

Independent Programme Review Report

Provider name	DBS
Date of site visit	30 th April 2019
Date of report	11 th June 2019

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Marketing
	Award	Master of Science
	Credit	90 ECTS
	Duration¹ <i>(years, months, weeks)</i>	Full-time: 3 semesters of 12 weeks each across 12 months. Part-time: 5 semesters of 12 weeks each across 24 months

Embedded programme	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Science
	Credit	60 ECTS
	Duration	Full-time: 2 semesters of 12 weeks across 12 months. Part-time: 4 semesters of 12 weeks each across 24 months.

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1 Introduction

The scope of the review encompassed the Masters of Science in Marketing and the embedded award of Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing in DBS.

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 policies, 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, 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. 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 reports 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 Provider
Alan Morgan	Course Director, Lecturer
Dermot Gallagher	Lecturer
Lynn Monaghan	Lecturer
Mary Nolan	Lecturer
Michaelle O Connor	Lecturer
Bernadette Higgins	Lecturer
Susan Sweeney	Lecturer
Niamh Cullen	Lecturer
Darina Reilly	Lecturer
Dr Heikki Laiho	Lecturer
Keeling Lee	Lecturer
Ray McDonnell	Lecturer
Ray Whelan	Lecturer
Mark Power	Lecturer
Ronan Frawley	Lecturer
Dr Michael Maguire	Lecturer
Ieva Masevic	Lecturer
John Nobel	Lecturer
Niamh Hickey	Lecturer

Emma Olohan	Lecturer
Victoria Doyle	Lecturer
Jacklyn Tully	Lecturer
Dr Chantal Ladias	Lecturer
Juan Pablo Fravego	Lecturer
Dr Shakeel Sidiqi	Lecturer
John Staunton	Lecturer
Stephen Kearney	Lecturer
Naomi Kendall	Lecturer
Aisling Duhay	Lecturer
Gary Bernie	Lecturer
Ian Sherwin	Lecturer
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School Operations
Darragh Breathnach	Head of Academic Operations
Lori Johnston	Registrar
Dr Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar
Dr Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Dr Lee Richardson	Data Analytics and Reporting Manager
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Jane Buggle	Librarian
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer
Mary Fenlon	Programme Coordinator

Sarah Sharkey	Student Retention Officer
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2.2 Agenda

See Appendix 2.

2.3 Persons Met

Staff, Students and Graduates with whom the Panel Met

Dialogue on learning opportunities

Alan Morgan	Course Director
Michael Maguire	Course Director
Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Emma Balfe	Head of Faculty and School (Acting)
Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning
Tanya Balfe	Admissions Manager
Jane Buggle	Deputy Librarian
Martin Doris	Assistant Registrar
Lori Johnson	Registrar

Standards and participation in the programme

Alan Morgan	Course Director
Michael Maguire	Course Director
Kerry McCall Magan	Head of Academic Programmes
Tony Murphy	Head of Quality Enhancement and Innovation in Teaching and Learning
Tanya Balfe	Admissions Manager
Grant Goodwin	QA Officer
Lori Johnson	Registrar

Programme Team

Name	Job Title with the Provider
Alan Morgan	Course Director
Dr Michael Maguire	Course Director
Gary Bernie	Lecturer
Dr Chantal Ladias	Lecturer
Ieva Masevic	Lecturer
Ray McDonnell	Lecturer
Dr. P.J. Paul,	Lecturer
John Staunton	Lecturer
Niamh Cullen	Lecturer
Shaun Hayden	Lecturer
Juan Pablo Fravego	Lecturer

Facilities Review

Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
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Learners and Graduates

Parth Parekh	student
Lakshay Bedi	student
Nupur Kalose	student
Vinodkumar Sridhar	student
Ibrahim El Samad	student

3 Review of the Programme Review Report

3.1 Fitness for Purpose of the Programme

The panel evaluated the observations, comments and suggestions from internal and external stakeholders and found that these were duly factored into the review process. Internal stakeholders consisted of students and staff (academic, support and administrative) and professional bodies such as The Marketing Institute of Ireland. Further consultations were held with graduates and with a wide range of employers in the services sector, including SMEs, larger corporate companies and marketing agencies.

Information was received in relation to the stakeholder consultation and the panel was satisfied that a comprehensive consultation was carried out with industry representatives, including employers and industry representative bodies. The panel noted that several government papers on employment and skills had been consulted including *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025* (Dept of Education and Skills) *National Survey of Employers' View of Irish Higher Education Outcomes, 2015* and, more recent publications including *Addressing Skills Needs Arising from the Potential Implications of Brexit* National Skills Council Report, 2018 for instance.

The review process was also informed by the comparator analysis undertaken by DBS and a review of External Examiner reports.

The panel found that the consultation process had been comprehensive and it was concluded that the proposed programme was fit for purpose. Further commentary is provided in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 of this report.

3.2 Achievement of the Programme of its Stated Objectives

The aims, objectives and graduate profile of the programme was outlined. The panel found that the proposed programme learning outcomes have been mapped to the QQI Science Awards Standards and satisfy the QQI Awards Standards for the Science Awards at Level 9. It was stated that successful completion of the programme provided learners with the knowledge, critical analysis skills and competencies required to progress in different areas of the marketing and social media sector such as SMEs, general marketing and digital agencies as well as larger corporate employers

3.3 Learner Profile

This programme is aimed at learners with a second class second division (2.2) honours bachelor degree in business or marketing who wish to specialise in the field of marketing with a view to entering industry. It will also be of interest to learners who have completed their undergraduate degree in marketing and wish to specialise in this area. An equivalent professional qualification such as ACCA or CIMA will also be considered. If an individual holds a non-business Level 8 bachelor degree but has three years marketing experience, they may also be considered.

3.4 Learner Performance

The number of applications for the full-time programme has continued to grow steadily since 2013. There are increasingly large numbers of international students who are interested in undertaking a full-time Masters in Ireland, due to career opportunities arising from this. However, applicants may not always be appropriately qualified for entry in terms of prior qualifications or meeting the English language requirements of the programme.

