

Independent Panel Report on a Provider's Programme Review

Provider	Dublin Business School ("DBS")
Programme(s) Reviewed	<p>Principal Programme: Master of Science in Business Analytics</p> <p>Embedded Programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics</p>

Independent Panel Members

Name	Role on Panel	Affiliation
Dr Annie Doona	Chair	Independent Education Consultant and Former President, IADT
Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Consultant
Dr Hugh O'Donnell	Subject Matter Expert	TU Dublin
Dr Meng Meng	Subject Matter Expert	University of Bath
Eva Juhl	QA Expert	MTU Cork
Damian Gornik	Learner Representative	MTU Cork
Stephen Boylan	Industry Representative	Intel

All members of the independent panel declared their independence of Dublin Business School and that they have no conflict of interest.

Part 1. Introduction

In accordance with statutory requirements and DBS' own programme review and revalidation process, an external, independent Panel convened in September 2024 to conduct an evaluation of DBS' MSc in Business Analytics programme and the embedded Postgraduate Diploma in Business Analytics, for which DBS has sought revalidation.

Part 2. Evaluation Process

2.1 Documents Supplied to the Panel

	Document Type	Document Name
1.	Descriptor	Module Descriptor
2.	Descriptor	Programme Descriptor
3.	Guidebook	Postgraduate Applied Research project Guidebook
4.	Guidebook	Postgraduate Dissertation Guidebook
5.	Handbook	MSc in Business Analytics Programme Handbook
6.	Regulatory Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Declaration ● Deed of Guarantee ● Fee Cover Note ● PEL Refund Arrangements
7.	Report	Programme Review Report
8.	Supporting Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2019 Validation Documents ● 20243 Differential Validation Documents ● Admissions data ● Attendance data ● Board of Studies ● Certificates of Validation ● Enrolment, Progression and Graduate Data ● Exam Paper ● External Examiner Report ● Industry Advisory Board ● Learner Feedback Documents ● Organogram ● Programme Team Meetings ● QQI Criteria and Handbook ● Research, Innovation, Practice, Enterprise Strategy ● Stakeholder Feedback Forms ● Transnational Partnership Handbook
9.	Terms of Reference	MSc in Business Analytics Revalidation

2.2 Provider's Representatives Met

	Person	Role / Job Title
1.	Lori Johnston	Academic Dean
2.	David Williams	Academic Director
3.	Paul McEvoy	Assistant Academic Director
4.	Anita Dwyer	Faculty Manager
5.	Shane Mooney	Head of Student Experience
6.	Darragh Breathnach	Registrar & Director of Campus Operations
7.	Emma Balfe	Head of Teaching Delivery and Content Production
8.	Tanya Balfe	Admissions Manager
9.	Grant Goodwin	Assistant Registrar
10.	Sotirios Karagiannis	Director of Graduate Programmes, UNYP
11.	Amy Hayes	Programmes Manager
12.	Sarah Sharkey	Student Engagement Officer
13.	David Rinehart	Information Literacy & Research Librarian
14.	Giles Kilcoyne	International Recruitment Manager
15.	Francisca Knight	Head of Academic Operations
16.	Seamus Coogan	Content Production and Relationship Manager
17.	Terri Hoare	Programme Level Manager
18.	Derek Reynolds	Lecturer
19.	Juan Fravega	Lecturer
20.	Nitya Govindaraju	Lecturer
21.	Andrew Browne	Lecturer
22.	Kunwar Madan	Lecturer
23.	Luciana Nascimento	Lecturer
24.	Rudi O'Reilly-Meehan	Lecturer

25.	2x Student Representatives	n/a
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2.3 Description of evaluation process

Following receipt of the programme documentation and in advance of the virtual site visit, members of the Panel were asked to provide their written comments (i.e. observations, queries, concerns) on the documentation. This helped highlight areas of interest and where clarification or further discussion may be required. The Panel then met privately prior to the virtual site visit and agreed on specific areas of questioning.

The virtual site visit allowed Panel members to explore the breadth and depth of the programme and the Panel welcomed the range of staff who were available to join these discussions. The Panel also had an opportunity to speak with two student representatives who provided valuable insight into their experiences on the programme.

The evaluation highlighted that DBS had undertaken a comprehensive, stakeholder-informed review process in preparation for revalidation and responded to many of the proposed revisions. The programme's transnational nature - being delivered through UNYP - will no doubt offer additional benefits in the form of peer learning and knowledge sharing opportunities for staff.

At the conclusion of the virtual site visit, the Panel had no significant concerns in relation to the programme, although a number of recommendations have been identified for DBS' consideration. Notwithstanding this, the Panel is pleased to make a recommendation that the programme is satisfactory.

Part 3. Panel Findings on Provider Programme Review Report

Section A. Context and Terms of Reference for the Programme Review

Commentary:

Following on from DBS' own internal review, and in accordance with statutory requirements, DBS has put forward to the following programmes for revalidation:

- Principal Programme: The 90 ECTS Master of Science in Business Analytics (Level 9)
- Embedded Programme (Exit-only award): The 60 ECTS Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics (Level 9)

The Panel's evaluation included two key areas of focus:

- the review process undertaken by DBS to understand, analyse and learn from the programme's performance over the last validation period;
- the revised programme as DBS intends to deliver it over the next validation period, including any modifications from the original programme and the rationale for these.

The programme is a transnational one, being delivered to separate and distinct cohorts of learners by the University of New York in Prague as well as in DBS' main campus in Dublin, all under DBS' quality assurance procedures. The programme is set to be delivered via blended learning, with on-site face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous elements.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the context and terms of reference for the programme review and has no specific recommendations to make.

