



## **SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**

### **COURSE EVALUATION 3**

#### **ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

**COURSE EVALUATED:** Bachelor of Arts (H) in Community Education and Development (Level 8, 60 credits)

**FACULTY:** Education and Lifelong Learning

**DEPARTMENT:** Education

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the School of Education and Lifelong Learning at South East Technological University to change certain aspects of the Bachelor of Arts (H) in Community Education and Development programme through the University's Course Evaluation Stage 3 (CE3) process. In accordance with the regulations governing the evaluation of programme amendment 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:

- Martin Walshe, Academic Council Representative, South East Technological University (Chair)
- Ivan McPhillips, Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Business Management, Atlantic Technological University, Galway
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Dr Thomas Murray, Head of Research, AONTAS, Dublin
- Dr Breda O'Dwyer, Head of Department of Organisation and Professional Development, Munster Technological University, Cork
- Catherine Power, Community Development Manager, Waterford Area Partnership

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 12 June 2025. The review meeting was conducted virtually via Teams. The following members of the South East Technological University team were present:

- Dr Helen Murphy, Head of Faculty of Education and Lifelong Learning, South East Technological University
- Dr Mary Fenton, Head of Department of Education, South East Technological University
- Dr Tony Murphy, Head of Lifelong Learning, South East Technological University
- Dr Richard Coady, Lifelong Learning Portfolio Integration Lead, South East Technological University
- Colm Downes, Lifelong Learning Project Manager, South East Technological University

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- Philomena Furlong, Lecturer, Department of Education, South East Technological University
- Rosemary Hearne, Lecturer, Department of Education, South East Technological University

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 Faculty on proposing amendments to an existing programme to meet the current training needs of the sector. The panel **recommends approval of the changes proposed for the Bachelor of Arts (H) in Community Education and Development (Level 8, 60 credits)** until the next Review in the Faculty of Education and Lifelong Learning. **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 Faculty 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*

- In discussion at the review meeting, the team proposed significant changes to the delivery mode for the programme whereby the current block, face-to-face delivery would be replaced by predominately online delivery punctuated by some face-to-face sessions. The change in delivery mode was not articulated in the document and it was not immediately clear how the new delivery mode would align with the contact proposed in the programme schedules or the module descriptors. **The team should include a discussion on the proposed delivery mode in the revised programme document and provide a sample delivery schedule for the programme, identifying the in-person and online lectures and**

**indicating whether the latter are synchronous or asynchronous. The faculty should review the module contact proposed in the delivery schedule, the programme schedules and the module descriptors to ensure that all are consistent.**

- The module ‘Professional Practice in Community Education and Development’ is currently approved as a one-semester, 10-credit, work placement module with a requirement to complete 36 hours of placement across a single semester. In discussion with the panel, however, the team outlined a proposed delivery practice which is not consistent with the module descriptor; in practice the module is delivered across three semesters, with deliverables in Semester 1 and Semester 3, and there is a lack of clarity on the minimum number of placement hours required to complete the module. **The team should review the delivery of the ‘Professional Practice in Community Education and Development’ module to ensure that it is in line with its approved module descriptor and programme schedule, that the minimum number of placement hours expected for the module are clearly articulated, any staff contact is identified, and the module is only delivered across a single semester (unless the recommendation re splitting the module under Recommendations below is adopted).**
- In discussion with the panel, there appeared to be some ambiguity among the team re the entry requirements for the programme, particularly around the purpose of the proposed interview. **The Faculty should review the entry requirements to articulate that a Level 7 Major Award in Community Education and Development (e.g. BA in Community Education and Development (SETU Waterford); BA in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development (SETU Carlow); BA in Leadership and Community Development (SETU Carlow)), or equivalent, is required. The proposed interview should be an engagement with prospective learners for information purposes only; as the interview will not be assessed the Interview Assessment Criteria included in the document should be removed. Applicants to the programme, who do not immediately meet the entry requirements via evidential academic qualifications, but who may have significant equivalent experiential learning, may apply for entry under the Recognition of Prior Learning pathway.**
- The team proposed that the dissertation module be removed from the programme as part of the current review and that a ‘dissertation or research project will be integrated into the Workplace Practice module’ (p. 4). In discussion with the panel, however, the team

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indicated that they did not now propose to integrate a research dissertation or project to the 'Professional Practice in Community Education and Development' (i.e. 'Workplace Practice' module above). The panel believes that the inclusion of some element of a research paper or capstone project is important for learners completing a Level 8 degree. **The team should include a research report or paper, funding application or other research-associated written assignment in the revised 'Social Research Methods for Community Practitioners' module given that the standalone dissertation module is to be removed from the programme.**

- **Given their centrality to the sector, the AIEB *All Ireland Standards for Community Work* should be included in the Essential Readings on the module descriptors for one or more modules.**
- **The new modules should be entered on the University module catalogue, and the revised modules updated on same, when access to the catalogue is restored.**

#### *2.3 Recommendations*

- **The team should consider splitting 'Professional Practice in Community Education and Development' into two distinct, 5-credit modules, if the preference is for learners to complete placement over two semesters. These modules should have distinct module learning outcomes and should be assessed in the semester to which they are assigned on the programme schedule.**
- **Greater detail on the assignment requirements should be included on the relevant module descriptors, particularly the expected word count for each assignment.**
- The panel welcomes the proposal to enhance team-working skills by utilising group work assignments as an assessment methodology. **The team should provide an indication of the proposed group size in the description of same in the Programme Assessment Strategy (p. 2).**
- **The team should articulate in the document how learners will be guided in using Artificial Intelligence appropriately in their studies, particularly given the programme is exclusively assessed by continuous assessment. The team should reference any**

relevant SETU policies and also indicate the training and resources that are available to SETU staff and students on same.

- The following are recommendations on individual modules:

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
Social Justice, Equity and Inclusion	<b>‘Diversity’ should be included in the Indicative Content and/or module learning outcomes in this module and consideration should also be given to including ‘diversity’ in the module title.</b>
Professional Practice in Community Education and Development	<b>The term ‘boundaries’ is included in the Indicative Content of the module; the reference to same should be extended to indicate what is intended by the term.</b>

**Signed:**



Martin Walshe (Chair)

**Date:**

23 June 2025