Overall pass rate

An overall average pass rate (total passed enrolled) of 94.29%. Overall, 1.59% of Learners failed the programme, and 4.13% of Learners were non-active. Pass rates ranged from a low of 93.88% in 2017/18 to a high of 95.18% in 2014/15.

The average mark in 2014/15 ranges from approximately 40% (B9RS102) to 70% (B9MK114). It can also be seen that there is a large spread of marks for B9RS102 (Dissertation). Note: B9MK112 is an elective which no Learners chose in 2014/15. The average mark in 2015/16 ranges from approximately 50% (B9RS102) to 65% (B9MK120). Note: B9MK112 is an elective which no Learners chose in 2015/16.

Award classification

The overall award classifications for the period 2014/15 to 2017/18 shows that 8.7% of Learners graduate from the MSc Marketing programme with First Class Honours, a further 50.31% graduate with Merit, and 40.99% with a Pass Award. The percentage of Distinctions decreased significantly from 2014/15 to 2015/16 and then have steadily increased from 2015/16 to 2017/18. The percentage of Merit awards has increased from 2014/15 to 2017/18 whilst the percentage of Pass awards has decreased from 2014/15 to 2017/18.

It is noted that percentage of Distinctions (8.7%) is lower than both the DBS average of 12% and the Private Provider average of 19% for Level 9 programmes. In contrast, the percentage of Merit awards (50.31%) is higher than both the DBS average of 38% and the Private Provider average of 44% for Level 9 programmes. and the average of Lower Second Class Honours awards for private providers (28%). The percentage of Pass awards (40.99%) is lower than the DBS average of 48% but higher than the Private Provider average of 36% for Level 9 programmes.

The lower percentage number of Distinctions may be due to the overall profile of Learners, with a large number of overseas learners for whom English maybe a second language, with the challenges this presents at Masters level, albeit that all learners are required to meet standard English language requirements for entry.

Destination of graduates

The MSc in Science in Marketing has been specifically designed with the needs of current and future marketing professionals and managers in mind. The course is aimed at those seeking to advance their studies and/ or professional career in marketing and its related fields. The type of role for graduates include Head of Sales, Marketing Assistant, Marketing Manager, Digital Marketing Assistant, Visual Artist, Client Associate, Digital Marketing Executive, Multi Media Planning Assistant, Digital Marketing Intern, PA, Advertising Operations Manager, Sales & Marketing Manager.

Examples of recent graduates have obtained employment or progressed in their careers at:

1. Harvey Norman Retail
2. The Law Society
3. The RDS
4. Leinster Rugby
5. St. Vincent's Hospital
6. Google
7. Facebook
8. Airbnb

3.5 Quality of the Learning Environment

Commentary was provided on access to lecturers, the use of Moodle as a virtual learning environment and teaching strategy. 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.

The panel concluded that the learning environment was consistent with the needs of the learners. Further commentary is provided in Sections 7.7, 7.8 and 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, external examiners, professional bodies and through review and discussion at team meetings.

The panel concluded that the workload was appropriate and noted the willingness of teaching staff to address any issues brought to them by the students.

3.7 Effectiveness of Procedures for Assessment

It was noted that all assessment for the programmes conforms to the DBS assessment regulations which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013. The evaluation of assessment is based on feedback from learners, external examiners, employers, as well as feedback from reviews and validations.

The panel found the assessment processes relating to the programmes to be appropriate. Further commentary is provided in Section 7.10 of this report.

3.8 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 programme under review has 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, access, transfer and progression. It was noted that there were no programme-specific QA requirements and no special accreditation or regulatory requirements for any professional bodies.

3.9 Proposed Modifications

Overview

One of the major changes to the programme is the introduction of an exit award. The Postgraduate Diploma is an embedded award in the MSc in Marketing. It will not be offered separately but is an exit award at 60 ECTS for learners who are unable to or wish not to complete the full Masters programme. This will allow learners to graduate with an award at 60 ECTS. The inclusion of an exit award for Level 9 programmes has been identified as important for DBS generally to allow acknowledgement of attainment for learners who cannot progress, in particular for international learners whereby a transcript with ECTS alone may not be fully recognised or understood by employers in their home country.

Another key change to the programme is the decision not to have any taught elective modules (except the Dissertation / Applied Project module). This is intended to give the programme a much more robust and focused approach at Masters level.

A number of modules on the programme have been reviewed and retitled to better reflect the contemporary environment:

1. Services Marketing Management
2. Web Marketing and Metrics
3. Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship
4. Applied Strategic Marketing
5. International Marketing
6. Applied Research Project

Brief details of these newly proposed modules as follows:

Services Marketing Management (10 ECTS)

This is a proposed new module. Ireland's Services Marketing industry represents 85% of employment opportunities for graduates and therefore it is seen as a crucial new inclusion on the programme. The majority of marketing graduates will spend all of, or most of, their careers working in service-based organisations. This module seeks to furnish students with a comprehensive appreciation of the critical service marketing management issues facing the service sector and service-organisations. In so doing the module seeks to instil a service logic in its students thus preparing them for success in the service economy into which they graduate.

Web Marketing and Metrics (5 ECTS)

This module is proposed as a combined update of the former elective modules, 'Web Marketing Practice' and 'Developing Digital Media' due to the critical importance of digital marketing and measurement to modern day marketing. The module will offer the learner both the theory and practice of planning, managing, and measuring a web based digital marketing project. Planning elements including campaign scoping, deliverables, budgeting and performance reviews will be central to any digital campaign. Consumer engagement and insight into online behaviours are key to learner appreciation of the new landscape. Understanding the costs, rewards and risks associated with developing any interactive digital media campaign will also be outlined.

Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship (5 ECTS)

This is proposed as a new inclusion to the revised programme. *Small businesses make up over 99% of businesses in the enterprise economy in Ireland and account for 70% of people employed*'. Rapid changes have prompted today's organisations to ensure their survival by launching innovative products and services with advanced technology, together with new thinking approaches. These approaches require creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Applied Strategic Marketing (10 ECTS)

This module is an update of the existing module 'Strategic Marketing Management'. The module is designed to be delivered in an applied manner. The module is based on a case study learning approach. Learners are required to engage every week with a series of marketing case studies and analyse them in order to make strategic marketing decisions (12 case studies over 24 weeks).

