



TUS

**Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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Faculty of Business and Hospitality

Department of Accounting and Business Computing

Report of Differential Validation Panel

Differential Validation Panel, 19th November 2024

for the

Higher Certificate in Arts in Social Enterprise and Community Development (Part time)

and;

Bachelor of Arts in Business, Enterprise and Community Development (Part-time)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings of the differential validation visit for the proposed:

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Social Enterprise and Community Development, and;
- Bachelor of Arts in Business, Enterprise and Community Development

and the findings and conclusions of the Panel held on 19th November 2024. The validation was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations. A differential validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on a programme proposal.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1 Higher Education Provider

Institute: Technological University of the Shannon
Faculty: Business and Hospitality
Department: Accounting and Business Computing
Date of Visit: 19th November 2024

2.2 Programmes Evaluated

Programme	Higher Certificate in Arts in Social Enterprise and Community Development
Award Title	Higher Certificate
NFQ Level	Level 6
ECTS Credits	120
Delivery Mode	Part Time
Proposed Start Date	2025
Duration	2.5 years
Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Business, Enterprise and Community Development
Award Title	Bachelor of Arts
NFQ Level	Level 7
ECTS Credits	60 ECTS
Delivery Mode	Part Time
Proposed Start Date	2025
Duration	1.5 Years

2.3 Differential Validation Panel of Expert Assessors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Prof. Marie Parker-Jenkins (Chair)	Emeritus Professor of Education, UL.
Dr. Brian Boyd	Lecturer - Dept Management & Financial Studies, Dundalk Institute of Technology
Louise O'Leary	Former student
Stuart Frazer	CEO of Frontline Make Change and founder of my favourite social in Ireland
Secretary to Panel	Dr Brendan Murphy
Quality Officer	Amanda Ryan

2.4 Institute Staff

Dean of Faculty of Business and Hospitality	Seadna Ryan
Head of Department of Accounting & Business Computing	Bernard Tao Cui

Programme Team:

Damien Quinn
Eddie Higgins (Equal Ireland)
Nuala Keher (Equal Ireland)
Eilis Biggs
Joanna Dukkupati
Imelda Fallon

2.5 Documentation

1. Existing and Proposed Programme Documents.
2. Summary of Rationale for the Proposal.
3. Summary of Comparative Programme Changes.
4. Report of Original Programme Validation Panel.
5. TUS Policy and Procedures for Differential Validation Policy if a Major Award.

3.0 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION PANEL

3.1 Main Findings

The Panel of Assessors recommends approval of the proposed:

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Social Enterprise and Community Development (Part-time) and;
- Bachelor of Arts in Business, Enterprise and Community Development (Part-time)

3.2 Conditions

No conditions apply.

3.3 Recommendations

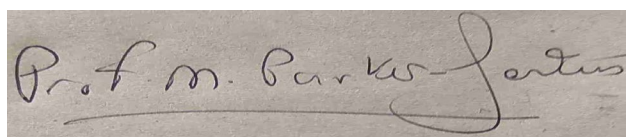
- 1) Consider re-titling the Level 6 module *Management* to *Management and Leadership in the Community* to better reflect its content.
- 2) Review the reading lists to ensure they are the most up to date and appropriate available. The Level 6 *Integrated Project* module is cited as a particular example for review.

3.4 Commendations and Observations

The panel commend:

- 1) the initiative of the Faculty and Department in responding to the SUSI funding call and participation in the associated pilot.
- 2) the nature of the programmes which were found to be ambitious, reflective, highly student focussed with an impressive link with the community.
- 3) the Faculty and Department for supporting learner accessibility and inclusion by developing the Part-time offering for the two pilot programmes.
- 4) the partnership of TUS with Equal Ireland in the delivery of important offerings in the Social Enterprise and Community Development domains. The panel also commend the mix between the business and community development aspects of the programme.
- 5) the consideration provided to adjusting the assessment strategy to support engagement of part-time learners.

- 6) the blended delivery format that supports accessibility and engaged learning, including the extensive utilisation of multimodal asynchronous learning resources.
- 7) the comprehensive nature of the programme documentation presented.
- 8) the Faculty/Department Management and the Programme Team for the positive engagement and helpful presentations and clarifications provided throughout the validation.

A rectangular image showing a handwritten signature in cursive script on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Prof. M. Parker-Jentus".

Signature of Chairperson

Date: 13/01/2025