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Midlands Midwest**
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**Dámh an Ghnó agus Fáilteachais
Faculty of Science and Health**

Report of Peer Review Panel

Programmatic Review

of the

**Faculty of Science and Health
Department of Sport and Health Sciences**

External Validation Visit, 14th March 2023

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings of the Programmatic Review Panel for the Department of Business & Management, Faculty of Science and Health, and the findings and conclusions of the External Validation Panel conducted on 14th March 2023. The external validation visit was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations. A Programmatic Review Panel external validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on the programmatic review and associated critical self study and proposed programme changes..

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.2 Higher Education Provider

Provider	Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
Faculty	Science and Health
Department	Sport and Health Sciences
Date of Visit	14 th March 2023

2.3 External Re-Validation Panel of Expert Assessors

Name	Affiliation
Professor Marie Parker Jenkins	Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Limerick
Dr Paula Rankin	Head of Department of Science and Health SETU Carlow
Dr Barry Lambe	Lecturer in Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences SETU Waterford
Dr Siobhan O'Connor	Associate Professor in Athletic Therapy and Training, DCU
Dr Michael Hanlon	Lecturer in Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, SETU Waterford
Dr Ronan Doherty	Lecturer in Nutrition, ATU Donegal

Liam Moffatt	Physiotherapist and Sports Medicine Specialist Mayo Sports Clinic
Dr Ciara Sinnott O'Connor	Head of Performance Physiology - Sport Ireland
Edel Larkin	Community Sports Hub Co-ordinator Westmeath Sports Partnership
Dr Sinead McCarthy	Teagasc

Secretary to Panel: Dr. Brendan Murphy, TUS.

2.4 TUS Staff

Name	Role
Dr Don Faller	Dean of Faculty of Science and Health
Dr Aoife Lane	Head of Department of Sport and Health Sciences
Lynn Allen	Programme Leader
Anna Postawa	Programme Leader
Patricia Heavey	Programme Leader
Aine O Connor	Programme Leader
Geraldine Cuskelly	Programme Leader
Ciaran O Cathain	Programme Leader
Kris Beattie	Programme Leader
Niamh Ni Cheilleachair	Programme Leader
Kieran Dowd	Programme Leader
Clare McDermott	Programme Leader
Fiona Skelly	Programme Leader
<u>Department Staff</u> Michael Donohoe, Marese Gilhooly, Robin Healy, Lewis King, Kris Beattie, David Kelly, Mairead Cantwell, Laurie Ryan, Marc Cashin, Geraldine Ward, Belinda Grady, Christian Coombs, Marie Byrne, Laura Mahony, Clem Higginbotham, Noel Tierney, Doireann O'Callaghan, Sinead Bracken, Paul Hogan, Cathy Brougham, Brian Mullarney, Aine O'Connor, Eoghan McNeill.	

2.5 Employers/Industry & Alumni Representatives

Representative	Affiliation
Chris Coombs	Physiotherapist Tullamore Physio
Craig Reddan	Certified Athletic Therapist
Laura Mahony	LM Nutrition
Cathal Cregg	Connacht Provincial Coaching and Games Officer
Jack Cooney	GAA National Player Development Lead
Shirley O'Shea	Senior Health Promotion Officer HSE
Lauren Watters	Stewarts Care Sports Centre
Niamh Fogarty	Alumni Representative
Dave Harrington	Alumni Representative
Jenny Fitzpatrick	Alumni Representative
Lorcan Daly	Alumni Representative
Cormac Ward	Alumni Representative
Aoife Murtagh	Alumni Representative
Brona Keegan	Alumni Representative

2.6 Current Student Representatives

Mark Quearney
Rachel Bonner
Sarah Dillon
Rhiann Heery
Angela Thunder
Leona Larkin
Eoghan Dorgan
Brianna Rice
Dylan Morrin
Brona Keegan

3.1 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION PANEL

3.2 Main Findings

The External Validation Panel of Assessors recommends reapproval of the following programmes in the *Department of Sport and Health Science* subject to the condition and recommendations listed.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Athletic and Rehabilitation Therapy

Bachelor of Science in Sports Therapy (Level 7 Embedded Award) Higher

Certificate in Science in Injury Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sports Science with Exercise Physiology

Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Science (Level 7 Embedded Award)

Higher Certificate in Science in Sports Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Physical Activity and Health Science

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Exercise & Health Behaviour Change (Level 8 add-on)

Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Health Science (Entry Point & Embedded Award)

Higher Certificate in Science in Exercise and Health Studies (Level 6 Embedded Award)

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nutrition and Health Science

Bachelor of Science in Health Science with Nutrition (Level 7 Embedded Award)

Higher Certificate in Science in Health Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

3.3 Conditions

1. Change the title of the Level 7 embedded award *Bachelor of Science in Sports Therapy* to a generic academic title that does not imply a professional practice qualification.

3.4 Recommendations

General Recommendations

1. Review the titles of all embedded awards to ensure they are appropriate and do not imply qualifications for professional practice where this does not apply. In this context, consider generic titles as appropriate.
2. Explore the options for developing postgraduate taught Masters programmes to facilitate progression pathways at Level 9 for Graduates.

3. Explore if there are opportunities to develop cross modular assessment within programmes.
4. Consider how the theme of 'Sustainability' could be developed across the programme suite. This is particularly relevant in Nutrition streams as an example.
5. Update the practical equipment required for the programme suite on an ongoing basis to ensure the programmes are adequately resourced to support the prescribed learning. Consider the resourcing requirements of the department in the development of the new STEM building.
6. Consider including some of the Credits from Stage 3 of the Level 8 Honours Degree programmes for the calculation of the respective Awards.
7. Reconsider the use of negative marking where MCQ's are utilised.
8. Review the balance of learning on qualitative and quantitative research methods across all programmes.