International Marketing (10 ECTS)

This module is an update of the former elective module 'Global Marketing'. The importance of the international environment in the marketing world has been recently highlighted by challenges such as political intervention (Trump/China/Brexit, etc.). International markets evolve rapidly and very often

companies struggle to keep up in terms of their strategy. It is therefore reasonable to deduce that many companies' international operations will consist of a collage of country market operations that pursue different objectives at any one time. This module will bring learners through the systematic design of international marketing strategies. Learners will gain insights into international theories, concepts and ideas as they relate to global marketing issues. Learners will be requested to discuss a series of case studies in various industries across the globe, as well as write a publishable international marketing case study on an international marketing topic of their choice.

Dissertation /Applied Research Project (25 ECTS)

This module has been updated and revised such that the learner will choose between a traditional research dissertation approach or an applied research approach, which will most likely be focused on an organisation in which the learner either is involved with or is employed by. The Dissertation /Applied Research Project module focuses on allowing the learner to produce a robust piece of research underpinned by a primary and secondary data collection and a rigorous qualitative and/ or quantitative data analysis. The process is designed to expose the learner to the critical analysis of key issues of marketing through reference to the academic literature and experience as a researcher. The learner will be encouraged to critically evaluate the implications of the findings of their research in relation to the research focus and to develop a concept of lifelong learning and research skills, including critical thinking, reasoning and reflection abilities.

The Dissertation/Applied Research Project module has been included to allow the learner to bring together the learning from all the modules that have been previously completed at this level and apply the skills and knowledge to a practical case or problem and robustly formulate a solution and provide the necessary data to support the solution proposed. The Learner can demonstrate their knowledge, practical and cognitive skills in this piece of work. The programme learning outcomes focus on the learners' ability to evaluate, construct, analyse and think critically and this module allows for all of these outcomes to be demonstrated from an academic perspective but also to have a portfolio piece of work that can be shared with current or prospective employers.

This newly designed research dissertation module is now worth 25 ECTS as opposed to 30 ECTS in the existing programme.

Contemporary Consumer Behaviour (10 ECTS)

This module is an update of the previous module 'The Changing Consumer' which is offered at 5 ECTS level on the existing programme. This module will now be offered at 10 ECTS and has been renamed to accurately reflect what the learner will be investigating. The module has been updated to include learning from the behavioural sciences and new areas of consumer behaviour which marketers must understand, for example the relationship between on and offline behaviour and the omnichannel approach from brands. This module will now be delivered at 10 ECTS.

Marketing Innovations and Sustainable Practices (5 ECTS)

This module is an update of the previous module 'Marketing Innovations' which is offered as an elective on the current programme delivered at 10 ECTS level. The newly revised module will be delivered at 5 ECTS, bearing in mind that there are no electives on the new programme. The objective of this module is to encourage and support students in thinking creatively about creating and marketing new products/services that will contribute to the well-being of society and minimize negative effects on society. In effect learners are becoming entrepreneurs by honing their thoughts into a marketing reality.

Research Methods (5 ECTS)

Research Methods is offered as a 10 ECTS linear module on the existing programme. This newly designed module is now delivered at 5 credits in Semester 2 to give a more focused approach on research methodologies closer to the dissertation stage. The module seeks to develop the learner's knowledge and understanding of the processes underpinning formal research. It provides coverage of research philosophies, strategies, designs, sampling, methods of data collection, while highlighting the ethical implications of, and the need for rigour in, Masters level research. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques will be explored, equipping learners with the requisite skills to plan, investigate, analyse and present data using various qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.

Integrated Marketing Communications (10 ECTS)

This is an update on the very important module 'Integrated Marketing Communications in a Digital Age'. The Module content, readings and assessment have been updated in line with current trends.

4 Evaluation of the Modified Programme

4.1 Report see Appendix 1.

5 Outcome of the Review

5.1 Summary

The panel is satisfied that the criteria have met subject to twelve (12) conditions. There are ten (10) recommendations and five (5) commendations.

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Marketing
	Award	Master of Science
	Credit	90 ECTS
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Embedded programme	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Science
	Credit	60 ECTS
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

6 Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Michael Hall	Chair	Head of Department of Health and Leisure Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Dr Patricia McHugh	Panel Member	Lecturer in Marketing and Programme Director, MSc Digital Marketing, School of Business and Economics, NUI Galway
Bairbre Brennan	Panel Member	Assistant Lecturer Technological University Dublin
Jordan Bowe	Student/Learner representative	Marketing Student National College of Ireland
Ian Bolton	Independent Industry Representative	Managing Director Colours International
Mary Jennings	Secretary	Communications 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	30 th April 2019
Date of report	11 th June 2019

	First intake	Last intake
Proposed Enrolment interval	September 2019	September 2023
Maximum number of annual intakes	Two – September and January	

Principal programme	Title	Master of Science in Marketing
	Award	Master of Science
	Credit	90 ECTS
	Duration² <i>(years, months, weeks)</i>	Full-time: 3 semesters of 12 weeks each across 12 months. Part-time: 5 semesters of 12 weeks each across 24 months

Embedded programme	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Science
	Credit	60 ECTS
	Duration	Full-time: 2 semesters of 12 weeks across 12 months. Part-time: 4 semesters of 12 weeks each across 24 months.