Section B. **Provider Information and Programme Context****Commentary:**

DBS, a subsidiary of the international education company Kaplan Inc., has been operating in Ireland since 1975 and offers a range of programmes leading to QQI-validated awards from levels 6-9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. DBS has a student body of over 8,000 active learners, along with 472 employees (314 of whom are involved in teaching).

The MSc in Business Analytics was first validated in 2019 and aims to provide learners with the skills and competencies necessary to succeed and progress in the interdisciplinary areas of business management, data analytics and computing.

The programme has recently undergone a comprehensive internal review informed by stakeholder feedback and benchmarking activities to ensure it remains current and relevant. As a result of this, the revised programme is being proposed with some modifications to its modules, and teaching, learning and assessment strategies

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied with the provider information and programme context provided and has no specific recommendations to make.

Section C. **Baseline qualitative and quantitative information**

Programme Data Overview

Commentary:

As per the programme data submitted by DBS, enrolment numbers onto the programme have seen a year-on-year increase, starting at 93 in the 2019/20 year and rising to 346 in the 2022/23 year. The majority of these learners have entered the full-time version of the programme, with an average of 61.8% male learners and 38.2% female learners over the last validation period. The vast majority of learners are from Asia (76.0%), far surpassing any other demographic, and almost all students have been under 40 years old (99.3%), with a handful of exceptions.

Although DBS has processes in place for assessing non-standard applications (e.g. recognition of prior learning, mature learners), the Panel noted that no RPL applications were received over the last validation period (Programme Review Report, Section 3.1.1.1, p. 36), naturally leading to no enrolments of same. It was not entirely clear why this has been the case, though DBS acknowledged exercising caution in widening the reach of the programme due to its interdisciplinary nature. Given that the programme targets working professionals seeking a qualification to progress in their careers, the Panel was of the view that RPL may offer an opportunity toward this. In view of this, the Panel recommends that DBS review the visibility and publicization of its RPL (and mature) entry routes to identify ways to increase access opportunities for prospective learners.

Grade distribution over the last validation period shows the majority of learners falling within the 2nd Class Honours category, with the number achieving a 1st Class Honours falling slightly below the sector average. DBS noted that some learners appeared to struggle with the Applied Research Methods module, which was partly attributed to the introduction of research skills later in the programme. In response to this, a new Research Methods module is being introduced in semester 1 to provide the necessary research skills for learners to then make an informed decision on whether they wish to pursue a Dissertation or an Applied Research Project.

The programme has seen an overall high rate of progression, with as many as 82% of graduates progressing to employment or pursuing further studies, and many graduates have been employed in a wide range of roles related to the graduate profile.

Recommendations:

The Panel recommends that DBS review the visibility and publicization of its RPL and mature entry routes to identify ways to increase access opportunities for prospective learners.

Programme Delivery and Teaching & Learning Strategies

Commentary:

Learners enrolled in the DBS instance of the programme have access to a wide range of resources and facilities necessary for the programme, including Moodle and library access; a Media Lab; a media studio; computer labs; and an OpenStack environment for utilising web servers, FTP servers, and SQL servers. Online delivery is facilitated through the use of Zoom, which was introduced in 2021 and is now available in every classroom in DBS' Castle House premises and two-thirds of the rooms in the Aungier Street premises. DBS also operates a Computing Technical Support (CATS) service which is available to both staff and learners.

Average attendance figures over the last validation period have not fallen below 75% in a given year, with the 2019/20 year seeing a high of 84%. The Programme Coordinator is a key role in the running of the programme, responsible for supporting learners toward positive outcomes. The Programme Coordinator works closely alongside teaching staff, the Academic Director, and the Student Engagement Officer to monitor and identify 'at-risk' learners and follow-up as required.

DBS employs responsive teaching, learning and assessment strategies based around active learning, real-world application, continuous feedback, and guest speakers. The development of the programme and the feedback received across intakes has informed various modifications for the programme moving forward, such as: the allocation of additional credit to Programming to reinforce the teaching and learning potential on the module; the inclusion of a new Research Methods module in semester 1 to develop and refine learners' research skills from the outset, and a move toward more portfolio-based assessment to reflect learners' own critical thinking skills and learning journey.

To date there has been no programme delivery in UNYP. According to the Programme Review Report (p. 4), UNYP has however started learner recruitment and aims to commence delivery in September 2024.

Recommendations:

While the Panel has some recommendations regarding the revised programme (see the Panel's IER), no specific recommendations have been identified under this area.

Section D. **Evaluation of the programme by stakeholders**

Evaluation by current learners and graduates of the programme

Commentary:

DBS offers multiple means by which learners can provide feedback on their programme and overall learning experience. Surveys are routinely conducted at the start and end of each module to gain perspectives on operational matters (first survey) and teaching and learning (second survey). Learners can also provide feedback through their Class Representative, and Class Representative Meetings are typically held each semester.

On the whole, learners responded positively to the programme, indicating general satisfaction with the delivery model, infrastructure, supports, and the enthusiasm of lecturers. Some of the issues raised by learners included the timeliness and quality of feedback, as well as timetabling issues and concerns over group work.

In response to the issues highlighted, DBS has undertaken a review of the Programme Handbook, timetables and exam dates to provide greater clarity.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that feedback from learners and graduates has been appropriately considered and has no specific recommendations to make.

Evaluation of the programme by Staff

Commentary:

Feedback provided by staff during the review process has led to several changes in the module content and assessment strategy, as can be seen in the list of proposed programme modifications.

For example, it was decided that 'Programming, Databases, and Statistics' module would be removed as it had been identified as a potential barrier to entry, while additional credit would be added to Programming to reinforce the teaching and learning potential on the module.

