

VALIDATION REPORT



1.	Title of Programme(s): (incl. Award Type and Specify Embedded Exit Awards)	Master of Arts in Transformative Practices in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Postgraduate Certificate in Transformative Practices in EDI (30 ECTS) Postgraduate Diploma in Transformative Practices in EDI (60 ECTS)
2.	NFQ Level(s)/ No. ECTS:	Level 9 90 ECTS
3.	Duration:	3 Semesters
4.	ISCED Code:	0220
5.	School / Centre:	ATU Galway Mayo
6.	Department:	Environmental Humanities & Social Sciences
7.	Type of Review:	New Programme
8.	Date of Review:	05.12.2022
9.	Delivery Mode:	Full Time
10.	Panel Members:	Dr Yvonne Kavanagh, Assistant Registrar SETU (Chair) Mr Gary Loke, Inclusion and Education Consultant Dr Brid Ni Chonail, Senior Lecturer in Humanities, TU Dublin Professor Jason Arday, Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Glasgow Ms Carmel Brennan, Assistant Registrar, ATU (Secretary)
11.	Proposing Staff:	Dr Justin Kerr Dr Deirdre Garvey Dr Mark Garavan Dr John Mulloy Ms Hazel Walker Dr Davy Walsh Ms Mairead Cluskey Ms Natalie Delimata Dr Washington Marovatsanga

12.	Programme Rationale:	<p>There is a need for a Master of Arts in Transformative Practices in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion arising from several sources.</p> <p>First, is the recognition of the changing demographic of contemporary Ireland. The last Census showed that 17.6% of Irish residents were born outside of Ireland. This fact alone heralds a significant change from the culturally and ethnically homogenous society that has characterised Ireland for many decades.</p> <p>Secondly, Irish society has undergone very significant changes in its underlying values in recent years. Liberalism and secularism have become established characteristics of Irish attitudinal structure as evidenced in the recent marriage equality referendum and the abortion referendum.</p> <p>Thirdly, even though much progress has been made regarding gender equality, significant cultural and structural barriers remain. These include issues such as physical safety, workplace culture, and childcare and family support deficits. While much change has also occurred for LGBTQ+ people many exclusionary deficits continue to negatively impact on these minority groups.</p> <p>Finally, the social disabling of differently bodied people continues to be a constraint on participation in social and economic settings for many people. As many as 10% of the population identify themselves as having a specific disability. Neurodivergent people continue to experience significant levels of exclusion and prejudice.</p> <p>This programme is setting out to produce graduates with an evidence-informed orientation towards progressive social change and thereby contribute to a more inclusive Ireland.</p>
13.	Proposed Student Intake:	20 - 25
14.	Stakeholder Engagement:	<p>Consistent with the values and aims of the proposed programme, the MA was designed as a result of a collaborative and participatory process. Three phases of programme development can be identified.</p> <p><u>Phase One – Pre-design consultation:</u> Key professional practitioners were invited to respond to the proposal to create a MA in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. A survey was carried out and consultations held. Participants were invited to suggest core content that would be required in the programme.</p> <p><u>Phase Two – Design Consultation:</u> In this phase, the programme board convened a panel of experts nationally to advise on the programme content. The programme</p>

		<p>board held four separate workshops, and several other engagements, with this panel.</p> <p><u>Phase Three – Course Design:</u> A multi-disciplinary core programme development team proceeded to design the programme to reflect the consultation processes above.</p> <p>In addition to the above, early drafts of the programme were sent to GMIT’s EDI officer for comment and feedback.</p>
15.	Graduate Demand/Employment:	<p>The programme is designed for practitioners operating within multiple settings. Given the significance of EDI, and its incorporation into the strategic requirements of organisations and community groups, combined with the legislative mandates, the programme board expects that MA graduates in EDI will have a high level of employability.</p> <p>Learners will be introduced to practical case studies and be expected to design responses to various social EDI problematics. The aim is not to emphasise a theoretical and sociological learning of issues but rather that the learner is oriented towards personal and social transformation.</p> <p>Learners should be highly employable possessing all the requisite skills - conceptual and applied - for work in the community and statutory sectors.</p>
16.	Entry Requirements, Access, Transfer & Progression:	<p><u>Entry Requirements:</u> A Level 8 degree with a minimum a 2nd Class Honour Grade Two.</p> <p>All candidates will be required to submit a personal statement outlining why they wish to undertake the programme.</p> <p>Candidates may also be admitted to the programme through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in accordance with the university’s policy.</p> <p>In the event of a surplus number of applicants, the personal statement will form the basis for selection of offers.</p> <p>Applicants whose first language is not English are required to provide evidence of English language proficiency in line with the university’s Admissions Policy. These requirements are available from ATU's Admission's office.</p> <p><u>Progression:</u> Graduates of the MA may progress to Level 10 awards in multiple disciplines particularly in the social sciences.</p>