Evaluators

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Michael Hall	Chair	Head of Department of Health and Leisure Studies, Institute of Technology, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Dr Patricia McHugh	Panel Member	Lecturer in Marketing and Programme Director, MSc Digital Marketing, School of Business and Economics, NUI Galway
Bairbre Brennan	Panel Member	Assistant Lecturer Technological University Dublin
Jordan Bowe	Student/Learner representative	Marketing Student National College of Ireland
Ian Bolton	Independent Industry Representative	Managing Director Colours International
Mary Jennings	Secretary	Communications Consultant

Masters in Science in Marketing

Names of Centres Where the Programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners	Minimum number of learners
DBS Dublin Campus	150	15
Target learner groups	This programme is aimed at learners with a second class second division (2.2) honours bachelor degree in business or marketing who wish to specialise in the field of marketing with a view to entering industry. It will also be of interest to learners who have completed their undergraduate degree in marketing and wish to specialise in this area. An equivalent professional qualification such as ACCA or CIMA will also be considered. If an individual holds a non-business Level 8 bachelor degree but has three years marketing experience, they may also be considered.	
Number of learners per intake	150	
Countries for provision	Ireland	
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. Synchronous and asynchronous learning
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	The MSc in Marketing has been specifically designed with the needs of current and future marketing professionals and managers in mind. The course is aimed at those seeking to advance their studies and/ or professional career in marketing and its related fields. The course will equip learners with a comprehensive understanding of key foundations of the marketing discipline as well as providing them with a detailed understanding of the contemporary marketplace. In addition, students will learn how to apply the latest marketing theory and practice in an increasingly complex marketing environment. Through the dissertation or applied research project, students will synthesise their learning and author a piece of research focussed work.
Specifications for teaching staff	Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma/Masters and/or Level 10 PhD in any of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing, management, services marketing, consumer trends / analysis • Big Data, web marketing, International marketing and branding • Strategic marketing, entrepreneurship In modules where industry experience is desirable, holders of 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 learners to teaching-staff	1:50 Classroom sessions 1: 25Workshops 1: 25Practical Sessions 1:50 Online Class WTE: 1.26/100 = 0.025

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing

Names of Centres Where the Programmes are to be provided	Maximum number of learners	Minimum number of learners
DBS Dublin Campus	15	150
Target learner groups	This programme is aimed at learners with a second class second division (2.2) honours bachelor degree in business or marketing who wish to specialise in the field of marketing with a view to entering industry. It will also be of interest to learners who have completed their undergraduate degree in marketing and wish to specialise in this area. An equivalent professional qualification such as ACCA or CIMA will also be considered. If an individual holds a non-business Level 8 bachelor degree but has three years marketing experience, they may also be considered.	
Number of learners per intake	150	
Countries for provision	Ireland	
Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time	Full-time and part-time	
The teaching and learning modalities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Classroom lectures 9. Case based learning 10. Practical skills sessions 11. Workshops 12. Tutorials 13. Individual and group work 14. Synchronous and asynchronous learning 	
Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)	The Postgraduate Diploma is an embedded award in the MSc in Marketing. It will not be offered separately but is an exit award at 60 ECTS for learners who are unable to or wish not to complete the full Masters Programme. It is designed to appeal to graduates seeking to enhance their careers prospects in industries where a marketing function is critical to the business needs. The course will equip learners with a comprehensive understanding of key foundations of the marketing discipline as well as providing them with a detailed understanding of the contemporary marketplace. In addition, students will learn how to apply the latest marketing theory and practice in an increasingly complex marketing environment. Through the dissertation or applied research project, students will synthesise their learning and author a piece of research focussed work.	
Specifications for teaching staff	Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Level 9 Postgraduate Diploma/Masters and/or Level 10 PhD in any of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing, management, services marketing, consumer trends / analysis • Big Data, web marketing, International marketing and branding 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic marketing, entrepreneurship <p>In modules where industry experience is desirable, holders of Level 8 honours bachelor degrees in the above disciplines, who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant senior industry experience, may also be considered.</p>
<p>Specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching-staff</p>	<p>1:50 Classroom sessions 1: 25Workshops 1: 25Practical Sessions 1:50 Online Class WTE: $1.18/50 = 0.024$</p>

Other noteworthy features of the application

Part 2 Evaluation against the validation criteria

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

Satisfactory Yes	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. ³

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

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 this programme. 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. The panel was informed that DBS is currently taking part in the re-engagement process with QQI and has completed the Pilot Phase. As part of the re-engagement process, policies and procedures were being reviewed.

DBS has 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).

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

Satisfactory partially	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) 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).
Yes		d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards</i> .
Yes		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
Yes		(i) Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought.
Yes		(ii) Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.
		g) For each programme and embedded programme
Yes		(i) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified. ⁴
Yes		(ii) The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are consistent with the relevant QQI awards standards.
Yes		h) Where applicable, the minimum intended module learning outcomes are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.
Yes		i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.
Yes		(i) For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards. ⁵

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel found that, in general, the aims, objectives and rationale for the programme were expressed clearly and were comprehensive and consistent with the level of the award. The panel made a number of observations on this point as set out below where it was felt further clarification was needed. Some conditions and recommendations have been met in regard to this criterion.

The panel noted from the documentation and from conversations with staff at the site visit that there are a number of substantial changes proposed for the revised programme under review. The proposed modifications are outlined in more detail in Section 3.9 of this report. A major change, suggested by the external examiner, is the introduction of an exit award, the Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing at 60ECTS. This embedded programme, which is not offered separately, offers acknowledgement of attainment of learning for learners are unable to complete the final dissertation of the MSc.

Another change is the decision not to have taught electives on the programme. In conversation with teaching staff, the panel was informed that this was to provide a more focussed and robust approach to the topics of marketing at a Masters level, which requires the capacity for more critical analysis.

The panel was of the view that it was not sufficiently clear from the documentation that the programme learning outcomes had been retained for the proposed programme.

It is a condition that DBS include a section in the Programme Document that describes how the programme learning outcomes have been retained.

The panel noted that it was proposed that the Digital Marketing stream in the existing programme be discontinued in the revised programme. At the site visit, the panel and staff discussed this point and the panel learned that, in contemporary marketing practices, digital marketing is embedded in many aspects of marketing as a matter of course – it is not something added on, for instance – and it is proposed to take this approach in the revised programme to reflect this development.

The panel concluded that it was not clear in the documentation that the digital marketing stream had been discontinued and that this should be clear to prospective students making programme choices.

It is a condition that DBS articulate in the Programme Document that the creation of the MSc in Digital Marketing has resulted in the discontinuation of the digital marketing stream of the original programme.