A new Research Methods module is being added to semester 1 which will provide a solid foundation for those seeking to pursue further academic research post-completion of the programme (e.g. a PhD).

The programme team has also moved toward more portfolio-based assessment to better reflect learners' own critical thinking skills and learning journey.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that feedback from programme staff has been appropriately considered and has no specific recommendations to make.

External Examiner Feedback

Commentary:

DBS has conducted external examining for the programme in accordance with sectoral practice, and while the External Examiners have overall noted that academic standards and achievements are on a par with other institutions, there was a highlighted need for more timely assessment data reporting and enhanced clarity regarding DBS' assessment strategy. This feedback coincided with the implementation of a new Student Information System within DBS, and it is noted in the Programme Review Report that "reporting is being worked on with IT Teams involved..." (Section 4.3.3, p. 89).

The External Examiner made a number of other recommendations to improve student experience and assessment practices, though it is not completely clear the extent to which these have been taken on board.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that External Examiner feedback has been appropriately considered and has no specific recommendations to make.

Section E.

Section F. Programme Quality Assurance

Complaints, appeals and commendations

Commentary:

Over the last validation period, a significant number of complaints and appeals were recorded. These included:

- One learner complaint which subsequently escalated to an appeal, with DBS following its complaints and appeals processes, respectively, to the final outcome (which ruled that insufficient evidence existed to support the appellant's claim).
- 38 appeals were filed stemming from a variety of reasons, though some of these 'appeals' included view-script requests which do not invoke the full formal appeals process.
- 155 academic impropriety (misconduct) cases, of which only 35 were found to involve no misconduct. The DBS Programme Review Report states that this figure represents "one of the largest number of impropriety investigations in the College" (Section 5.1.2, p. 92).

The Panel noted that this section presented information both on cases brought by the provider against a learner, and on cases brought by the learner against the provider.

Though the overall number of cases is significant, all cases appear to have been dealt with in accordance with established procedures. It is therefore reassuring to see that DBS' investigatory and appeals processes are working as intended. Notwithstanding this, it is also crucial for DBS to understand why these numbers remain so high and how, as an institution, it can proactively respond to this.

Recommendations:

While not a formal recommendation, the Panel encourages DBS to continue monitoring the programme with a view to understanding, and subsequently responding to, the cause of academic misconduct cases and appeals.

Quality Assurance Systems and Processes

Commentary:

DBS has well-established and QQI-approved procedures in place for the ongoing quality assurance of its programmes. These includes procedures for transnational provision and blended learning, which are particularly important for this programme. The Academic Director for Computing has primary responsibility for the oversight of the programme, while the responsibilities of individual staff members are set out in Section 10 of the Programme Descriptor.

Recommendations:

The Panel has no specific recommendations to make in relation to this area.

Additional Quality Assurance Systems and Processes required (e.g. online delivery / assessment)

Commentary:

Due to the transnational nature of the proposed programme, DBS has approved quality assurance procedures in place to ensure that the additional quality assurance requirements of transnational delivery are met adequately in accordance with established national and international legislation and standards. A Consortium Agreement between DBS and UNYP defines the responsibilities of both parties while recognising that these institutions operate in different jurisdictions.

The Panel recognises the opportunities and challenges that Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) tools have presented within educational institutions, and that identifying appropriate responses to Gen AI use to mitigate improper conduct and ensure the integrity of assessment is an ongoing, sector-wide conversation.

In response to the rapid growth of Gen AI tools and the notably high volume of academic misconduct allegations in the last validation period, DBS has established its own guidelines pertaining to Generative AI use within the institution and revised its Assessment Brief Template so that lecturers can specify the extent to which AI tools can be used in assessments.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that DBS is actively responding to identified issues around Gen AI use and academic misconduct and has no specific recommendations to make.

Section G. **Summary Analysis of the programme**

Commentary:

In order to understand the overarching strengths of the programme, and to identify areas for enhancement, DBS conducted an analysis of the programme's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This analysis found that the programme's industry relevance, the focus on practical application, and the school's advantageous location in Dublin City Centre were all clear strengths. In contrast, identified weaknesses included the relevance of exams, non-credit bearing modules, the lack of a research focus early in the programme, and the rapid rise in AI use. These latter issues were particularly evident in the significant number of academic misconduct cases recorded over the last validation period.

By enhancing the focus on research methods, the programme team identified an opportunity to give learners the choice to pursue either a dissertation or applied research, depending on whether they wish to develop a portfolio of work or progress their research skills.

The high cost of living and competition from other education institutions in and around Dublin are noted threats.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that DBS has conducted a realistic SWOT analysis of the programme and responded to many of the findings. No specific recommendations have been identified.

Section H. **Revision of the programme**

Commentary:

DBS has proposed the following revisions to the programme:

1. Three new modules have been added to the programme:
 - Research Methods
 - Business Database Management
 - Dissertation (elective)
2. The following modules have been removed:
 - Programming, Databases and Statistics
 - Data Mining
3. The following module has been made an elective:
 - Applied Research Project
4. The following module has been reduced to 5 ECTS:

- Business Strategy
5. The following module has been increased to 10 ECTS:
 - Programming for Analytics
 6. MIMLOs across multiple modules have been updated.
 7. The teaching, learning and assessment strategies across modules have been updated to increase the amount of online teaching, to remove proctored exams, and to re-introduce practical demonstrations as part of continuous assessment.

Recommendations:

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed revisions to the programme are informed by stakeholder feedback and relevant to the domain of business analytics in 2024.

Part 4. Overall Findings

In this section the panel will give its overall feedback on the conduct of the review and the findings therein. This feedback will inform future provider review processes and will also contribute to the refinement of any programmes being proposed for revalidation following this review process.

