Micro credential Validation

Report of the External Review Panel

Programme Reference Number:	0732 Building and Civil Engineering
Faculty/School(s):	Engineering
Department(s):	Building and Civil Engineering

Details of Programme(s) Reviewed

CIVE09008 Structures (Part A, C, D, Eurocodes, and Circular Economy)
CIVE09005 Fire Safety (Part B Dwelling Houses)
CIVE09007 Fire Safety (Part B Buildings Other than Dwelling Houses, and FSC)
CIVE09014 Services (Part E, F, G, H, J and D)
CIVE09004 Access and Use (Part M, B, K, DAC, Universal Design)
CIVE09009 Energy Conservation (Part L, F, J, C, D, Sustainability, and Circular Economy)
CIVE09003 Introduction to Legislation for the Built Environment

CIVE09022 Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Digital Leadership
CIVE09021 Visual Programming for Digital Construction
CIVE09024 Building Information Modelling for Sustainability
CIVE08052 Building Information Modelling Architecture
CIVE08054 Building Information Modelling Infrastructure

CIVE09015 Circular Economy Leadership and Organisational Transitions
CIVE09016 Circular Economy Principles for the Built Environment
ENER06006 Domestic Heat Pumps II: Maintenance and Service
ENER06007 Domestic Heat Pumps I: Installation and Commissioning

COMM06033 SDGs and PEOPLE
COMM06038 SDGs and PROSPERITY
COMM06037 SDGs and PARTNERSHIP
COMM06041 SDGs and PLANET

Type of Award:	Micro-credentials
NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications) Level:	06,08,09
ECTS:	5-10
ISCED:	
Duration:	6-15 Weeks
Proposed Student Intake:	10-15 Students per module
Proposed Start Date:	September 2024
Delivery Mode(s):	Part-Time, Online Learning, Blended

Date of Review:	21/05/2024

Review Panel

Panellist Role	Name	Role and Organisation
Chair	Paul Leamy	Head of Department of Furniture Design & Technology, ATU Connemara.
Internal Academic Discipline Expert	Dr John Carty	ATU Galway International Hotel School
Industry/ Community Representative	Laura Dixon	Civil Engineer, Climate Action coordinator, Mayo County Council
Student Representative	Ontiretse Ishmael	Natural Recourses and the Environment
VPARR Nominee (Secretary)	Declan Courell	Registrar ATU St. Angela's

*One or two external members of the panel in total.

All external members of the panel have declared that they are independent of ATU (Atlantic Technological University) and have no conflict of interest.

Programme Design Team

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

Jimmy Fahy	Programme Manager DASBE ATU Galway
John Scahill	Project Manager DASBE ATU Galway
Alan Duggan	Lecturer Building and Civil Engineering ATU Galway
Andy McNamara	Lecturer Building Civil Engineering ATU Galway
Anne Wiseman	Lecturer Building Civil Engineering ATU Mayo
Alan Duggan	Lecturer Building Civil Engineering ATU Galway
Shane Newell	Lecturer Building Civil Engineering ATU

	Galway
Wayne Gibbons	Lecturer Building Civil Engineering ATU Galway
Oliver Mulryan	Head of Department Civil Engineering ATU Galway

Introduction

The Expert Group Report on Future Skills Needs (2016) foresaw the importance of BIM by stating that: "...unless construction contractors and service providers can work in a BIM environment, they are likely to find themselves at a serious competitive disadvantage" The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has identified the requirement for Micro-Credentials in Construction and has made funding through the HCI, available at 80%, to make this Micro credential more attractive to individuals and companies and aid in the digitalisation of the construction industry.

Rationale for Microcredential

The work carried out by the Digital Academy for the Sustainable Build Environment (DASBE) demonstrates the demand for short courses. This project is seeing a large demand for BIM courses at all levels. As the countries' BIM levels mature, the requirement for BIM Leadership practices will increase. With the Micro-Credential online, the potential for student numbers can increase as required.

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 micro-credential's aims and learning outcomes are clear and aligned with the proposed award title.
2. The rationale for the micro-credentials is well-informed and justified.
3. The design of the micro-credentials is suitably structured and fit for purpose.
4. The design of the micro-credentials ensures that students can successfully achieve the Micro-credentials 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 credible measures of students' academic standards.
7. The planned resources, including staff, physical, online, library, and student support, sufficiently support the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the micro-credentials.
8. The micro-credentials facilitate 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 micro-credentials.
10. The learning environment and mode of delivery are consistent with the needs of the micro-credentials intended students, and accessible and appropriate support services for students have been provided.
11. Students will be well informed about the micro-credentials requirements, guided to relevant resources, and supported in their studies in a caring environment.

Findings

Overall Finding

Validated with recommendations	X

Items discussed.

- Lectures are delivered online at different times, some in the afternoon and others in the evening.
- Some lectures are recorded and available to students on their own time.
- Information on times that micro-credentials are being delivered will be on the programme website.
- Supports – Students have access to a Student Liaison Officer
- Proposed intake—The Pilot ran with 10-15 students last year. Ten to fifteen students are projected to undertake the programme.
- Micro-credentials are 80% funded by the HEA.
- All micro-credentials are recognised as CPD by the Engineers Ireland
- Level 9 Certificates are Postgraduate Certificates
- Higher Diplomas are at level 8. Students seeking RPL will be given a similar approach to Springboard. The department has in-house support to assist students with RPL applications.
- There isn't a limit to the number of modules a student can sign up for bar timetable restrictions.
- An explanation of the online platforms, i.e. Moodle / Teams, is referred to at the module induction session, and a handbook is also available to students for this purpose.
  Software-based modules have an element of attendance built into the module.
- Programme

Commendations

The team's incorporation of Guest Lecturers is highly commendable. This approach ensures the curriculum remains current and reflects the latest practices within the field.
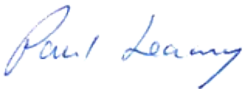
Recommendations

The Validation Panel has the following commendations.

- **Currency of Reading Lists:** Ensure reading lists for each micro-credential are up to date with the latest resources.
- **Module Prerequisites:** Double-check "progression prerequisites" for modules with a continuing theme.
- **RPL Support:** Evaluate the department's expertise in handling Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) applications for specialists in specific modules.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Collaborate with the marketing department to promote the micro-credential offerings effectively.
- **Accessibility:** Review entry requirements for each module to ensure wider access for potential learners.
- **Clear Progression Pathways:** Create infographics for each module that clearly highlight the award pathways and progression options.

- **Module Scheduling:** Advertise and distribute the timetable for modules as soon as they become available to help learners plan their studies.

- **Improved Module Inductions:** Provide clear introductions for each module outlining learner requirements, relevant resources, and the role of the online student advisor. This will help learners navigate each module effectively.
- **Portable Credentials:** Explore options for learners to store and share their micro-credentials with any party they choose. This could involve issuing digital badges or integrating with credential wallets.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL):** Develop a plan to handle requests for RPL (applying prior knowledge/experience towards micro-credentials). This might involve creating an RPL assessment process.
- **Quality Assurance Feedback Loop:** Implement a feedback plan that includes regular monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the micro-credential program. This ensures the program remains high-quality and meets learner needs.

Report Approval

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

Signed: *Paul Leamy*	
Name: Paul Leamy **Validation Panel Chair**	**Date: 23/05/2024**