Other modules have been reviewed and updated, with the addition of new modules such as Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Services Marketing Management that reflect the needs of business, the changing consumer and changes in technology. See Sections 7.3 and 7.5 for further comment on this.

In conversation with staff, the panel was informed that the programme content had been re-organised as a result of the review and that plans were in place to deliver the programme in a way that was appropriate to a Level 9. Given the level of change, the panel concluded that there needed to be greater clarity on how the content of the re-organised programme had not changed significantly from the existing programme.

It is a condition that DBS confirm with evidence that the programme content, at a higher level, has been reorganised with respect to marketing at Level 9 on the NFQ and has not changed significantly from the existing programme.

It is a condition that all module MIMLOs are NFQ-level appropriate

The title of the programme was deemed to be appropriate and in line with the QQI standard for the Major Award Type on the NFQ.

It was noted that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes for the proposed programme were informed by the QQI Science Award Standards and have been mapped against these standards.

7.3 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	Comment	Sub-criteria
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. ⁶
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 ⁷ of learner demand for the programme.
Yes		(v) There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant ⁸ .
Yes		(vi) The programme meets genuine education and training needs. ⁹
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.

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel was informed of the consultation process undertaken for this review, a description of which is provided in Section 3.1 of this report.

A comparative analysis of the MIPOs of similar programmes offered by a public provider in Ireland and one programme in the UK was undertaken as part of the review by DBS. The panel noted that while there are similarities between all three programmes, the DBS programme focuses on offering an integrated programme with a balance between theoretical, practical and applied skills, bringing in additional concepts such as creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial thinking.

Feedback from employers indicated that the core competencies required by employers across a broad range of sectors include and understanding of the customer experience, having a grasp of commercial realities in business and being able to respond creatively to the changing nature of consumers who have more power and choice than before.

The panel was also informed that employers had strongly indicated that skills such as team work, capacity to find and build creative solutions to programmes, communication and presentation skills were equally important as more technical marketing skills such as the capacity to undertake strategic analysis of data, being able to apply theoretical knowledge (e.g. around new concepts such as 'bridging' of the online/offline world; or having 'night vision' – the idea of the consumer with no real boundaries, for instance) in commercial ways.

In conversation with staff and learners and graduates the panel was informed that these skills were embedded in the curriculum structure and in the learning and assessment strategies in line with DBS objective for the programme to be an integrated one. These include structured group projects and group presentations where students collaborate on applied projects with an industry focus and seminars and visits with guest lecturers from industry. It was evident from conversations with staff and learners and from the documentation provided that DBS has an excellent network with stakeholders and uses this network to the enhancement of the programme.

The panel concluded that the programme meets a need for skilled graduates in its discipline and that there are employment opportunities available to graduates of the programme.

DBS is commended for team responsiveness to sectoral trends and changes including learner trends.

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

Satisfactory Partially	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 ¹⁰ .
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 (CEFR ¹¹) 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 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.
		f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-
Yes		(i) Reflects the core <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i> , 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.

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel was satisfied that the programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are clearly articulated and working in practice. Information on access, transfer and progression is available through DBS website, promotional material and the Student. This includes information on EU and non-EU entry requirements and information for students with disabilities.

The panel noted that the entry requirements for the programme included learners with a 2.2 honours degree in business or marketing or an equivalent qualification such as ACCA or CIMA would also be considered. Individuals holding a non-business Level 8 bachelor degree but with three years' marketing experience may also be considered. The panel considered the entry requirements in relation to prior learning with experience of marketing was restrictive and excluded, for instance, potential learners with a science background who also worked in business and who would benefit from adding marketing skills to their repertoire. Staff informed the panel that it was an advantage to have marketing experience coming into a Masters programme where learners were expected to be able to critically appraise concepts and apply learning from the beginning and that was the rationale for the prior learning requirement. The panel recommended that DBS consider the entry requirements particularly for RPL for the programme.

It is recommended that DBS broaden entry requirements beyond business and marketing experience for recognition of prior learning pre-requisites.

The panel noted that, in the documentation provided, DBS indicated that there were two programmes that provided inward progression to the proposed programme. These are BA (Hons) in Marketing and BA (Hons) in Business Studies. DBS also offers an MSc in Digital Marketing as well as an MSc in Marketing. The panel was of the view that it would be important to ensure students were aware of the differences between the MSc programmes and also that students were aware of the difference in content and approach between the BA in Marketing and the Masters programmes and were also aware of the proposed changes to the programme under review so that they could make an informed choice as to progression in their studies within DBS.

It is a condition that DBS advise prospective learners of the proposed changes to the programmes and offer additional, relevant assistance in programme choice.

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

Satisfactory Partially	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 <i>programme</i> 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 ¹² .
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. ¹³

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

In a review of the documentation and in discussion with staff and learners at the site visit, the panel considered in-depth specific aspects of the curriculum structure and overall content.

The panel reviewed how the important subject of research and research methods was structured in the programme as the capacity to undertake, manage and apply research to address marketing problems is a key area to be developed during a Level 9 programme. Robust research skills are also needed, the panel observed, to conduct the dissertation/applied research topic (capstone) which has 25 ECTS.

The panel noted that it is proposed to reduce the numbers of credits assigned to the Research Method module from 10 ECTS to 5 ECTS. In discussion with staff, the panel was informed that research methodology is embedded in different modules, in the specific teaching strategy adopted by lecturers in class and in assessed assignments and that, therefore, learners had opportunities to develop their research skills along the way, rather than only in a specific module.

They further informed the panel that learners are coached along the way by staff to undertake research that would assist with their final research project (for those taking the Principal Programme). The panel also learned that, at an institutional level, DBS was encouraging learners to pursue applied research projects for the dissertation or capstone project (in Semester 3, learners pursuing the MSc award will have a choice of pursuing an academic dissertation or an applied research project) as the emphasis throughout was on critically applied learning, including skills in research.

The panel considered that, in general, the approach to how research and research methods are to be learned, delivered and assessed was not sufficiently clear in the documentation provided.

The panel also considered that the content to be covered in the Research Methods was extensive and were of the view that it may be difficult to deliver and assess all the topics proposed in the documentation.