Section A. **Commentary on review process:**

The Panel is satisfied that the programmatic review undertaken by DBS was comprehensive and informed by stakeholder feedback. The Panel further recognises the transparent provision of information within the Programme Review Report and the ambition of the programme's transnational scope, which will no doubt provide considerable benefits in the form of peer learning and knowledge sharing.

Section B. **Recommendations on review process:**

The Panel has not identified any recommendations specific to DBS' review process. However, DBS may find that some of the recommendations on the revised programme can be considered in future programmatic reviews.

Section C. **Commentary on programme revisions:**

The Panel is satisfied that the proposed programme revisions are appropriately aligned with the stated aims and objectives and have been informed by stakeholder feedback to ensure their relevance and currency.

Section D. **Recommendations on programme revisions:**

The Panel has identified seven recommendations for DBS' consideration, all but two of which apply to both programmes.

Recommendations (Principal Programme)

1. The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers.
 - a. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.
2. The Panel recommends that DBS strengthen the link between the programme's stated entry requirements and its proposed learner demographic to better reflect the target demographic for the Dublin intake and to identify ways to reduce strain on the administrative aspect of the admissions process.

3. The Panel recommends that DBS review the visibility and publicization of its RPL and mature entry routes to identify ways to increase access opportunities for prospective learners.
4. The Panel recommends that DBS identify formal opportunities to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers.
5. In relation to the programme's transnational delivery, the Panel recommends that DBS leverage the complete range of opportunities which emerge from the partnership arrangement with UNYP.
6. The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.
7. The Panel recommends that DBS review the choice of a single assessment worth 100% of the module mark in Applied Research Methods.

Recommendations (Embedded Programme)

1. The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers.
 - a. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.
2. The Panel recommends that DBS identify formal opportunities to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers.
3. In relation to the programme's transnational delivery, the Panel recommends that DBS leverage the complete range of opportunities which emerge from the partnership arrangement with UNYP.
4. The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.

Signed: _____

Panel Chairperson:

Date: _____



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

Part 1. Provider details

Provider name	Dublin Business School ("DBS")
Date of site visit	27 September 2024
Date of report	21 October 2024

Section A. Overall recommendations

Principal programme¹	Title	Master of Science in Business Analytics
	Award	Master of Science (Major Award)
	Credit	90 ECTS
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Embedded programme^{1 2}	Title	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics
	Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Science (Major Award)
	Credit	60
	Recommendation <i>Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory</i>	Satisfactory

Section B. Expert Panel

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Annie Doona	Chair	Independent Education Consultant and Former President, IADT

¹ Replace throughout with actual programme title.

² Replace throughout with actual programme title. Copy and paste this table for any additional embedded programmes.

Matthew Hurley	Report Writer	Independent Consultant
Dr Hugh O'Donnell	Subject Matter Expert	TU Dublin
Dr Meng Meng	Subject Matter Expert	University of Bath
Eva Juhl	QA Expert	MTU Cork
Damian Gornik	Learner Representative	MTU Cork
Stephen Boylan	Industry Representative	Intel

Section C. Principal Programme

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (FT)	Maximum number of learners (PT)
Dublin Business School, 12-14 Aungier Street, Dublin 2	1,200 (across 3 intakes)	1,200 (across 3 intakes)
University of New York, Prague (UNYP)	240 (across 2 intakes)	240 (across 2 intakes)

Proposed Duration and Enrolment					
	First Intake Date	Duration	Intakes per Annum	Enrolment i.e. learners per Intake	
			Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Full-Time	January 2025	12 months	3 (DBS) 2 (UNYP)	10 (DBS) 5 (UNYP)	400 (DBS) 120 (UNYP)
Part-Time	January 2025	24 months	3 (DBS) 2 (UNYP)	10 (DBS) 5 (UNYP)	400 (DBS) 120 (UNYP)
Intake Schedule e.g. January September		September, January, March/April			

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:

The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)

"Given the ever-increasing volume of data that businesses have access to today, there is a demand for employees who have computational, analytical and business strategy skills who can inform business decisions to increase efficiency and an organisation's value. This Master of Science in Business Analytics has been developed 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."

"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 constructed as a one year full-time or two-year part-time programme of 10 taught modules of 65 ECTS and a research project of 25 ECTS, leading to an award of Master of Science in Business Analytics."

"The programme contains a wide range of formative and summative assessments including individual and group work, projects, presentations and case studies."

"Learners will synthesise their postgraduate studies with experiential learning gaining critical analysis and self-reflection skills to embrace lifelong learning to progress professionally or undertake further studies and/or research. Through the project, learners will develop independent research and problem-solving skills reflective of their expansion of business analytics competencies and contribute to their chosen field of enquiry, which will be valuable in a variety of contexts in the workplace."

[Extracted from Programme Descriptor, Section 1C.1.12, p. 20]

Target learner groups

"This programme is aimed at learners with a Level 8 honours bachelor's primary undergraduate degree in a cognate area (e.g. computer science, IT, science, mathematics, statistics, finance, economics, business (including quantitative methods), engineering, maths and management information systems), who wish to specialise in the field of business analytics with a view to entering industry, or those with a Level 8 honours bachelor's primary undergraduate degree in a non-cognate area plus three to five years' experience of business analytics and who require a qualification in this area in order to progress professionally. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Learners will need to have achieved a minimum second class second division award (2.2 classification) in their honours Bachelor's Level 8 degree."

"On completion of this programme, learners will have 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."

"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."

