



SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE EVALUATION 3

ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

COURSE EVALUATED: Bachelor of Science in Retail Management

SCHOOL: Business

DEPARTMENT: Management and Organisation

INTRODUCTION

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the School of Business at South East Technological University to change certain aspects of the Bachelor of Science in Retail Management through the University's Course Evaluation Stage 3 (CE3) process. 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:

- Dr Pádraig Kirwan, SETU Academic Council Representative (Chair)
- James Collins, Head of Department of Business and Financial Services, Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest
- Dr Pio Fenton, Head of Department of Marketing and International Business, Munster Technological University
- Sean McGirr, Head of Menswear Design at JW Anderson, London
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Scott Rennison, Director of Merchandising, Primark, Dublin

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 12 May 2022. The review meeting was conducted virtually via Teams. The following members of the South East Technological University team were present:

- Dr Patricia Bowe, Head of Department of Management and Organisation
- Fiona Fleming, Lecturer, Department of Management and Organisation
- Dr Anthony Foley, Lecturer, Department of Management and Organisation
- Dr Sharon O'Brien, Lecturer, Department of Management and Organisation
- Ann Ryan, Lecturer, Department of Management and Organisation
- Brenda Sinnott, Lecturer, Department of Management and Organisation

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

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

2.1 General Remarks

The panel commends the School of Business on their extensive engagement with prospective learners and industry to inform the redesign of the current Retail Management degree programme. The panel **recommends approval of the changes proposed for the Bachelor of Science in Retail Management** until the next School Review in the School of Business. **Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below; 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 proposed amendments will move the programme from comprising predominately shared modules and delivery to comprising predominately bespoke modules. **Given the change in staff resources required to deliver the amended programme, the School must engage with Finance, prior to the submission of the programme to Academic Council for approval, to ensure the necessary resources are available.**
- **The School must ensure that all module descriptors are fully completed and entered on the SETU Waterford module catalogue.** A number of inconsistencies were noted between the module descriptors and the proposed programme schedule in the CE3 document, particularly in the areas of volume and type of contact, credits, and assessment. **The module descriptors and proposed programme schedules should be reviewed to ensure consistency. The module levels should be reviewed to ensure that all are at either Introductory or Intermediate Level, and that there is a minimum of 60 credits at Intermediate Level, to be in line with SETU Waterford regulations. The module learning outcomes should be reviewed to ensure that all at the appropriate level and use measurable verbs.**

2.3 Recommendations

- **The School should engage with the Registrar to evaluate if it would be better to wait to September 2023 to introduce the changes to the programme, to give sufficient time to advertise, or if the plan to introduce by direct entry in 2022 is feasible.**
- **The School should consider articulating graduate attributes for the programme.** These would assist prospective learners and employers in understanding the nature of the programme and the skills and competencies of its graduates.
- **At the next opportunity to review, the School should consider if Level 7 is the most appropriate level for a degree programme in this area, taking learner expectations and employer requirements into account. An *ab initio* Level 8 degree programme could facilitate a year-long industry placement which would be beneficial to students. If the Level 7 degree remains in place, and graduate numbers allow, the School should consider offering a bespoke add-on Level 8 degree in the discipline as a progression route for the Level 7 graduates.** The current proposal is for a specialised degree at Level 7, but the progression route to Level 8, which would be a graduate's defining qualification, is to a general Business degree.
- **The School should reconsider the proposed title of the programme, particularly as to how merchandising might be included in the title.** The areas of Fashion Buying and Retail Management are specified in the current proposed title, but merchandising would appear to be a significant stream in the programme. **The School should consider the core specialisations on the programme and title the programme accordingly.**
- **The School should consider if it is possible to adopt existing excel and statistics/data analysis modules from the School of Business module catalogue, rather than proposing bespoke modules for this programme.** The adoption of pre-existing generic modules in the areas would facilitate a better student experience and staff utilisation.
- **The following are recommendations on individual modules:**

Module Title	Recommendation
'Basic Excel', 'Advanced Excel' and 'Law'	The titles of the modules could be reconsidered to better reflect the nature of the module content.
'Statistics and Data Analytics'	The areas of differential statistics and data analysis do not appear to be covered in the module descriptor. Consideration should be given to including inferential statistics and data analysis in the module and to aligning or amalgamating the 'Statistics and Data Analytics' and 'Advanced Excel' modules to facilitate the practical application of data analysis.
'International Student Trip and Log'	The nature, structure and requirements for the module could be more clearly articulated in the module descriptor. The credits attached also require clarification as are given as both 10 and 30 credits in different sections of the document.
'Merchandising'	The reference to 'visual' merchandising in the module descriptor should be removed.
'Introduction to Fashion Buying and Retail Management'	The inclusion of greater detail on context and the definition of the different roles within the fashion industry, plus the articulation of the roles envisaged for graduates of the programme, would enhance the module.

Signed:



Dr Pádraig Kirwan (Chair)

Date:

Approved by
Academic Council: _____