



SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE EVALUATION 2

ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

COURSE EVALUATED: Bachelor of Arts & Bachelor of Arts H in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities

SCHOOL: Humanities

DEPARTMENT: Social Care and Early Childhood

1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the School of Humanities at South East Technological University to develop a Bachelor of Arts in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities (Level 7; 180 Credits), and a Bachelor of Arts (H) in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities (Level 8; 240 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:

- Majella O'Shea, Education Policy Consultant and Executive Coach (Chair)
- Dr Bernadine Brady, Lecturer School of Political Science and Sociology, University of Galway
- Pamela Lanigan, Coordinator SCP Na Siuire, Waterford
- Celina Kinsella, Residential Service Manager, RehabCare, Kilkenny
- Dr Pdraig Kirwan, Academic Council Representative, South East Technological University
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Mary O'Connor, Student Representative, Mary Immaculate College, Thurles
- Dr Perry Share, Head of Student Success, Atlantic Technological University, Sligo

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 15 June 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 Suzanne Denieffe, Head of School of Humanities
- Dr Lisa Moran, Head of Department of Social Care and Early Childhood
- Dr Sinead Conneely, Lecturer, Department of Law and Criminal Justice
- Hazel Finlay, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood
- Dr Hazel O'Brien, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood

- Victoria McDonagh, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood
- Maria McEvoy, Lecturer, Department of Arts
- Jane McGrath, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood
- Dr John McNamara, Lecturer, Department of Arts
- Dr Fiona Nutty, Lecturer, Department of Arts
- Dr Méabh Savage, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood
- Michael Tobin, Lecturer, Department of Arts
- Suzanne Walsh, Lecturer, Department of Social Care and Early Childhood

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 proposing a programme to meet an identified need in the sector and on the team's collaborative response at the panel meeting. The panel **recommends approval of the** Bachelor of Arts in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities and the Bachelor of Arts (H) in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities until the next School Review in the School of Humanities. **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; 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

- While the School was careful to articulate in the application that the proposed programmes were not Social Care programmes, the School failed to clearly frame the programmes within the discipline. In discussion with the panel, however, the team better communicated the identified current deficit within the care sector which programme graduates would address. **The School should review the document to remove the multiple references to Social**

Care and to seek to present the programme in a positive, rather than negative, framework i.e. the School should articulate what the programme is, rather than what it is not. The School should clearly communicate the nature of the programme, its contribution to the sector, and the roles prospective graduates could fill. Aligned to this the School should review the title of the programmes to ensure that the title better reflects the nature of the programmes and will give prospective students, their families, and employers a clear impression of the discipline studied. The School should be careful to clearly articulate the nature of the programme and qualification in all marketing and student information for the programme so that there is clarity for applicants.

- **The School should include the areas of technology, online and social media, and sustainability and climate change in the discussion in the introductory sections of the document and articulate where these elements are addressed in the module descriptors.**
- **The School should review the volume of assessment proposed to ensure that students are not being over assessed and, given that many modules are assessed fully by continuous assessment, use the full 15 weeks of semester for submission of continuous assessment assignments to spread the workload for students.**
- **The School should review the documentation to remove the small number of typographical errors and inconsistencies.** On page 61 of the proposal document, for example, the progression pathway for graduates of the BA in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities is given as the ‘one year BA (Hons) in Applied Social Studies in Social Care’. This appears to be an error and should be revised to be year 4 of the BA H in Supporting Individuals, Families and Communities programme. A word check is necessary on the use of ‘principals’ versus ‘principles’ throughout the document. There is some inconsistency between the module descriptors and programme schedules, for example: the assessment for ‘Health and Safety in Practice Setting’ is given as 100% Continuous Assessment in the module descriptor (with a breakdown of 40%, 40% and 20% for three assignments) but 100% Project in the programme schedule; ‘Irish Law and Protecting Children from Harm’ is 100% Continuous Assessment in the module descriptor but 10% Continuous Assessment and 50% Final Examination in the programme schedule; the module ‘Introduction to Contexts of Practice’ is on Stage 1, Semester 2 of the

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programme schedule but aligned to Stage 2, Semester 2 in the module descriptor; similarly, the module ‘Advanced Facilitation for Social Change’ is on the schedule for Semester 7 but described as Semester 8 on the module descriptor and the assessment criteria for 70%+ is also omitted from the module descriptor *et cetera*.

- **The discussion on placement should be more detailed, including the organisation and management of same, the types of placements settings and roles of agency supervisors proposed, and should clarify if the training for agency supervisors is mandatory or optional. The current description of placement in the document should also be reviewed for consistency;** on page 48, for example, the tripartite meeting between both supervisors and learner is described as ‘online’ but on page 182 it is stated that the meeting will take place in the learner’s ‘place of practice’.
- **The School should review any current competency standards for youth or community work, or social pedagogy and seek to align the programme to these standards with a view to seeking full or partial accreditation for the programme in these areas going forward.**
- The requirement that students must successfully complete the PPD and Creative Practice modules 1 and 2 prior to undertaking ‘Placement 1’ is not in line with SETU academic regulations. **Such a requirement would be a barrier to progression for students hence the School must seek a derogation from the academic regulations from the SETU Academic Council, if the School wishes to proceed with the pre requisite proposal.**
- While there are many excellent exemplars of level-appropriate module learning outcomes in the document, this was not consistent throughout. **The School should review the module learning outcomes to ensure that all are expressed in language appropriate to their level.**
- **The programme learning outcome for research should be revised to acknowledge the research skills developed by students on the programme.**

2.3 *Recommendations*

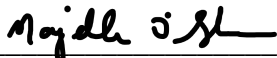
- The School (page 6) proposes that the ‘programme is in direct response to market research insights conducted by the Department of Social Care and Early Childhood that re-affirm the

widening out of career opportunities in the area of care provision'. **The inclusion/discussion of some of the relevant market research insights would enhance the proposal.**

- **The School should consider, either now or at the next opportunity to review, the opportunities for integrated assessment to reduce the workload on the learner and give more time for self-directed learning. The inclusion of reference to formative assessment and student feedback would enhance the discussion of the programme assessment strategy.**
- **A discussion on Artificial Intelligence, both as a tool to enhance learning and the strategies used in assessment design to mitigate against the influence of AI, would enhance the proposal.**
- **The module reading lists should be reviewed to ensure they support, and align to, the new framing of the programme, and to ensure that all have the most up-to-date publications, and the latest editions of same.**
- **All the modules on the programme are presented for approval as new modules. A percentage of the modules, however, have similar or identical titles to modules on the pre 2022 version of the BA in Applied Social Care, and often appear in the same semester in both. The inclusion of a table articulating how the proposed modules are distinctive from similarly-titled modules on other programmes would help to frame the understanding of the proposed programme.**
- **The following are recommendations on individual modules:**

Module Title	Recommendation
Advanced Facilitation for Social Change	The meaning of ‘assess’ in module learning outcome 1 is unclear. Assess the needs?

Signed:


Majella O'Shea (Chair)

Date:

06/07/2023

Approved by
Academic Council: _____