[Extracted from Programme Descriptor, Section 1C.1.13]

Approved countries for provision

Ireland
Czech Republic

Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time

Full-time and Part-time

The teaching and learning modalities

- On-site, face-to-face
- Synchronous online
- Asynchronous

- Independent

Summary of specifications for teaching staff		
Role	Profile	WTE
Lecturer (Dublin, Prague)	<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a Master's and/or PhD in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computing science • Quantitative methods and project management • Data mining and business intelligence • Finance • Mathematics and statistics <p>In modules where industry experience is desirable, those who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant computer science, data analytics, business analytics, data mining or software development experience may also be considered.</p>	1.1

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Classroom sessions	1:60
Online lectures	1:60
Workshops	1:30
Practical sessions	1:30

Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:

The Panel is satisfied that the programme outline and staffing specification are appropriate and has no recommendations to make.

Section C.2 Embedded Programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics

Names of centre(s) where the programme(s) is to be provided	Maximum number of learners (FT)	Maximum number of learners (PT)
Dublin Business School, 12-14 Aungier Street, Dublin 2	1,200 * (across 3 intakes)	1,200 * (across 3 intakes)
University of New York, Prague (UNYP)	240 *	240 *

	(across 2 intakes)	(across 2 intakes)
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*Numbers as per principal programme. As this is an exit-only award, learners are not recruited separately from the principal programme.

Proposed Duration and Enrolment					
	First Intake Date	Duration	Intakes per Annum	Enrolment i.e. learners per Intake	
			Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Full-Time	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Part-Time	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Intake Schedule e.g. January September		n/a			

Panel Commentary on proposed enrolment:

This programme is an exit-only award. As such, there is no enrolment of learners separate from the principal programme.

Brief synopsis of the programme (e.g. who it is for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to.)

"Given the ever-increasing volume of data that businesses have access to today, there is a demand for employees who have computational, analytical and business strategy skills who can inform business decisions to increase efficiency and an organisation's value." This Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics "has been developed 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."

"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 is an exit-only award for learners on the Master of Science in Business Analytics who complete 60 credits but do not complete the full master's programme.

[Adapted from Programme Descriptor, Section 1C.2, pp. 23-34]

Target learner groups

This programme is an exit-only award. As such, learners are not directly recruited onto this programme.

Approved countries for provision

Ireland
Czech Republic

Delivery mode: Full-time/Part-time

Full-time and Part-time

The teaching and learning modalities

- On-site, face-to-face

- Synchronous online
- Asynchronous
- Independent

Summary of specifications for teaching staff

Role	Profile	WTE
Lecturer (Dublin, Prague)	<p>Lecturing staff will have a minimum of a master's and/or PhD in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Computing science ● Quantitative methods and project management ● Data mining and business intelligence ● Finance ● Mathematics and statistics <p>In modules where industry experience is desirable, those who are exceptionally qualified by virtue of significant computer science, data analytics, business analytics, data mining or software development experience may also be considered.</p>	1.1

Learning Activity	Ratio of learners to teaching staff
Classroom sessions	1:60
Online lectures	1:60
Workshops	1:30
Practical sessions	1:30

Panel Commentary on programme outline and staffing:

The Panel is satisfied that the programme outline and staffing specification are appropriate and has no recommendations to make.

Programmes being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)

Code	Title	Last enrolment date
PG24049	MSc in Business Analytics	August 2025
PG24050	Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	August 2025

Section D. Other noteworthy features of the application

The programme is to be delivered transnationally in partnership with UNYP. Under this partnership, programme delivery by both DBS and UNYP will be governed and supported by DBS' quality assurance procedures. Formal agreements are in place concerning how the programme will be managed and which staff members have responsibility for coordinating delivery in two jurisdictions and for maintaining consistency of provision.

This partnership has the potential to create many opportunities for staff on both sides and it is highly recommended that DBS leverage these opportunities as and when they arise.

Part 1A Evaluation of the Case for an Extension of the Approved Scope of Provision

(where applicable). Having examined appropriate QA / Governance procedures, comment on the case for extending the applicant's Approved Scope of Provision to enable provision of this programme. (Especially relevant for move to online delivery / assessment)

Not applicable.

Part 2. Evaluation against the validation criteria

Criterion 1. The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme

<p>a) The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the programme.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c) The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	The Panel is satisfied that DBS meets the prerequisites to apply for revalidation of the programme and that the programme has been declared compliant with all relevant statutory and regulatory requirements.
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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

<p>a) The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly.</p> <p>b) A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme. (i) Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme.</p> <p>c) There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s).</p> <p>d) The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI's Policy and Criteria for Making Awards.</p> <p>e) The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate for example it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>h) Where applicable, the minimum intended module learning outcomes are explicitly specified for each of the programme's modules.</p> <p>i) Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.</p> <p>j) For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The programme's title is clear and accurate for the purpose of informing prospective learners and stakeholders, and the Panel is satisfied that the award title is consistent with the relevant award standards.</p> <p>The aims of the programmes are plainly expressed and the Panel is satisfied that the minimum intended programme learning outcomes are appropriate to the revised programme.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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.

Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The origin of the programme's development and a rationale as to why it remains relevant is provided, and there is clear evidence of stakeholder involvement at various stages of the programme's lifecycle. The strong year-on-year increase in learner numbers provides a rationale for the programme's continued delivery, as does the high rate of graduate progression.</p> <p>In relation to intake numbers, the programme descriptor states that the maximum number of learners that could be accommodated in a given intake is 400. The Panel considered this number in the context of DBS' proposal to have up to three intakes per annum, totalling 1,200 learners within a single year. Moreover, these numbers are the same across both the full-time and part-time versions of the programme, meaning that DBS is declaring itself capable of supporting and sustaining as many as 2,400 learners across variant iterations of one programme and in a single year. This represents more than a quarter of its total student body (which currently stands at approximately 8,000).</p> <p>The Panel recognises that these are not target numbers, nor is DBS anticipating that enrolment numbers will increase so dramatically. Notwithstanding this, these numbers represent a declaration of capacity and consideration must therefore be given to the potential impact on resources (physical and human), supports and administration should learner numbers</p>

