

New Programme Validation (Minor/SPA/Supplemental Award)

Section A

Report of the External Review Panel

Programme Reference Number:	S5 - GA_ECOMM_S06
Faculty/School(s):	School of Health Science, Wellbeing and Society
Department(s):	Department of Environmental Humanities & Social Care

Details of Programme(s) Reviewed

Title:	Certificate in Community Development Practice
Type of Award:	Minor Award
NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications) Level:	Level 6
ECTS:	10 ECTS
ISCED:	0220 – Humanities (except languages)
Duration:	15 weeks (1 semester)
Proposed Student Intake:	15-20
Proposed Start Date:	2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-time

Date of Review:	20 th December 2023
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Review Panel

Panellist Role	Title	Name	Organisation	Job Title
Chair	Dr	Joanne Gallagher	ATU Donegal	Head of Department
External Academic Discipline Expert*	Dr	Liam McGlynn	TU Dublin	Lecturer
Industry/ Community Representative*	Ms	Nora Corcoran	Galway Traveller Movement	Community Health Worker
Student Representative	Mr	Mallikharjuna Rao Sakhamuri	ATU	Student

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar (VPAAR) Nominee/Academic Secretary	Ms	Carmel Brennan	ATU	Assistant Registrar
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All external members of the panel have declared that they are independent of ATU (Atlantic Technological University), and all have declared that they have no conflict of interest.

Programme Design Team

The panel met the staff listed below during the review process.

Dr Justin Kerr	Dr Deirdre Garvey
Ms Mairead Cluskey	Dr Sheila McArdle
Ms Mary Nestor	

Introduction

Increased Traveller participation in Higher Education is a key target in the National Access Plan and ATU are working to address. This programme has been requested by stakeholders in the region to support members of the Traveller community engage and participate fully in higher education.

See Appendix for Entry Requirements, Programme Learning Outcomes and Approved Programme Schedule.

Rationale for Programme(s)

Mayo currently does not have an operational Traveller specific project. Its former project, The Mayo Traveller Support group, closed over a year ago. The HSE approached staff in the Department of Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences to support and respond to a distinct training /education need amongst Travellers in Mayo, so that it would in turn support the restart of a Traveller organisation in Co. Mayo. As planning progressed, it was also recognised that this training/education need extended beyond Mayo, into Roscommon, Galway and other areas. To respond quickly to this need, it is proposed that two existing and approved modules from the current L8 in Community Development and Youth Work, would be offered as a SPA in Community Development Practice to start in January 2024.

According to the 2016 census, nationally there are only 167 Irish Travellers with a third level qualification (total pop 31000 approx., 1303 living in Mayo). Less than 10% of the Irish Traveller population have completed upper secondary school - this is quite a stark statistic as 60% of Travellers are under 25 years old (CSO 2016).

Validation Criteria

ATU's Developing and Validating New Taught Programmes Policy specifies that new programmes must comply with the following criteria for validation:

1. The programme aims and learning outcomes are clear and aligned with the proposed award title.
2. The rationale for the programme is well informed and justified.
3. The design of the programme is suitably structured and fit for purpose.
4. The design of the programme ensures that students can successfully achieve the Programme Learning Outcomes.
5. The teaching, learning and assessment strategy is well planned and appropriate for the discipline area and type of award.
6. Assessment techniques are fair, valid, reliable, consistent and a credible measure of the academic standard attained by students.
7. The planned resources, including staff, physical, online, library and student supports, sufficiently support the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programme.
8. The programme facilitates lifelong learning for a diverse student population by setting out appropriate entry requirements and opportunities for access, transfer, and progression.
9. There is demand for potential graduates from the programme.
10. The learning environment and mode of delivery are consistent with the needs of the intended students of the programme and accessible and appropriate support services for students have been provided for.
11. Students will be well informed on the requirements of the programme, guided to relevant resources and supported in their studies in a caring environment.

Findings

Overall Finding

Validated without changes	
Validated subject to condition(s) and/or recommendation(s)	X
Rejected	

Reason for Overall Finding

The programme meets the award criteria as set out by ATU and is an appropriate standard for the NFQ level and ATU's standards, with workload suitable to the credit weighting. The Programme Development Team have clearly thought about the challenges facing the target group and are taking measures, sometimes in conjunction with other organisations, to address these.

Commendations

The Validation Panel advises Academic Council of the following commendation:

The programme was welcomed by the panel as meeting a latent need for personal development, community development and providing a pathway to higher education for an underrepresented group.

Conditions

The Validation Panel advises Academic Council that subject to satisfying any condition(s) detailed below, the panel is satisfied that the proposed programme(s) meets the validation criteria as set out in Atlantic Technological University's Developing and Validating New Programmes Policy.

No conditions were stipulated for this programme.


Recommendations

The panel advises Academic Council that the Programme Development Team and/or the Department should take cognisance of any recommendations outlined below.

1. Given the target market, clearly articulate the supports that are required and will be available for students undertaking the programme. Consider establishing a buddy system for students.
2. Continue efforts to provide access to laptops for potential students. Ensure that students are aware of the computing resources required, and those available, for completion of the programme.
3. The panel recognises the barriers to education faced by the target cohort and suggest that the Programme Development Team seek derogation from standard entry requirements, such as that given to the Tertiary education programmes, which have target specific entry requirements with stringent selection procedures. Meeting each applicant prior to commencement of the programme is important for communication and establishing appropriate expectations. Remove the text on transfer given the size of the award.
4. Revise the award standard choice and complete the learning outcome mapping.
5. Revise module delivery to include part-time hours so the hours appear on the Approved Programme Schedule (APS).
6. Endeavour to situate the class in one room suitable to dialogue and group development if possible, within the constraints of the timetabling system.
7. Review the programme document to ensure accuracy in all instances e.g., remove reference to GMIT, correctly state programme duration, list award class as 100%, remove typo in introduction, ensure programme is correctly labelled as a minor award.

Report Approval

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

Signed:  Name Validation Panel Chair	Date: 20 th December 2023
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