Programme Specific Recommendations

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Athletic and Rehabilitation Therapy
Bachelor of Science in Sports Therapy (Level 7 Embedded Award) Higher
Certificate in Science in Injury Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

1. Review the title, learning outcomes and indicative content of the Stage 1 module *Screening and Injury Prevention* to ensure the content reflects the title. The content in relation to Screening needs to be enhanced. Consider introducing wording that also reflects 'Injury Risk' as appropriate.
2. Consider the flow of the learning outcomes and indicative content between the modules *Anatomy 1 & 2* and *Musculoskeletal Injuries 1, 2 and 3* to ensure that there is consistency and flow in how the knowledge builds.
3. Review the Stage 1 module *Drugs in Sports* to ensure that the learning outcomes and indicative content are appropriate for a Stage 1, Level 6 module. Make explicit the learning content in relation to non-steroidal anti-inflammatories in this module.
4. Review and make more explicit the learning content in relation to 'Concussion Assessment' and expand the content in the module *Musculoskeletal Injuries 3*. Formalise and expand the Concussion Rehabilitation content in the rehabilitation modules. Consider how this learning could be further prioritised and increase the time dedicated to this.

5. Consider introducing further learning and practical content on high level/elite athlete rehabilitation.
6. Engage further with Placement Providers and consider mechanisms to support them including with appropriate training. Consider developing a specialised Clinical Placement Handbook.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Sports Science with Exercise Physiology
Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Science (Level 7 Embedded Award)
Higher Certificate in Science in Sports Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

1. Reconsider the title of the Level 7 embedded award, *Bachelor of Science in Human Movement Science*, and if it is the best title to fully reflect the programme.
2. Consider how Stage 1 module *Maths for Sports and Health* can be integrated with the other modules that utilise aspects of Mathematics introducing applied examples as appropriate.
3. Consider further how the Stage 4 module *Applied Sport Scientist* as a capstone module can be fully utilised to develop employability skills.
4. Review the sequencing of the learning on 'Applied Psychology' and consider building this learning earlier in the programme.
5. Add further details on the Practical elements of modules as this would benefit the module descriptors.
6. Review the assessment strategies to ensure that the Practical Work is recognised appropriately in the assessment of individual modules.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Physical Activity and Health Science
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Exercise and Health Behaviour Change (Level 8 add-on)
Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Health Science (Entry Point & Embedded Award)
Higher Certificate in Science in Exercise and Health Studies (Level 6 Embedded Award)

1. Consider the title of the Level 8 add-on in Exercise & Health Behaviour Change in context of the title of the ab-initio Level 8 programme which has the same programme schedule but a different programme title (Physical Activity and Health Science).

2. Consider how the identity and focus of the programme may be enhanced to assist with marketing and promotion and to support the recruitment of viable student cohorts.
3. Review core competencies and reconsider the titles of the 'Health Promotion' modules to provide greater focus and enhance marketing and the employability context.
4. Further develop employability statements to demonstrate the variety of employment opportunities available for graduates.
5. Review the alignment of the programme with the accreditation requirements for Register of Exercise Professionals (REP's) and consider if REP's accreditation for exercise and health specialists could be built into the programme.
6. Review the learning content in the '*Behavioural Change*' and '*Health Promotion*' streams to ensure that there is appropriate progression and differentiation of learning.
7. Consider the location of the Stage 2, Semester 1 module, *Physical Activity and Health Policy* and if health policy is placed too early in the programme.
8. Consider integrating the content of 'Exercise Consultation Skills' into 'Advanced Exercise Prescription' and revising the Stage 4 module to 'Consultation Skills for Public Health'
9. Consider the area of '*Sport for Development*' and '*APA*' and how they are captured in the programme.

Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Nutrition and Health Science

Bachelor of Science in Health Science with Nutrition (Level 7 Embedded Award)

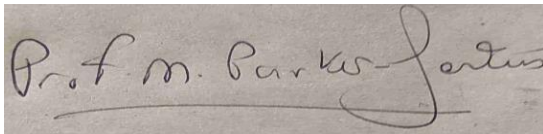
Higher Certificate in Science in Health Science (Level 6 Embedded Award)

1. Consider further how gender balance could be further promoted in recruitment of student cohorts to the programme.
2. Review the learning content on Nutrition to see if there is any overlap between modules or opportunities for further differentiation.
3. Review the assessment strategy across the programmes to see if there are any opportunities to further rationalise the quantity of assessment points and give consideration to cross modular assessment.

4. Consider substituting the module *Sports Nutrition* for *Applied Sports Nutrition* in Stage 3.
5. Incorporate 'Current Topics/Concepts' as a component of literature reviews for assessment deliverables as appropriate.
6. Explore further opportunities for interaction with the Food Industry to develop Placement in these settings.

3.5 Commendations and Observations

1. The panel commends the team for the excellent documentation prepared for the programmatic review and noted that it is presented to a very high standard.
2. The panel commends the range of programmes and the excellent content designed to produce well rounded graduates.
3. The panel commends the thorough self-evaluation and evident work and analysis undertaken. The self reflective approach is particularly noteworthy.
4. The panel commends the considered changes introduced to the programmes during the course of the programmatic review.
5. The panel commends the research active profile of Staff and the developing and growing research capacity. The high level of doctoral qualifications and associated publications is also noteworthy.
6. The panel commended the efforts of the department in gaining and maintaining accreditation.
7. The panel commends the collegiate spirit of the department team.
8. The panel commends the very positive engagement of the department management and staff team during the validation visit.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Prof. M. Parker-Jentles".

Signature of Chairperson

11/04/2023

