New Programme (Major Award) External Validation Report

Section A

Report of the External Review Panel

Programme Reference Number:	SG_BSUST_M09
	SG_BSUST_N09
	SG_BSUSU_N09
	SG_BSUSV_N09
Faculty/School(s):	Business
Department(s):	Marketing, Tourism & Sport

Details of Programme(s) Reviewed

Title:	MSc in Sustainable Tourism & Event Management
Type of Award:	Masters (Structured)
NFQ Level:	09
ECTS:	90
ISCED:	1015 - Travel, tourism & leisure
Duration:	2 years
Proposed Student Intake:	12-15
Proposed Start Date:	2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-time, Online

Title:	PG Certificate in Sustainable Tourism & Event Management
Type of Award:	PG Certificate
NFQ Level:	09
ECTS:	30
ISCED:	1015 - Travel, tourism & leisure
Duration:	1 year
Proposed Student Intake:	6-10
Proposed Start Date:	2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-time, Online

Title:	Certificate in Sustainable Tourism & Event Management
Type of Award:	Certificate
NFQ Level:	09
ECTS:	15
ISCED:	1015 - Travel, tourism & leisure
Duration:	1 semester
Proposed Student Intake:	6-10
Proposed Start Date:	2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-time, Online

Date of Review:	23.02.2024

Title:	Certificate in Sustainable Tourism & Event Measuring and Monitoring
Type of Award:	Certificate
NFQ Level:	09
ECTS:	15
ISCED:	1015 - Travel, tourism & leisure
Duration:	1 semester
Proposed Student Intake:	6-10
Proposed Start Date:	2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-time, Online

Date of Review:	April 18th

Review Panel

Panellist Role	Name	Organisation	Job Title
Chair	Carmel Kelly	IADT	Assistant Registrar
External Expert	Dr Catriona Murphy	TUS	Senior Lecturer & Researcher
External Expert	Dr Nicole Ferdinand	Oxford Brookes	Deputy Associate Dean PG Studies
Industry Rep	Mary Mulvey	Tourism Ireland	Board Member
Student Rep	Agni Paul	ATU	PhD Student
Academic Sec	Dr Simon Stephens	ATU	Assistant Registrar

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 Breda McTaggart
Dr Tomás O'Flaherty
Jacinta Dalton
Dr John Carty
Dr James Hanrahan
Dr Domhnall Melly
Maria Murphy
Dr Susanne O'Reilly

Introduction

The MSc in Sustainable Tourism and Event Management, and its associated programmes are designed to build on the existing undergraduate programmes in tourism, event management and hospitality offered across ATU. As the programme is online it will be delivered by a programme team across ATU Galway and Sligo. In addition, the programme will facilitate industry engagement with the significant expertise in sustainable tourism of ATU's STORY research group. The proposed suite of programmes is presented in Figure 1.1 (a). Students can apply directly to the structured research master's programme, which consists of 30 ECTS of taught modules and a 60 ECTS of research/capstone project. However, where students are not able to progress to the later stages of their degree programme, there are embedded exit opportunities in the award.

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

Rationale for Programme(s)

The aim of the Masters in Sustainable Tourism and Event Management and its associated programmes is to provide graduates with the knowledge, skills, and competencies in sustainable tourism and event management to facilitate them to take on senior and management positions in tourism and event management, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and public and local authorities. This programme will enable graduates to work as expert members of a team around sustainable destination management, consultancy, innovation, and academia in the field of sustainable tourism and event management. The suite of programmes will also provide a postgraduate qualification in sustainable tourism and event management that will contribute to lasting national and regional economies. The program will meet the demand of the industry to measure, monitor and report on sustainable tourism indicators while transitioning to net-zero destinations.

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. Yes

2. The rationale for the programme is well informed and justified. Yes

3. The design of the programme is suitably structured and fit for purpose. Yes

4. The design of the programme ensures that students can successfully achieve the Programme Learning Outcomes. Yes. The PDT has defended its rationale for using MSc linked to the alignment with measuring/monitoring the SDGs.

5. The teaching, learning and assessment strategy is well planned and appropriate for the discipline area and type of award. Yes. Additional focus on "applied" elements would enhance the offering.

6. Assessment techniques are fair, valid, reliable, consistent and a credible measure of the academic standard attained by students. Yes, with an emphasis on CA (report and applied).

7. The planned resources, including staff, physical, online, library and student supports, sufficiently support the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programme. Yes, extensive experience of Online Delivery and Research supervision.

8. The programme facilitates lifelong learning for a diverse student population by setting out appropriate entry requirements and opportunities for access, transfer, and progression. Yes. Further emphasis on RPL routes may support recruitment.

9. There is demand for potential graduates from the programme. Yes (as above).

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. Yes. ATU has a team of Online support staff.

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. Yes, induction is provided.