It is a condition that DBS either create two discrete modules for research (capstone)/dissertation options or integrate, under common learning outcomes (MIMLOs), within one module.

It is a condition that DBS illustrate in the documentation what research methods have been explicitly embedded in other modules now that the original research methods is a 5 credit module.

It is a condition that DBS review content of the Research Methods Module and be assured that the quantity of content to be delivered, learned and assessed is realistic.

As noted in 7.2 above, and in the modifications outlined in Section 3.9 of this report, it is proposed not to have a separate digital marketing module as, as was discussed at the site meeting with staff, and as is outlined in the documentation provided, digital marketing now permeates the way marketing is undertaken, particularly given the trends in consumer behaviour (marketing is one-to-one, rather than one-to-many), the trends in digital technology and the alignment of the online and offline worlds in an omni-channel world, for instance. The panel was of the view that it was important nonetheless to ensure that sufficient attention was paid to digital marketing in its own right throughout the programme in all modules.

It is recommended that DBS ensure that digital marketing content is retained in the programme across all modules.

In reviewing the topics covered by the modules in the proposed programme, the panel considered that some topics were under-presented. These include Marketing Analytics, Strategic Marketing and Brand Management.

It is recommended that DBS consider how to include topics that are under-represented in the programme such as Marketing Analytics, Strategic Marketing and Brand Management.

It is recommended that DBS consider including marketing (not digital marketing) analytics content (MIMLOs, content, assessment, research) into modules, including research modules or as a discrete module.

The panel was advised by staff and also read in the documentation of the increasing importance of creativity and innovation to be embedded in the way businesses operate if they are to be successful. The need for students to have creative and entrepreneurial skills was stated in a recent Enterprise Ireland report (see 3.1 above also). This is reflected in the new module on the topic in the proposed programme. In conversation with staff at the site visit, it was evident that the discipline of Design Thinking was a key and developing trend in this area and was covered, the panel was informed. This was not clear from the documentation provided. The panel was also of the view that innovation and entrepreneurship, if they are not to remain at the theoretical level, should include aspects of how to ensure that ideas developed were capable of commercialisation. These aspects need to be incorporated more formally into the module, the panel considered.

It is a condition that DBS change the title of the Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Module to include Design Thinking (or similar) and consider adding Commercialisation to the title also.

The panel considered that while the topic of finance was covered implicitly throughout the programme, as teaching staff also outlined at the site visit, the topic warranted more explicit attention and specific assessment, given its importance in the realm of the effective management of marketing campaigns and initiatives.

It is recommended that DBS include finance in MIMLOs and assessment rubrics in relevant modules to emphasise the importance of finance in business marketing.

Overall, the panel concluded that the proposed programme would need to be reviewed by the team at DBS at the end of the first year of delivery, given the extent of the changes.

It is a condition that DBS, at the end of the first year of the revised programme, review and revise the programme appropriately to an internal approval process.

From the documentation in the proposed Programme Document, the panel noted the listed graduate attributes and competencies that the programme is intended to facilitate and nurture. The panel was of the view that there was an ambiguity as to what constituted an attribute and what constituted a competency. The panel also concluded that it was not clear how the attributes and competencies were linked to the programme proper and/or student engagement or, from conversations with staff at the site visit, if there was a shared understand among staff about this topic.

It is a condition that DBS articulate the graduate attributes and competencies and ensure that these are understood by all programme staff and is underpinned in the content of the programme

7.6 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 (7.12c).
Yes		b) The programme has an identified complement of staff ¹⁴ (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 ¹⁵ opportunities ¹⁶ .
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.

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel noted that teaching staff on the programme were experienced module leaders, with most qualified to Masters level or holding a professional qualification. Some staff members were upgrading qualifications to Masters or PhD level.

There was evidence that staff were involved in continuous professional development, acting as external examiners, serving on editorial boards for industry publications, as well as writing articles in business journals, including DBS's own business journal, published by DBS library. As noted in 7.3 above DBS staff have a considerable network with industry and employers and they bring this to bear on the programme. The panel further noted that many were practitioners in the field and brought this experience in bringing up to date content to the programme.

At the site visit, the panel found that there was evidence of good team work and cooperation among staff and a sense of collegiality. This was demonstrated in the way that the review had been conducted, in the way that staff cooperated on assessment strategies and workload and from feedback from the students and graduates met. See also Sections 8, 9 and 10 of this report.

DBS is commended for its engagement with the panel as part of the review.

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

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		
Yes		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 (7.12d).
Yes		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)
Yes		(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.
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[MSc in Marketing \(Principal Programme\)](#)

[Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing \(Embedded Programme\)](#)

The panel was generally satisfied that there are sufficient physical resources available to implement the programme as planned. It was noted that a five-year plan had been provided for the programme under review.

A tour of the physical facilities in the Aungier St and Castle House Campuses was undertaken by the panel. The on-going development and upgrading of common meeting and study areas throughout the campus to facilitate group work and peer study support was acknowledged.

The panel found that the library uses technology effectively to support learners and staff, including access to an assignment planner, Kindle lending facilities, a Registrar of Scholarly Activity as well as a user-friendly search engine to enable ease of search for books and academic journals. It was noted that specialist library staff are employed to assist students to develop their research capabilities.

The library is engaged in publishing the DBS journals for the School of Arts and the School of Business and Law featuring peer-reviewed research by both staff and students. See Section 7.11 for specific comment on this. This initiative is in line with a core pillar of DBS's strategy on achieving academic excellence.

The panel considered that the information technology facilities were of a high standard, with mobile laboratories available to students throughout the campus, providing ease of access to library and MOODLE resources. The panel noted that the information technology support services had been integrated with other student services, making it easier for students to avail of this service on an on-going basis.

DBS is commended for the publication of the DBS Business Review and graduate initiatives and staff engagement in research and publication.

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

Satisfactory Yes	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.

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel was satisfied that the learning environment is consistent with the needs of learners.