17.	<p>Programme Structure:</p>	<p>The modular sequence of the programme has been carefully designed to bring about emergent and progressive learning and practice application.</p> <p>The first semester grounds the learners in the historical and conceptual context of how inequality and exclusion have come about and been justified. In addition, modules in this semester invite the learner to investigate their own internalised prejudices and inner manifestations of social inequality. In addition, the learners are introduced to practices of engagement that can effect transformation in communal and organisational settings in favour of equality praxis.</p> <p>The second semester is designed to build on these foundation points. Once more, there is an investigation of contemporary and conceptual instances of inequality and oppression. The learners here will engage in the key tools of see, judge, and act. There is a more focused module on community engagement. Learners are also introduced to social research and the sources of knowledge. Crucial here is developing an understanding of how knowledge claims are themselves sources of contemporary power. The objective is to broaden the learner's comprehension of knowledge production and epistemologies and to facilitate them to situate epistemology within systems of power and oppression. This prepares the learner to undertake the capstone research / action project in semester three.</p> <p>In semester three the opportunity to do research or action is designed to permit a deep integration of knowledge and reflection accumulated in the two previous semesters. It is expected that the learner in semester three will be able to synthesise critical understanding with evidence-informed and socially transformative interventions in social space designed to support greater EDI. The learner should have the capacity to demonstrate the full range of programme learning outcomes at this point - knowledge, skills, and competence.</p> <p>This layered and progressive programme design is intended to support the development of a socially engaged, aware, and reflective equality practitioner who can apply their skills in multiple settings.</p> <p>The three programme thematic lenses of race, gender, and disability will be foregrounded throughout and utilised as exemplars for EDI learning and action.</p>
18.	<p>Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategies:</p>	<p><u>Teaching & Learning</u></p> <p>A key aim of the proposed awards is to equip graduates with the skills necessary for transformative practice and an understanding of the structural and institutional settings within which such practices occur. The pedagogical approach will be developmental,</p>

		<p>recognising the student as a co-learner and possessor of knowledge and wisdom in their own right. The sequence of modules is selected to be facilitative and iterative and a progressive learning experience.</p> <p>The programmes will be delivered largely online combined with several residential components. The learning approach will employ a combination of lectures, tutorials, workshops, readings, class discussion, role plays, work placement and case-study analysis. Learners will be encouraged to participate in the virtual classroom by utilising specific online participatory tools. The focus throughout will be on relating concepts to actual situations. A particular effort will be made to invite outside speakers from various domains of practice and from a variety of social settings.</p> <p><u>Assessment</u> The approach to assessment on this MA is to seek as much integration across modules in each semester. The concern is to avoid over-assessment and an orientation of learning towards the evaluative. Assessment briefs will be jointly designed by lecturers and students and the overall application of the leaning in the semester will be applied by the learner as much as possible to 'real-life' situations.</p>
19.	Resource Implications:	<p><u>Library Resources</u> Additional library resources will be required to support the programme. New textbooks will be required though many resources will be available online. Books required are set out in the modular documents. Library resource estimated at €1000.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u> The delivery of the programme will require the equivalent of 18 contact hours over 3 semesters. It is expected that some modules will be delivered in a cross-disciplinary way. Some of these hours may be provided from existing capacity and capability on the Mayo Campus.</p> <p><u>Residential element</u> There are four two-day residential requirements in the programme. For those learners travelling from outside the Mayo region there may be additional costs as a result. These costs will be covered by the student fees. It is hoped in addition that learners can be accommodated through local learner networks and support.</p> <p>There may be additional costs outlined in the response to recommendation 5.</p> <p>This programme is self-financing using the self-funding cost model.</p>

20.	Synergies with Existing Programmes:	None
21.	Findings and Recommendations:	<p data-bbox="603 282 831 315">Commendations:</p> <ol data-bbox="651 353 1358 674" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="651 353 1358 528">1. The panel commends the programme team for the development of this inspirational and outstanding programme. The programme team have engaged in learning and reflexivity throughout the entirety of the process. <li data-bbox="651 533 1358 674">2. The panel also commends the development of a video which provides a visual backdrop to the intersectional intentions of the programme in a novel and innovative way. <p data-bbox="603 719 756 752">Conditions:</p> <p data-bbox="603 797 676 831">None</p> <p data-bbox="603 875 858 909">Recommendations:</p> <ol data-bbox="651 954 1385 1977" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="651 954 1385 1088">1. Document the supports which will be available to students to assist and care for them as they progress through the programme, particularly in relation to psychological safety. <li data-bbox="651 1093 1385 1227">2. Clearly articulate how global context interlinks with, and impacts on, local context. The specific application of the history of inequalities within the Irish context and its positionality should be included in the programme. <li data-bbox="651 1232 1385 1413">3. Provide further clarity on how reflective blogs will be assessed given their weighting in the programme's assessment strategy. Ensure that students are appropriately scaffolded and receive early feedback that will enhance learning. <li data-bbox="651 1417 1385 1727">4. Clearly articulate the role of group work in the programme and how it will be managed. Consider the options for the co-creation process and for marking of these. Students need to be supplied with a palette of choices in relation to the scope, depth and boundaries of the group work and how they will be assessed and graded. Rubrics should be developed for each assessment methodology and provided in advance to students. <li data-bbox="651 1731 1385 1906">5. Articulate clearly that there will be a range of people from diverse backgrounds involved in the delivery of the programme. Any costs associated with guest lecturers should be included in the resources required for the programme. <li data-bbox="651 1910 1385 1977">6. Revise the contact hours in each module to ensure that they appropriately reflect ECTS.

		<p>7. Clarify that the programme is a taught masters and the programme delivery mode is accurately recorded in the programme build. The student workload should be made explicit to applicants.</p> <p><u>Recommendations Relating to Specific Modules</u></p> <p>8. SOCI09012 Law, Policy and Activism: This module should include a critique of gaps in an Irish context and should explicitly have a critical perspective.</p> <p>9. SOCI09015 Preparation for Research/Action Project: This module should acknowledge the lack of gathering of equality data in the Irish context. It should also provide for students to be educated on data management and ethical data handling.</p> <p>10. SOCI09009 Research / Action project: Revise the module descriptor to ensure that it is clear that projects are not restricted to race, gender and disability, and that intersectionality is core to the module. Amend the supervision allocation to reflect current agreed rates.</p>	
22.	FAO: Academic Council:	Approved:	
		Approved subject to recommended changes:	X
		Not approved at this time:	
	Signed:		
		Chair	Secretary