Findings

Overall Finding

Validated without changes	
Validated subject to recommendation(s)	**YES**
Rejected	

Reason for Overall Finding

The PDT have presented an excellent document which provides for provision of an innovative MSc programme and embedded programmes and awards, with clear student demand, and which addresses a clear industry need. The PDT engaged with enthusiasm and energy during the panel meeting.

Commendations

The Validation Panel advises Academic Council of the following commendations.

1. The applied and dynamic nature of the MSc proposed and its embedded awards.
2. The quality and comprehensiveness of the programme documentation submitted to the panel.
3. The engagement with the panel and the evident experience, industry knowledge, research capacity and enthusiasm for the programme.
4. The Panel acknowledges ATU's reputation for excellence in Online Learning and welcomes the introduction of this MSc to its portfolio of online programmes.

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.

N/A

Recommendations

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

1. Map the programme to MSc award standards, in addition to MBS standards.

2. Highlight content related to the sustainability skills required in both the MICE and DMC sectors.

3. Explore the possibility of students undertaking a short industry secondment/placement (where appropriate) during the research process of the cap-stone project.

4. Make more explicit reference to the Digital Content of the MSc in the documentation, including Robotics and VR.

5. Revisit the naming of modules to highlight their practical content, relevant to gaps in the tourism and event management sectors.

6. Ensure that the MSc provides graduates with the technical skills to successfully apply for relevant industry certification for a tourism enterprise/destination.

7. As the MSc evolves, explore additional opportunities to provide "training" to industry i.e. Microcredentials, SPAs and Digital Badges.

Report Approval

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

Signed: Carmel Kelly Name: Carmel Kelly, Assistant Registrar, IADT Validation Panel Chair	Date: 18.04.24

Section B

Quality Enhancement Plan in Response to New Programme Validation Report

Response submitted on behalf of the Programme Development Team by:	
Date:	

(Note to Programme Development Team: Copy Condition(s) and/or Recommendation(s) below, providing a detailed response to each. State specifically whether they have been met, how and where it has been completed and/or timeline for implementation. Where a recommendation has not been addressed a strong rationale for same must be provided.)

Month/Year it is intended to commence the programme:

Provide the delivery schedule if it differs from APS e.g., a one stage masters being delivered over two academic years.

Quality Enhancement Plan Approval

Compliance with conditions have been verified and responses to recommendations have been considered as appropriate.

Signed:	
Name Quality Office	Date

Appendices

Note: Appendices are added post-validation as part of the response to the report showing any amendments.

Appendix A Entry Requirements

Appendix B Programme Learning Outcomes

Appendix C Approved Programme Schedule

Table of Contents

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SG_BSUST_M09
Master of Science in Sustainable Tourism & Event
Management

Programme Overview

Type of Award	Masters (Structured)		
Programme Title	Master of Science in Sustainable Tourism & Event Management		
Proposed Commencement Date	2024		
Status	Approved by School	**Programme Code**	SG_BSUST_M09
Framework Level	09	**Number of ECTS**	90 ECTS
Delivered By	Semester	**Minimum Duration**	3
Minimum Course Grade	40	**Classified Award**	Yes
Primary Award Standard	Business	**Secondary Award Standard**	
ISCED Code	1015 - Travel, tourism & leisure	**RGAM Code**	1 - Non Laboratory
Embedded Exit Award(s)	Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Tourism and Event Management, Certificate in Tourism and Event Management, Certificate in Tourism and Event Management measuring and Monitoring.		
Proposed Delivery Mode(s)	Online Learning		
Contains Work Placement	No	**Work Placement Credits**	
Contains Work-based Project	No	**Work-based Project Credits**	
PSRB Recognition Planned	No	**Garda Vetting Required**	No
Fitness to Practice Applies	No	**Interim List of Eligble Programmes ILEP**	Yes
Department	Marketing, Tourism & Sport	**Campus**	ATU Sligo

Programme Authors
James Hanrahan, Domhnall Melly, Susanne OReilly, Jacinta Dalton, John Carty, Maria Murphy, Tomas O Flaherty

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Entry Requirements and Access Routes

Candidates must hold a Level 8 Bachelor of Business degree with a minimum grade classification of H2.2 in tourism, event, hospitality, business, marketing, or other related business discipline. Candidates who do not meet the H2.2 performance standard in a Level 8 award will be required to apply through ATU's Recognition of Prior and Experiential Learning (RPEL) process.

This provides applicants interested in this field of study with the opportunity to apply and undertake an award. The award is developed and designed with an understanding of the potential diversity of student experiences on entering the programme. There is an expectation that students will have different knowledge, skills and competencies on entry, which will be collated when students commence their learning. This supports the tailoring of teaching, learning and assessment to learner needs.

