



SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE EVALUATION 2

ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

COURSE EVALUATED: Higher Diploma in Business in Talent Management

FACULTY: Business

DEPARTMENT: Management and Organisation

1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the Faculty of Business at South East Technological University to develop a Higher Diploma in Business in Talent Management (Level 8, 60 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)
- Helen Barry, Managing Director, Simplify HR, Waterford
- Dr Richard Coady, Academic Council Representative, South East Technological University
- Grainne Cronin, Group HR & Talent Acquisition Manager, AutoBoland Group, Waterford
- Airidas Kacenas, Student Representative, University of Ulster
- Dr Juliet McMahan, Associate Professor, Department of Work and Employment Studies, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Dr Breda O'Dwyer, Head of Department of Organisation and Professional Development, Munster Technological University, Cork

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 18 September 2025. 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 Tom O'Toole, Head of Faculty of Business (Waterford), South East Technological University
- Dr Patricia Bowe, Head of Department of Management and Organisation, South East Technological University
- Prof. Denis Harrington, Head of Department of Graduate Business, South East Technological University

- Dr Triona Bartholin, TU RISE Postdoctoral Fellow, Faculty of Business, South East Technological University
- Dr Jennifer Hennessy, Department of Management and Organisation, South East Technological University
- Stephanie Keating, Department of Management and Organisation, South East Technological University
- Ann Marie McGrath, Department of Management and Organisation, South East Technological University
- Dr Mick Rock, Department of Management and Organisation, South East Technological University

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 Faculty on proposing a programme to meet an identified skills need for talent management in the sector and for successfully obtaining Springboard+ funding to facilitate the delivery of same. **The panel, however, is unable to recommend approval of the Higher Diploma in Business in Talent Management at this time and ask that the Faculty amend and revise the proposal document in line with the Conditions and Recommendations listed below and submit a revised programme proposal document for consideration by the panel.** Given the time constraints of Springboard+ Funding, the panel undertakes to meet to consider an updated programme proposal, that takes account of the Conditions and Recommendations below, on 7 October 2025, if the resubmission is received from the Faculty by 2 October 2025, at the latest.

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 programme aims and learning outcomes, as articulated on page 7 of the programme document, are generally focused on talent management. This specialisation, however, is not evident from the proposed programme schedule or module descriptors included; the latter reflect a more generic Human Resource Management programme. **The team should consider the articulated aims and outcomes, and design a programme more specifically focused on talent management which would deliver on the aims and outcomes proposed. This could require the selection of alternative existing modules or the design of a number of bespoke modules to cover core areas as identified in the learning outcomes, such as leadership development, engagement, HR data analysis, use of artificial intelligence in HR, change management, diversity and inclusion *et cetera*.** In discussion with the panel, the team indicated that the module descriptors, as included in the document, do not reflect the modules as delivered. **The team should take this opportunity to update the descriptors for any approved modules proposed for the revised programme, as necessary, to ensure that the module descriptors articulate the modules as delivered. The module learning outcomes for the redesigned programme should be comprehensively mapped to the programme learning outcomes to ensure that a graduate will achieve same on successful completion of the modules.**
- The proposed title for the programme is not consistent in the document; the title is given as Higher Diploma in Talent Management, Higher Diploma in Talent Planning, or Higher Diploma in Business in Talent Management in different sections in the programme document. **The programme proposal should be revised to ensure that the title of the programme includes the generic area of the award and is given as Higher Diploma in Business in Talent Management throughout the document.**
- Currently, the programme comprises a 5-credit Introductory-level module, 15 credits each of Intermediate- and Advanced-level modules, and 35 credits (recorded as 25 credits) of Postgraduate modules. **The level of the modules proposed for the programme should be reconsidered to ensure that all are at the appropriate level to contribute to a 60-credit, Level 8 Major Award.**
- **The programme learning outcomes on page 7 of the document, particularly outcomes 5 and 6, should be revised to ensure that all outcomes are achievable and measurable**

on completion of the programme. Programme learning outcome 5 could perhaps be reworded around developing competency in reflective practice thus enabling them to take ownership of their Continuing Professional Development. There appear to be two divergent versions of the programme learning outcomes stated in the document i.e. one set on page 7 and a different set mapped to the Award Standards on pages 8-9. **The proposal document should be revised to ensure that there is a singular version of programme learning outcomes proposed and that these are mapped to the SETU Award Standards for Level 8 (not just mapped to the generic areas of knowledge) to ensure that any award achieved by a graduate of the programme would be at the requisite level.**