The panel was advised that DBS uses a number of mechanisms to develop and implement supports for students including:

- Learner surveys
- Peer Mentoring Support (with training provided for mentors)
- Student representation on the Academic Board and Board of Studies
- Support for, and engagement with an elected Student Union
- Student services for:
 - Accommodation
 - Counselling and referral services, including specific contact with the provider of mental health for young people, *Jigsaw*
 - Sports and societies, with many student-led events
 - Entertainment
 - Study and meeting spaces within the campus
 - Careers office, providing advice and information on employment opportunities and professional development

The panel concluded that the staff with responsibility for support services were proactive in responding to student feedback for improvements in facilities which was undertaken on a continuous basis. The panel visited the central student hub which had been created and was satisfied that this provided the basis for an integrated approach to providing accessible services.

7.9 Criterion 9: There are sound teaching and learning strategies

Satisfactory	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.
Yes		b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.
Yes		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).
Yes		d) Learning is monitored/supervised.
Yes		e) Individualised guidance, support ¹⁷ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel found that there was a variety of effective teaching strategies on the programme.

The panel noted that an important teaching strategy is the use of group projects. The teaching staff informed the panel that this method was an effective way to learn formal marketing skills, such as critically analysing marketing strategies, and presenting a case studies as appropriate for a Level 9 programme. They had the additional benefits of teaching skills prized by employers such as team work, communications, creative thinking and problem solving. Overall, group projects provided an experience of applying learning to real life situations.

The panel concluded that the use of group projects was carefully considered, with processes in place to ensure that any problems arising were dealt with speedily at local level, generally by teaching staff. The panel further concluded that there was a shared understanding among staff of the use and management of group projects as a teaching and learning resource.

At the site visit, students informed the panel that teaching methods on entrepreneurship were very practical and support was given to students to research all aspects of business /enterprise ideas effectively, including providing links to support agencies such as Enterprise Ireland.

The panel noted that there was a balance between the use of interactive classroom techniques, use of case studies, use of client briefs for project work, use of guest lecturers or visits to businesses or other organisations and on-line resources, including MOODLE to encourage effective learning. At the site visit, the teaching staff reiterated to the panel the emphasis placed on guest lecturers and use of client brief from businesses, as well as field visits to companies so that students were encountering the issues facing companies in effective marketing. The panel observed that, as the programme does

not have a work placement element, this was an important aspect of the programme which was well managed through DBS's network in many sectors of industry.

7.10 Criterion 10: There are sound assessment strategies

Satisfactory Partially	Comment	Sub-criteria
Yes		a) All assessment is undertaken consistently with <i>Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards</i> ¹⁸
Yes		b) The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures.
Yes		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. ¹⁹
Yes		d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.
Yes		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. ²⁰
Yes		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. ²¹

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

The panel was advised that all assessment for the programme conforms to the DBS Assessment Regulations which are informed by QQI Assessment and Standards Revised 2013.

As noted in 7.5 above, it was not sufficiently clear to the panel how research methods were embedded over the whole programme, including in methods of assessment. It was not clear what support for research was provided outside of the Research Module.

It is a condition that DBS formally articulate research supports available outside of the Research Module, including formal supervisory arrangements.

It is recommended that DBS create a list of assessments that support the development of Level 9 research skills.

In discussion at the site visit, it was evident that individual lecturers/module leaders may assess different aspects of research methods, using different rubrics and therefore there was over-assessment in some particular areas – literature reviews were a case in point.

It is recommended that Research Methods lecturers look at where the content of research methods is assessed in other modules and to advise students accordingly.

It is recommended that DBS use a common rubric-based method to assess particular types of student work (e.g. core studies) and make these rubrics available to all academic staff on the programme. Review these periodically as a team.

Given the importance of the capstone research project for MSc students, the panel was of the view that the emphasis in the assessment of Research Methods would focus on the extent to which methods of research that students were proposing were robust enough and appropriate to enable them to research their chosen topic well.

It is recommended that DBS focus Research Methods assessment on ‘proposal as to methodology’ for research projects.

At the site meeting, the panel learned, in conversation with teaching staff, that DBS had investigated the possibility of having cross-discipline assessment as part of the overall integrated approach to this applied programme and to ensure that there was not over-assessment or duplication of effort on the part of both students and teaching staff. The panel learned, that, to date, this had not been widespread but that the teaching team intended to explore how this assessment technique might be introduced. The panel acknowledged that this was not always easy to achieve.

The panel was informed that the teaching staff had, in fact, developed a common method of assessing the group and individual components of the project, including overall assessment of the project by including personal reflection by each student so that there was a fair assessment of each learner’s effort.

It is recommended that DBS consider the introduction of joint (cross-module) assessment across relevant modules.

The panel also learned about the variety of assessment methods which were for the proposed programme, including group projects, the creation of finished artefacts and other methods that were appropriate for a Level 9 programme. An innovative method cited involved students being

asked to write a case study/article (related to the module being assessed) which had the potential to be published in a peer review journal, including DBS's own business journal. While publication was not guaranteed, the process facilitated assessment in research skill development, academic writing, understanding of the theory and how it was applied in real life situations, while the prospect of being published provided motivation to students.

DBS is commended for the variety of assessment techniques used in the programme.

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

Satisfactory Yes	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 ²² .
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> ²³ 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

²² For 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).

²³ See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

		successfully participate in the programme.
Yes		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).

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An overview of the support services available to students is outlined in Section 7.8 of this report. The panel noted that the Student Handbooks and website contained relevant information in relation to the supports and services available to students. It was further noted that there were individual handbooks for Dublin with appropriate information included for students. See also comment on information re progression of students to further studies in 7.4 of this report.

Students reported that lecturers and staff were generally responsive to requests for support and information. In conversation with staff, they indicated that this process of support for students was routine and part of the overall culture within the college, including many informal and non-scheduled meetings in support of the development of the students.

DBS is commended for the non-scheduled commitment to student development on the part of staff.

7.12 Criterion 12: The programme is well managed

Satisfactory Yes	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 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.
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 ²⁴ 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.
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MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

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The panel was satisfied that there are effective structures in place for the governance and management of the programme 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. It was noted that the QAH and associated policies and procedures have been developed in line with QQI statutory guidelines. There are not programme-specific quality assurance arrangements required for this programme, the panel noted. See section 3.8 of this report also.