Recognition of Prior Learning

In accordance with its policies, ATU is committed to the principles of transparency, equity and fairness in recognition of prior learning (RPL) and to the principle of valuing all learning regardless of the mode or place of its acquisition. Recognition of Prior Learning may be used to:

   i. gain access or advanced entry to a programme, subject to available places.

   ii. gain credits and exemptions from programme modules after admission.

English Language Requirements

English Language Requirements will be as determined by ATU and as published in the Access, Transfer and Progression code. The current requirements are as follows:

- Non-EU applicants who are not English speakers must have a minimum score of 6.0 (with a minimum of 6.0 in each component) in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or equivalent. All results must have been achieved within 2 years of application to ATU.
- EU applicants who are not English speakers are recommended to have a minimum score of 6.0 (with a minimum of 6.0 in each component) in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or equivalent.

Applications

Applications for this programme are made directly to the University.

Selection

Direct applicants will be offered places in decreasing order of performance until all available places are exhausted following the initial application deadline. Thereafter, if additional places remain unfilled, offers will be made to eligible applicants until all places are filled.

Programme Learning Outcomes

On completion of this programme the learner will/should be able to:

PLO	Programme Learning Outcome
PLO 1	Develop a systematic and in-depth understanding of emerging knowledge and anticipated developments in sustainable tourism and event management to inform their professional practice, and critically evaluate a business and organisation's strategy.
PLO 2	Formulate detailed knowledge of a wider context for practice in the tourism and event management industry, including critical awareness and anticipation of the fundamental issues facing organisations in today's complex business environment, ethical practices, and the needs of stakeholders.
PLO 3	Identify, define, and successfully investigate novel and complex research problems by evaluating current developments and trends in the professional and academic literature as the basis for research and/or innovation, strategic change and leadership within tourism and event management.
PLO 4	Examine, analyse and critique multiple sources of sustainability and business data to diagnose, and solve strategic and complex sustainable tourism, event management, governance, and ethical challenges using advanced research and innovation skills, while realising the limits of such data.
PLO 5	Generate critical insights through advanced research and skills and apply these skills to make evidence-based, effective decisions in complex business environments, considering the relationship and tension between stakeholders, strategy, and sustainability within organisations.
PLO 6	Write, present and defend complex information that articulates ideas, insights, and analysis to effectively communicate to various audiences to influence and lead professional practice.
PLO 7	Respond in a dynamic and changing business environment, including formulating and communicating judgements with incomplete or limited information.
PLO 8	Work effectively individually and in a group to exhibit a professional approach to stakeholder management with the ability to lead, take the initiative, and engage in informed decision-making in the interests of all relevant stakeholders.
PLO 9	Appreciate the role of lifelong learning and its value to personal, career, and organisational development, including identifying knowledge gaps and managing learning tasks independently through self-evaluation.
PLO 10	Critically evaluate and support the diversity and individuality of all stakeholders and the important role tourism and event management organisations and businesses, sustainability, and good governance play in society.

Approved Programme Schedule - SG_BSUST_M09 Master of Science in Sustainable Tourism & Event Management

Stage 1

Delivery	Code	Module Title	Level	Credit	M/E	OL	OL IL	CA	PC	PJ	FE	Total
SEM 1	TOUR09001	Sustainable Tourism and Events Impact Management	09	05	M	1.50	6.00	0	0	100	0	100
SEM 1	TOUR09002	Strategic Planning and Policy for Tourism and Event Management	09	05	M	1.50	6.00	0	0	100	0	100
SEM 1	MKTG09031	Sustainable Experiential and Engagement Marketing	09	05	M	1.50	6.00	0	0	100	0	100
SEM 2	TOUR09003	Leadership in Environmental Social Governance (ESG)	09	05	M	1.50	6.00	100	0	0	0	100
SEM 2	TOUR09004	Sustainable Tourism and Event Measuring and Monitoring	09	05	M	1.50	6.00	50	0	50	0	100
SEM 2	RSCH09029	Research Design & Development	09	05	M	2.27	4.25	100	0	0	0	100
SEM 3	RSCH09059	Research/Capstone Project	09	60	M	1.50	40.50	10	0	90	0	100
			Credit Total	90								

Area Effective Term	Credits Required	Award Classification Percentage
202400	90	100 %

Stage Exit Award

Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Tourism and Event Management, Certificate in Tourism and Event Management, Certificate in Tourism and Event Management measuring and Monitoring.

Stage / Semester Average Weekly Contact Hours	OL
Semester 1	4.50
Semester 2	5.27
Semester 3	1.50
Stage Total Average Weekly Contact Hours	3.76

Note: Average weekly hours for programmes with more than two semesters per stage and which have year-long modules may not calculate correctly

Key
M/E - Mandatory/Elective, OL - Online Learning Hours, IL - Independent Learning Hours, CA - Coursework Assessment, PC - Practical, PJ - Project, FE - Final Exam,