		<p>rise to anywhere close to 2,400. In factoring this, the Panel is not expressing doubt on DBS' capacity to respond to increased demand, but rather ensuring that appropriate evidence exists of this capacity.</p> <p>The Panel spent time discussing this issue with DBS staff during which it became apparent that the presentation of numbers in the descriptor does not fully reflect DBS' strategic approach to scaling. This approach involves obtaining projections on intakes and careful timetabling and does not exclude the use of caps if learners numbers rise beyond what DBS can accommodate at a given time. While this provided assurance as to DBS' management of capacity, the Panel was of the view that the proposed numbers needed to reflect this, as no reference to management strategies such as capping were apparent.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 1</p> <p>The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 1(a)</p> <p>Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.</p> <p>In partnership with the University of New York in Prague (UNYP), the programme will be delivered transnationally. That is, both DBS and UNYP will deliver local versions of the exact same programme under DBS' quality assurance procedures. This is not DBS' first transnational partnership, and so the necessary formal agreements and processes are already in place. The Panel views this as a partnership with significant potential benefit, such as the pairing of academic staff from both providers for the purpose of peer learning and knowledge sharing.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendation:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 2</p> <p>In relation to the programme's transnational delivery, the Panel recommends that DBS leverage the complete range of opportunities which emerge from the partnership arrangement with UNYP.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 (CEFR³) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>f) The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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). (ii) Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners; (iii) Has long-lasting significance. <p>g) The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>Programme information pertaining to access, transfer and progress is plainly expressed and aligned with relevant QQI guidelines. This includes minimum requirements for general learning, minimum requirements for discipline-specific learning, minimum language proficiency requirements (B2+), and minimum mathematical proficiency requirements.</p> <p>The Panel observed that the entry requirements for the programme appeared oriented toward individuals with Irish or EU-equivalent qualifications. However, with such a high percentage of learners enrolling in the Dublin programme from Asia, the Panel sought to understand how DBS manages international benchmarking of qualifications. Representatives for DBS commented that they refer to the equivalence databases in Ireland and the UK and then manually review and assess the qualifications of each applicant.</p> <p>The Panel was of the view that this process could be streamlined by mapping the most common qualifications and universities of incoming learners to the programme's entry requirements, so as to help alleviate administrative</p>

³ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

		<p>strain and to better reflect the programme's actual demographic as per the enrolment data presented.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 3</p> <p>The Panel recommends that DBS strengthen the link between the programme's stated entry requirements and its proposed learner demographic to better reflect the target demographic for the Dublin intake and to identify ways to reduce strain on the administrative aspect of the admissions process.</p> <p>With regard to opportunities for learners for recognition of prior learning (RPL), the programme descriptor notes that applications "will be considered on a case-by-case basis based upon educational records, work experience, ability to demonstrate technical or mathematical problem solving skills and a capacity to successfully participate in the programme " (Section 4.2.11, p. 45) This is supported by a set of documented procedures which are available in DBS' Quality Assurance Handbook.</p> <p>These opportunities may be particularly relevant to the percentage of DBS' target learner demographic which includes "...those with a Level 8 honours bachelor's primary undergraduate degree in a non-cognate area plus three to five years' experience of business analytics and who require a qualification in this area in order to progress professionally" (Programme Descriptor, Section 1C.1.13, p. 20).</p> <p>In spite of this, the Panel noted that no RPL applications, or indeed mature entry applications, were received over the last validation period (Programme Review Report, Section 3.1.1.1, p. 36). The Panel queried why this was the case, with DBS representatives commenting that they have been cautious about widening the reach of the programme due to its interdisciplinary nature. Nonetheless, DBS acknowledged that more could be done to highlight the RPL entry pathway.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 4</p> <p>The Panel recommends that DBS review the visibility and publicization of its RPL and mature entry routes to identify ways to increase access opportunities for prospective learners.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	The embedded programme is an exit-only award and will not experience enrolment independent of the principal programme.

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

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>c) Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes.</p> <p>d) The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff.</p> <p>e) The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles.</p> <p>f) The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented.</p> <p>g) The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>h) The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes.</p> <p>i) Elements such as practice placement and work-based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements.</p> <p>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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The full-time version of the programme is designed to be delivered over one calendar year, while the part-time version is delivered over two years. The Postgraduate Diploma and MSc share the first nine modules, and learners complete Applied Research Methods and either the Applied Research Project or Dissertation to attain the full Master's degree.</p> <p>The structuring of modules is logical and consideration has been given to the scaffolding of skills across semesters. This is particularly evident with the addition of a new Research Methods module in semester 1 to provide learners with key research skills from the outset. This allows learners to make a more informed choice as to whether they wish to pursue a research project or dissertation.</p> <p>During the site visit, the Panel had an opportunity to speak with teaching faculty to understand how they have managed the challenge of designing a conversion programme which balances depth against breadth of knowledge. Staff acknowledged this challenge and would generally consider what is most relevant to and necessary for industry in deciding one approach over another.</p> <p>The Panel spent some time discussing the Programme for Analytics module, a mandatory module worth 10 ECTS which is delivered in semester 1. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the programme, and the fact there will be learners enrolling who come from a variety of backgrounds (and therefore may not have much programming experience), the Panel proposed whether it would be worth considering</p>

		<p>delivering the module across two semesters to allow learners to assimilate the module content. Though the Panel recognises that the programme is not specifically a programming one, this modified mode of delivery may help provide balance between the practical modules across semesters 1 and 2 and give non-programmers additional time to understand the content.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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