8 Overall recommendation to DBS

MSc in Marketing (Principal Programme)

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Marketing (Embedded Programme)

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	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); ²⁵
	Not satisfactory.

8.1 Reasons²⁶ for the overall recommendation

Satisfactory subject to proposed DBS meeting conditions met.

8.2 Summary of conditions

- It is a condition that DBS include a section in the Programme Document that describes how the programme learning outcomes have been retained.
- It is a condition that DBS articulate in the Programme Document that the creation of the MSc in Digital Marketing has resulted in the discontinuation of the digital marketing stream of the original programme.
- It is a condition that DBS confirm with evidence that the programme content, at a higher level, has been reorganised with respect to marketing at Level 9 on the NFQ and has not changed significantly from the existing programme.
- It is a condition that DBS articulate the graduate attributes and competencies Ensure that these are understood by all programme staff and is underpinned in the content of the programme.
- It is a condition that DBS either create two discrete modules for research (Capstone)/dissertation options or integrate, under common learning outcomes (MIMLOs) within one module.
- It is a condition that DBS illustrate in the documentation what research methods have been explicitly embedded in other modules now that the original research methods is a 5 credit module.
- It is a condition that DBS change the title of the Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Module to include Design Thinking (or similar) and consider adding Commercialisation to the title also.
- It is a condition that DBS, at the end of the first year of the revised programme, review and revise the programme appropriately to an internal approval process.
- It is a condition that all module MIMLOs are NFQ-level appropriate.
- It is a condition that DBS review content of the Research Methods Module and be assured that the quantity of content to be delivered, learned and assessed is realistic.
- It is a condition that DBS formally articulate research supports available outside of the Research Module, including formal supervisory arrangements.
- It is a condition that DBS advise prospective learners of the proposed changed and offer additional, relevant assistance in programme choice.

8.3 Summary of recommendations

- It is recommended that DBS broaden entry requirements beyond business and marketing experience for recognition of prior learning pre-requisites.
- It is recommended that DBS ensure that digital marketing content is retained in the programme across all modules.
- It is recommended that DBS include finance in MIMLOs and assessment rubrics in relevant modules to emphasise the importance of finance in business marketing.
- It is recommended that DBS consider including marketing (not digital marketing) analytics content (MIMLOs, content, assessment, research) into modules, including research modules or as a discrete module.
- It is recommended that DBS consider how to include topics that are under-represented in the programme such as Marketing Analytics, Strategic Marketing and Brand Management.

- It is recommended that DBS create a list of assessments that support the development of Level 9 research skills
- It is recommended that DBS consider the introduction of joint (cross-module) assessment across relevant modules.
- It is recommended that DBS focus Research Methods assessment on 'proposal as to methodology' for research projects.
- It is recommended that Research Methods lecturers look at where the content of research methods is amended in other modules and to advise students accordingly.
- It is recommended that DBS use a common rubric-based method to assess particular types of student work (e.g. core studies) and make these rubrics available to all academic staff on the programme. Review these periodically as a team.

8.4 Summary of commendations

- DBS is commended for team responsiveness to sectoral trends and changes including learner trends.
- DBS is commended for the publication of the DBS Business Review and graduate initiatives and staff engagement in research and publication
- DBS is commended for its engagement with the panel as part of the review.
- DBS is commended for the variety of assessment techniques used in the programme.
- DBS is commended for the non-scheduled commitment to student development on the part of staff.

9 Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

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

Panel chairperson:

Date:

Signed:

Chris Kaeuffel.

10th June 2019

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 Provider:										Dublin Business School									
Programme Title										Master of Science in Marketing									
Award Title										Master of Science in Marketing									
Stage Exit Award Title:										Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing									
Modes of Delivery (FT/PT):										Full-time									
Teaching and learning modalities										As per module descriptors									
Award Class	Award NQF level	Award EQF Level	Stage (1, 2, 3, 4, ..., or Award Stage):	Stage NQF Level:	Stage EQF Level:	Stage Credit (ECTS)	Date Effective	ISCED Subject code											
Major	9	7	Award	9	7	90	Sept 2019	0414											
Module Title (Up to 70 characters including spaces)	Semester no where applicable (Semester 1 or Semester 2)	Status	NQF Level where specified	Credit Units	Total Student Effort Module (hours)			Allocation Of Marks (from the module assessment strategy)											
					Total Hours	Class (or equiv) Contact Hours	Hours of Independent Learning	Work-based learning effort	C.A . %	Supervised Project %	Proctored practical demonstration %	Proctored written exam %							
Contemporary Consumer Behaviour	1	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	24	178	100										
Sustainable Marketing Practices	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	12	89	100										

Web Marketing Management & Metrics	1	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	12	89	100		
Services Marketing Management	1	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	24	178	100		
Research Methods	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	36	38	51	100		
Integrated Marketing Communications	2	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	24	178	100		
Creativity, Innovation & Entrepreneurship in Marketing	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	12	89	100		
Applied Strategic Marketing	2	M	9	10 ECTS	250	48	24	178	100		
International Marketing	2	M	9	5 ECTS	125	24	12	89	100		
Dissertation / Applied Research Project	3	M	9	25 ECTS	625	12		613		100	
Students will not progress to the Dissertation/Applied Research Project module unless all taught modules have been passed.											

10 Appendix 2: Agenda

Agenda

Tuesday, 30th April 2019

MSc in Marketing

Time	Activity
8.45am–9.30am	Private meeting of panel
9.30am–9.45am	Dialogue on learning opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model of Provision• Resourcing of proposed programme provision• Staffing of the proposed programme provision
9.45am–11.15am	Standards and participation in the programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal approval process• Access and admission requirements for the programmes• Structure, aims, objectives and intended learning outcomes of the programmes• Curriculum design and content• Assessment
11.15– 11.45am	Tea/Coffee Break and private meeting of panel
11.45am–12.45pm	Meet with students and graduates of the programme Tour of facilities
12.45pm –1.45pm	Lunch and private meeting of panel
1.45pm–2.00pm	Preliminary oral feedback to team