part-time mode of the programme (section 4.2.8).

The panel proposes as a special condition of validation that:

- The required IELTS level for entry to the programme must be stated in the revised programme document
- That the level and recency of learning in mathematics required for entry must be confirmed in the programme document

It is recommended that:

- The provision and content of a bridging programme event should be included in the programme document

Differential Validation Findings:

The panel considered the educational standards and needs of the target audience in undertaking their studies. The panel asked the College to explain how the established standards were appropriate and were at a level to enable the students to have a reasonable opportunity to successfully complete the programme. It was noted that the majority of potential learners would probably be graduates of other English-medium UNYP programmes, or international students intending to study through the medium of English. While the standard stipulated is similar to standards in some other Irish institutions, there are international comparators where the standards are higher considering demands of Level 9 learning. The panel also noted that while most participants may be international students, the programme may also be attractive to some local Czech students, and as a Prague located College, there should be additional recognition of that local context in the information provided to local applicants. It is recommended that:

- consideration be given to setting a higher entry standard for English language, and as indicated in initial programme validation that the precise IELTS requirement also be explicitly stated
- entry requirements for Czech graduates be stated referring to the standard Czech education system also

Criterion 5

The programme's curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose.

- 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.
- 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.
- c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended programme learning outcomes. d)

The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.

- e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles.
- f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.
- g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.
- h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.
- i) Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.
- 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.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

The module modifications specified by the original panel were subsequently addressed by DBS to the satisfaction of the original panel.

Differential Validation Findings:

There are no additional considerations relevant to the differential validation under this criterion.

Criterion 6

There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

- a) 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 criterion 12 c).
- b) The programme has an identified complement of staff (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments.
- 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
- d) continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development opportunities.
- e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
- 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.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The conditions specified by the original panel were subsequently addressed by DBS to the satisfaction of that panel.

Differential Validation Findings:

Appropriately qualified staff are available to teach and support the programme in UNYP. The panel recommended that it would assist in deepening relationships and also strengthen the similarities of experience across locations that the staff from UNYP be invited to visit Dublin and provide lectures there and vice versa.

Criterion 7

There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

- a) The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also criterion 12 d).
- 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:
 - (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)
 - (ii) suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
 - (iii) printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment (iv) suitable specialist equipment (e.g. kitchen, laboratory, workshop, studio) if applicable (v) technical support
 - (vi) administrative support
 - (vii) company placements/internships if applicable
- 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).
- d) There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address
 - (i) Planned intake (first five years) and
 - (ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake.
- e) The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The panel were content with the resources viewed.

Differential Validation Findings:

The panel confirmed that the physical resourcing of the programme at UNYP had been appropriately considered and that they were in place.

Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The Panel, having reviewed the programme document for the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics, and engaged with the DBS staff, are of the view that the Learning Environment is consistent with the needs of the programme learners.

Differential Validation Findings:

There are no additional considerations relevant to the differential validation under this criterion.

Criterion 9

<p>There are sound teaching and learning strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes. b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes. c) The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload). d) Learning is monitored/supervised. e) Individualised guidance, support and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme. 	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
<p>Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics</p>	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The panel is of the view that sound teaching and assessment strategies will be in place subject to the conditions mentioned elsewhere in this document being met.

Differential Validation Findings:

There are no additional considerations relevant to the differential validation under this criterion.

Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies

- a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with [Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards](#) b)

The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.

- 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.
- d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
- 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.
- 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.
- g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.
- 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.

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Partially	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes partially meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The Panel discussed each module descriptor with the module lecturer (see criterion 5) which included teaching and learning strategies for the MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics. Conditions and recommendations have been made which also relate to this criterion which include the provision of an assessment schedule.

The absence of formative assessment was raised (section 5.10) and the Panel did suggest this as an area that the programme team might want to revisit with a view to identifying students who are struggling with the early parts of the programme.

The issue of the format and clarity of sample assessments has been made earlier in his document. The validation panel agree that the programme's assessment procedures are consistent with the assessment procedures in the School Quality Assurance Handbook.

It is recommended that:

- The provision of formative assessments is considered within the programme.

Differential Validation Findings:

The panel and the Colleges' staff discussed the management of assessment across the two locations. It was noted that this can be a challenging enterprise given the differences in assessment culture in different countries as well as different institutions. It was noted that training was being provided to UNYP staff on the marks and standards and grading protocols in place in DBS. In light of the extension of the provision of the programme across two locations in two different countries, the panel suggests that extra mechanisms be put in place to ensure both consistency of and maintenance of the awards standards. Specifically it is recommended that

- A second external examiner be appointed to assist in the examining process – this is not to infer that the locations are divided by examiner, but that each has a role for the full programme considering both instances

Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

- 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.
- b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.
- c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme specific appeals and complaints procedures.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.
- h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities.
- i) If the programme aims to enrol international students it complies with the Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students 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.
 - j) The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations).

Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The Validation Panel having reviewed the programme document and supporting QQI documentation, is of the view that Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for.

Differential Validation Findings:

The panel was satisfied that learners in Prague would have access to all online, synchronous and asynchronous learning supports available to all DBS students, and that they would have equivalent on site services.

Criterion 12

The programme is well managed	
<p>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.</p> <p>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 programme-specific 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.</p> <p>c) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the</p> <p>d) There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, complement of supported physical resources.</p> <p>e) Quality assurance aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.</p> <p>f) The programme-guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.</p> <p>g) The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.</p> <p>h) There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.</p>	
Satisfactory (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics	
Yes	The panel has evaluated the programmes having regard to the criterion and sub-criteria and recommends that QQI can be satisfied that the programmes meet this criterion.

Original Validation Findings:

The Panel had access to DBS, Quality Assurance Handbook.

The panel raised a concern about the resourcing of the teaching and management of the proposed MSc in Business Analytics and embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics which is addressed under criterion 6.

The panel having reviewed the programme document and supporting QQI documentation, is of the view that the programme will be well managed subject to appropriate resourcing.

Differential Validation Findings:

In discussions with the DBS team it was not evident that there was sufficient clarity on how a programme, provided in multiple locations, is managed to ensure that there consistent equivalence of learning experience. There also seemed to be a little confusion about the precise responsibilities pertaining to certain roles. It is particularly important that this is very clear to all parties including students to ensure that communications are clear and programme standards are explicitly managed. The panel advises that DBS revise its programme management and quality assurance arrangements including the consortium agreement and document them in full to:

- Ensure that there is clear understanding by all parties that there is one programme with a number of instances and that all standard DBS programme management quality assurance procedures need to be implemented in full, in particular membership of the programme board by all persons teaching on the programme in both locations, student representatives from both locations
- Describe explicitly the equivalent roles in each location with their specific job descriptions, and complement this with an organogram for the management of the programme – look at both individual roles and also groups, e.g. Academic Director, Programme Team and responsibilities such as exemptions, mitigations, deferrals, etc.
- Define clearly what minor and major changes are and the clear boundaries beyond which a teacher/lecturer does not have discretion to make local changes without using the standard QA mechanisms for said minor/major changes - all parties should be able to make proposals in this regard through the standard process
- Review the complaints procedures and to ensure that they are not contradictory and that they provide for appropriate escalation ensuring they can be easily understood by everyone, especially students
- Ensure that quality assurance responsibilities and oversight responsibilities are clear and appropriate

And further the panel recommends that

- there be joint programme team meetings during the first year of the operation of the programme, and as needed thereafter.

Part 2B Overall recommendations to QQI following evaluation for differential validation

Principal programme: Master of Science in Business Analytics

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 special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Embedded programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics

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 special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition; these may include proposed pre-validation conditions i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination);
	Not satisfactory.

Reasons for the overall recommendation

The panel was satisfied that DBS entered a collaborative arrangement with UNYP following the conclusion of a reasonable due diligence exercise, and that a good relationship has been established which has the potential to support the successful provision of the programmes. While a variety of documentary tools, including the formal agreement are in place, elements of them are not sufficiently robust to ensure that there is a consistently equivalent standard in the programme and learner experience in all locations without some key amendments.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

That DBS revise its programme management and quality assurance arrangements including the consortium agreement and document them in full to:

1. Ensure that there is clear understanding by all parties that there is one programme with a number of instances and that all standard DBS programme management quality assurance procedures need to be implemented in full, in particular membership of the programme board by all persons teaching on the programme in both locations, student representatives from both locations
2. Describe explicitly the equivalent roles in each location with their specific job descriptions, and complement this with an organogram for the management of the programme – look at both individual roles and also groups, e.g. Academic Director, Programme Team and responsibilities such as exemptions, mitigations, deferrals, etc.
3. Define clearly what minor and major changes are and the clear boundaries beyond which a teacher/lecturer does not have discretion to make local changes without using the standard QA mechanisms for said minor/major changes - all parties should be able to make proposals in this regard through the standard process
4. Review the complaints procedures and to ensure that they are not contradictory and that they provide for appropriate escalation ensuring they can be easily understood by everyone, especially students
5. Ensure that quality assurance responsibilities and oversight responsibilities are clear and appropriate.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

- That consideration be given to setting a higher entry standard for English language.
- That entry requirements for Czech graduates be stated referring to the standard Czech education system also.
- That a second external examiner be appointed to assist in the examining process – this is not to infer that the locations are divided by examiner, but that each has a role for the full programme considering both instances.
- That the staff from UNYP be invited to visit Dublin and provide lectures there and vice versa
- That there be joint programme team meetings during the first year of the operation of the programme, and as needed thereafter.

Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

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

Panel chairperson: Dr Tara Ryan

Date: 24 February 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara A. Ryan." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Signed:

Addendum

Disclaimer

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