<p>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 criterion 12 c).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 opportunities.</p> <p>e) There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.</p> <p>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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>Summary profiles of all members of the programme's academic faculty are provided in the Programme Descriptor (Section 8), which the relevant prerequisite qualifications and experience stated for each. These include faculty required for the delivery of the programme by DBS in Dublin and by UNYP in Prague. All required staff are in post.</p> <p>The Panel had an opportunity to speak with many academic staff members during the virtual site visit, and the commitment of staff to their learners was evident.</p> <p>The Programme Descriptor also outlines all staff members involved in the management of the programme and their specific responsibilities in assuring the programme's quality, managing the programme's administration, and facilitating the provision of learner supports.</p> <p>DBS' quality assurance procedures include processes for the management and professional development of staff, and the Panel is of the view that the partnership between DBS and UNYP will offer great benefits in relation to peer learning and knowledge sharing by academic staff.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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.

Programme	Satisfactory? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The Programme Descriptor (Section 9) sets out the specification of physical and digital resources required for delivery of the programme. Learners have access to a wide range of resources, facilities and services, including Moodle and library access; a Media Lab; a media studio; computer labs; and an OpenStack environment for utilising web servers, FTP servers, and SQL servers.</p> <p>The library is open six days a week and DBS' online library is available to learners 24/7 on and off campus.</p> <p>Online delivery is facilitated through the use of Zoom, which was introduced in 2021 and is now available in every classroom in DBS’ Castle House premises and two-thirds of the rooms in the Aungier Street premises. DBS also operates a Computing Technical Support (CATS) service which is available to both staff and learners.</p> <p>As required, the Programme Descriptor includes a breakdown of the proposed enrolment over the next five-year validation period, accompanied by corresponding income and expenditure.</p> <p>UNYP operations are spread across three buildings, and include 15 classroom spaces, 2 computer labs, an auditorium, a student lounge, a cafe, and a library.</p>

		Arrangements are also in place to ensure transnational accessibility of electronic resources of the DBS library by UNYP learners.
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

Criterion 8. The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme’s learners

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The Panel noted the many academic, social and cultural supports that are available through the physical and online learning environments, with the online elements of the programme being supported by additional quality assurance procedures for blended and online learning.</p> <p>Modules, in many cases, feature guest speakers such as industry and field experts to provide learners with windows of insight on the state of the sector. The Panel commented that it would be opportune for DBS to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers, as this would not only provide the industry perspective, but allow learners to understand the progression pathways a graduate might follow.</p> <p>UNYP similarly have a variety of academic, social and cultural resources and supports in place to assist learners on their journey through the programme. Given the transnational nature of the programme, it is expected that guest speakers and industry experts will be invited to deliver workshops to UNYP's learners in the same way as they would with DBS' learners.</p> <p>In respect of the above, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Recommendation 6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Panel recommends that DBS identify formal opportunities to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

Criterion 9. There are sound teaching and learning strategies

<p>a) The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes.</p> <p>b) The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>d) Learning is monitored/supervised.</p> <p>e) Individualised guidance, support and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The programme incorporates both theoretical and practical elements using a blended of face-to-face and online learning. Teaching and learning methodologies used on the programme encompass a mix of classroom-based lectures, live online classes, workshops, practical lab sessions, tutorials, and on-demand content to facilitate asynchronous learning. Within these, there are opportunities for learners to undertake case study analysis, problem-based learning tasks, and hone their reflective learning and writing skills.</p> <p>Formative feedback opportunities are built into modules, allowing learners to receive timely updates on their progress and reflect on their learning journey. During the programme review process, it was noted that some learners had issues with the timeliness and quality of feedback, a matter which DBS is now aware of and to which it has been actively responding.</p> <p>In order to understand learners' views on the programme, two different surveys are conducted at the start and end of each module. The first survey asks about operational matters while the second asks about teaching and learning. It was evident from the Programme Review Report that the findings of these surveys were valuable in informing some of the proposed revisions to the programme.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

Criterion 10. There are sound assessment strategies

<p>a) All assessment is undertaken consistently</p> <p>b) The programme’s assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider’s QQI approved quality assurance procedures.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>d) The programme includes formative assessment to support learning.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>g) There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results.</p> <p>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.</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>External Examiner reports from the last validation period have highlighted that academic standards and learner achievements were comparable with other institutions across the higher education sector, and that the assessment process in general has been conducted rigorously.</p> <p>As the programme has been revised, the programme team has moved toward more portfolio-based assessment to better reflect learners' own critical thinking skills and learning journey. This is reflected in the number of portfolio-based assessments which can be seen in the individual module assessment strategies.</p> <p>Formative assessment opportunities are built into the programme and provide an important frame of reference for learners to reflect on their progress. It was noted in the Programme Review Report, however, that some learners expressed issues with the timeliness and quality of formative feedback, a matter which DBS has noted and to which it is responding.</p> <p>In relation to the Applied Research Methods, the Panel noted the proposal to employ a single assessment worth 100% and queried whether this was the most appropriate choice for this kind of module. Specifically, it queried whether there might be an assessment format which would more accurately reflect the nature of research itself, which is conducted over a period of time.</p> <p>In respect of this, the Panel makes the following recommendations:</p> <p>Recommendation 7 The Panel recommends that DBS review the choice of a single assessment worth 100% of the module mark in Applied Research Methods.</p>

Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme, with the exception of Recommendation 7 and its context, which does not apply to the Postgraduate Diploma.
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Criterion 11. Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

