



SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE EVALUATION 2

ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

COURSE EVALUATED: Certificate in Construction Project Scheduling (Special Purpose Award, Level 7, 20 Credits)

SCHOOL: Engineering

DEPARTMENT: Architecture and the Built Environment

1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the School of Engineering at South East Technological University to develop a Certificate in Construction Project Scheduling (Special Purpose Award; Level 7; 20 Credits). In accordance with the regulations governing the evaluation of new programme proposals, as set out in the South East Technological University *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, the programme proposal was reviewed by a panel of assessors.

The panel of assessors who contributed to this report were:

- Ciaran Lynch, Former Development Manager, Limerick Institute of Technology (Chair)
- Paul Dolan, Lecturer, School of Engineering and Informatics, Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest, Athlone
- Ciaran Gormley, Planning & Design Director, Bennett Construction Ltd, Mullingar
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Dr Orla O'Donovan, Academic Council Representative, South East Technological University
- Dr Declan Philips, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Science & Engineering, University of Limerick

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 4 September 2023. The review meeting was conducted virtually via Teams. In the course of the meeting, the panel of assessors met with the programme development team. The following members of the South East Technological University team were present:

- Dr Robin Stubbs, Head of Department of Architecture and the Built Environment
- David Morrissey, Assistant Head of Department of Architecture and the Built Environment
- Dr Brian Graham, Lecturer, Department of Architecture and the Built Environment
- Dr John Wall, Senior Lecturer, Department of Architecture and the Built Environment

The assessors wish to thank the members of the development team for engaging generously and openly with the review process.

2. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

2.1 General Remarks

The panel commends the School on their engagement with industry and their commitment to developing relevant curriculum to meet the professional development needs of the sector. The panel **recommends approval of the Certificate in Construction Project Scheduling** until the next School Review in the School of Engineering. **Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below, and the successful review of the revised document by the panel (the latter necessary only if there is a significant subject-specific amendment to the programme in response to the recommendations); and the submission of a summary document describing the responses and actions of the School to address the conditions and recommendations made by the review panel.**

Areas for attention have been emboldened in the text for convenience of reference. Action is required on items marked ‘Conditions’ and such action is mandatory if the programme is to be approved; action is highly recommended on items marked ‘Recommendations’.

2.2 Conditions

- **The academic entry requirements for the programme require clarification.** A list of cognate disciplines is given but it is not articulated that an award in a cognate discipline is required. **The entry requirements should be stated as: (1) A Higher Certificate in a cognate discipline; or (2) a National Craft Certificate or Senior Trades Qualification in a cognate area, with a minimum of 2 years relevant experience.** The cognate areas listed and the reference to RPL should be maintained. **Applicants for whom English is not their first language, should be required to meet the University’s English language requirements.**
- **The School should articulate in the document how learners will be facilitated to complete the ‘Work-based Learning’ module if they are not employed in a relevant industry, or if they become unemployed prior to completing the programme.**

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- In discussion with the panel, the School identified the target cohort for this programme as mature learners, many of whom may be out of formal education for some time, and who are currently employed in the industry. **The School should therefore articulate in the proposal how learners will be supported to gain the digital competencies and academic writing skills necessary to successfully engage with the programme. This assistance could take the form of additional support, or the incorporation of the necessary skills into a technical module on the programme.**
- **The module reading lists should be reviewed to ensure that all reference the most recent editions of publications and the Chartered Institute of Building *Guide to Good Practice in Management of Time in Major Projects: Dynamic Time Modelling* and CIOB *Technical Information Sheet (CIOB PP21)* should be included on the reading list for the ‘Project Scheduling Techniques’ module.**
- **The programme learning outcomes should be mapped to the Award Standards for Level 7, rather than just the generic categories of learning, to ensure that a learner who successfully completes the programme will achieve the required standard.**
- **The document should be reviewed to eliminate inconsistencies and typographical errors.** The programme is a Special Purpose Award but is described as a Minor Award on page 6 of the document. The programme title is not consistent throughout the document; on page 3, for example, the title of the programme is given as Certificate in Construction Programming and Scheduling, but it is titled Certificate in Construction in Project Scheduling elsewhere. It is indicated on page 6 of the programme document that the modules are taken from existing Level 7 and 8 programmes; however, the programme, as proposed, comprises two existing approved Intermediate modules and a new module. There were some typographical errors also noted; page 6, for example, omission in third sentence below Table 2 (‘The aim *in* offering ...’) and on page 9 the sentence before Table 3 should be deleted.

- **The following are the conditions for individual modules:**

Module Title	Condition
Project Scheduling Techniques	Review the module learning outcomes to ensure that all are expressed using measurable verbs.

2.3 Recommendations

- In discussion with the panel, the School indicated that requiring applicants to be in employment in a relevant industry as a prerequisite to undertaking the programme was not permitted under the terms of the HCI funding approved for this programme. **Given that a ‘Work-based Project’ currently attracts half the credits on the programme, the School should consider making employment in a relevant industry setting an entry requirement in future iterations of the programme to ensure that learners are in a position to meaningfully undertake the ‘Work-based Project’ module.**
- In conversation with the panel, the team gave a more precise description of the focus of the programme, in that its purpose is to equip learners with the fundamentals of scheduling to allow engagement with schedulers, rather than intending to qualify the learner as a scheduler. **It would enhance the proposal and give greater clarity to learners and employers, if the purpose of the programme was articulated more clearly in the document and programme learning outcomes revised to reflect same. Given that the programme is a 20-credit, Level 7 Special Purpose Award, the module descriptors should also be reviewed and pared back to reflect the fundamental nature of the programme.**
- **The School should consider restructuring the programme to be delivered over two or more semesters, rather than the current single semester. Undertaking the ‘Work-based Project’ after completing the skills modules, rather than simultaneously, would allow learners to better apply the skills developed on the programme. The School should also consider the order of the other modules on the programme to facilitate the development of skills and knowledge prior to the application of same; a sequential**

delivery model for the modules, rather than the current simultaneous one, would be beneficial for student learning and progression on the programme. Currently, the ‘Work-based Learning’ module attracts 10 credits, half the credits for the programme. **The School should consider revising the ‘Work-based Learning’ module to reduce the credits associated and utilise the credits instead to prioritise technical development on the programme.**

- In discussion with the panel, the School identified the trades cohort as a priority focus for programme recruitment. **The School should articulate this emphasis in the document and detail any supports or bridging studies envisaged to prepare this cohort to undertake the programme.**
- **Assessment on the programme should be spread over the full 15 weeks of semester, rather than the 12 weeks proposed, to allow learners more time to complete assignments.**
- **The School should consider adding civil engineering and structural engineering as cognate disciplines for the purposes of entry.**
- **In section 4.0, consider adding a column to the Programme Outcome table and label each row with the relevant PO# so it can be linked with the table in section 4.1.**
- **The following are the recommendations for individual modules:**

Module Title	Recommendation
Project Scheduling Techniques	Include Building Information Modelling (BIM) and ISO19650 in the Indicative Content of the ‘Project Scheduling Techniques’ module.

Signed:

Ciaran Lynch (Chair)

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Date: _____

**Approved by
Academic Council:** _____