- The nature of the proposed delivery of the programme is unclear from the document. The programme schedule is not semesterised and the module contact hours, as stated in the programme schedule, module descriptors and in the proposed delivery schedule in the presentation, are divergent. There are also inconsistencies in module titles and assessment types across the document. In addition, it is understood that it is planned to deliver the programme in part-time mode but this is not evident from the module descriptors, some of which refer to full-time mode contact hours only. **The team should review the document and present the programme schedule in semesterised format to indicate the proposed sequencing of modules. A more detailed discussion on the proposed delivery of the programme should be included in the document together with a sample delivery schedule. The contact time and type proposed for modules should be consistent across programme schedules, module descriptors, delivery schedule and the discussion of same in the document.**
- The discussion on the entry requirements and the nature of the specific target cohort for the programme lacks clarity. **The team should consider the intended target cohort for the programme and ensure that this is reflected in the programme entry requirements and design.** For instance, is the programme proposed as a conversion programme for non-HRM graduates or as a specialisation programme in Talent Management for holders of a Level 8 degree in Business/HRM? **The revised entry requirements should be in line with Section 6.6.2 of the SETU Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes 2025-2026.**
- **The discussion on assessment in the document should be revised to ensure that there is consistency between the discussion and the assessment types indicated in the module**

descriptors and programme schedule. A draft assessment schedule should be included in the revised document to ensure a balanced and appropriately scaled workload for students.

- **There were typographical errors and inconsistencies noted in the document. The revised document should be reviewed to ensure that typographical errors and inconsistencies have been corrected.**
- **The descriptors for all proposed modules should be revised to incorporate material that better reflects the programme learning outcomes and the accepted definitions of Talent Management. The reading lists on all modules should be updated to reflect more contemporary books, articles, and other resources.**
- **The following are the conditions for individual modules:**

Module Title	Condition
Applied Business Project	It is stated in the module descriptor that the “module aims to enable students to implement a discipline specific business project in a live organisational setting”. Details should be included as to how this will be achieved in the case of a learner not working in an organisational setting. The aim should also include the words “in a talent management context”.

2.3 *Recommendations*

- **The team should consider if there are opportunities to share assessments across modules to reduce the workload for students, while still allowing learners to demonstrate that module learning outcomes have been achieved.**
- **To enhance the proposal, the section on ‘National and Regional Context’ should be revised to discuss the proposed programme in the context of established skills needs and demand in the Talent Management/HR area and similar provision elsewhere. The**

‘Institute Context’ should reflect how the programme fits with the faculty programme portfolio and SETU strategic priorities.

- **The following are recommendations on individual modules:**

Module Title	Recommendation
Performance Management	The team should consider including material related to talent management, specifically around managing top talent, future-focused performance management, and some inclusion of current critiques of Performance Management (PM) and Performance Appraisal (PA).
Principals of Employment Law	Consideration should be given to merging employment relations skills and employment law into one module around managing the employment relationship, or to having elements of these modules within other modules. This would make room for modules more associated with a programme on talent management such as leadership/organisational behaviour. The inclusion of core talent management modules would appeal more to the target audience, whilst retaining the important element of employment relations.
Resourcing and Talent Planning	The inclusion of more explicit material on analytics, talent pools, pipelining <i>et cetera</i> would enhance the module.
Design and Deliver Training	The module title could be updated to better reflect a more strategic approach; a title such as ‘Learning and Development’ might better reflect this. The inclusion of the topic Career Development here or in at least one of the modules (e.g. Performance Management) would enhance the programme.

Module Title	Recommendation
Employee Relations Skills	See recommendation on 'Principals of Employment Law' above.
Human Resource Management in a Business Environment	There appears to be overlap between this and other modules, and, furthermore most people applying to do a focussed programme on Talent Management should know the basics of Human Resource Management. Consideration should be given to removing the 'Human Resource Management in a Business Environment' module from the programme and to replacing it with a module that better reflects the stated learning outcomes.



Signed:

Ciaran Lynch (Chair)

Date:

22/09/2025