<p>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.</p> <p>b) Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme.</p> <p>c) Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>g) The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs.</p> <p>h) The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities.</p> <p>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> 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.</p> <p>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).</p>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>DBS has established a very comprehensive range of social, emotional and wellbeing supports, including a Careers Hub, Student Council, Peer Mentor Programme, Immigrations Service, Sports Clubs, Societies, Student Experience Team, and Learner Supports Service.</p> <p>A four-phase online induction programme has been designed to assist international learners in preparing for their arrival in Ireland, and to familiarise learners with the various services, tools, and facilities available to them during their time with DBS.</p> <p>DBS' commitment to learner wellbeing was evident to the Panel. All staff involved in the student experience undertake the "Safetalk" programme around suicide prevention, with some others completing the advanced "Assist" programme. A free counselling service is available to all students who may require it. The DBS premises contains a physical Student Services Hub and Student Welfare service which can offer confidential support and advice.</p> <p>During the virtual site visit, the Panel met with two recent graduates of the programme who offered insight on their personal experiences of the programme. This discussion gave the Panel a deeper understanding of the learner journey, information provision to learners, teaching and learning,</p>

		<p>assessment strategies, career advice and employment opportunities, and available supports.</p> <p>Learners enrolled with UNYP have access to the university's wide range of 'Student Life' services and benefits, including student clubs, club sports, a gym, fitness classes, and discounts with local restaurants and stores. A Student Life Office is in place to facilitate learner access to these services. Other services available to learners include International Student Services, Careers Service, and an Alumni Office. Learners will also have transnational access to DBS' electronic library resources.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

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 programme’s staffing requirements and can be added to the programme’s complement of staff.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>e) Quality assurance is intrinsic to the programme’s maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.</p> <p>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.</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>		
Programme	Satisfactory ? (yes, no, partially)	Comment
Master of Science in Business Analytics	Yes	<p>The Panel is satisfied that this criterion has been addressed.</p> <p>The programme is built upon established governance structures and a quality assurance system which sets out how the programme is to be managed, who is responsible, and what is to be done. Consequently, the programme interfaces effectively with the QA procedures and the individual staff members involved at different levels of the programme's management are clearly set out.</p> <p>Profile specifications for staff, including teaching faculty, are detailed in the Programme Descriptor, and DBS has fit for purpose policies for recruitment, management and development of staff.</p> <p>As the programme will be delivered transnationally, there are formal arrangements in place to coordinate between academic staff at both institutions (DBS and UNYP) and to ensure consistency of provision. In particular, the Academic Director for Computing Programmes oversees the programme as it is delivered in DBS and UNYP, and liaises with the Programme Leader in Prague on a routine basis.</p>
Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics	Yes	As per principal programme.

Part 3. Overall recommendation to QQI

3.1 Principal programme: MSc in Business Analytics

Select one	
X	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 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

1. The programme fully meets the validation criteria.

Commendations

1. The Panel commends the comprehensive nature of DBS' self-evaluation and review process, and DBS' use of data analytics to inform the review process.
2. The Panel commends the open and constructive engagement of DBS staff with the Panel.
3. The Panel commends the range of supports available to students, particularly international students.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

No conditions.

Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers.
 - a. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.
2. In relation to the programme's transnational delivery, the Panel recommends that DBS leverage the complete range of opportunities which emerge from the partnership arrangement with UNYP.
3. The Panel recommends that DBS strengthen the link between the programme's stated entry requirements and its proposed learner demographic to better reflect the target demographic for the Dublin intake and to identify ways to reduce strain on the administrative aspect of the admissions process.

4. The Panel recommends that DBS review the visibility and publicization of its RPL and mature entry routes to identify ways to increase access opportunities for prospective learners.
5. The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.
6. The Panel recommends that DBS identify formal opportunities to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers.
7. The Panel recommends that DBS review the choice of a single assessment worth 100% of the module mark in Applied Research Methods.

3.2

3.3 Embedded programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Business Analytics

Select one	
X	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 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

1. The programme fully meets the validation criteria.

Commendations

1. The Panel commends the comprehensive nature of DBS' self-evaluation and review process, and DBS' use of data analytics to inform the review process.
2. The Panel commends the open and constructive engagement of DBS staff with the Panel.
3. The Panel commends the range of supports available to students, particularly international students.

Special Conditions of Validation (directive and with timescale for compliance)

No conditions.

Recommendations

1. The Panel recommends that DBS review and revise, as appropriate, its proposed maximum learner numbers, considering whether these numbers genuinely align with its ability to respond to the resource demands of such high numbers.
 - a. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that DBS consider whether staggered recruitment caps may be a more realistic way for DBS to grow in line with its capacity to effectively deliver the programme.
2. In relation to the programme's transnational delivery, the Panel recommends that DBS leverage the complete range of opportunities which emerge from the partnership arrangement with UNYP.
3. The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.
4. The Panel recommends that DBS identify formal opportunities to bring back graduates who are now working in industry as guest speakers.

Summary of recommended special conditions of validation

No special conditions of validations have been identified by the Panel.

Summary of recommendations to the provider

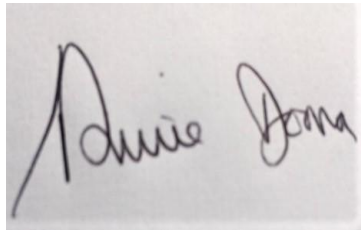
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6. The Panel recommends that DBS consider if/how the 10 ECTS Programming for Analytics module could be delivered across two semesters rather than one to allow students additional time to assimilate the module content.
7. The Panel recommends that DBS review the choice of a single assessment worth 100% of the module mark in Applied Research Methods.

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 Annie Doona

Date: 1st November 2024

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored surface. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Annie Doona".

Signed:

3.4 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.

While QQI has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will QQI be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Part 4. Proposed programme schedules *(post panel feedback and consequent amendments, if any)*