



SOUTH EAST TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE EVALUATION 3

ASSESSORS' REPORT TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL

COURSE EVALUATED:	Higher Diploma in Science in Computer Science (Level 8, 90 credits)
FACULTY:	Science and Computing
DEPARTMENT:	Computing and Mathematics

INTRODUCTION

The following is a review report to Academic Council from the panel of assessors on the proposal from the Faculty of Science and Computing at South East Technological University to change certain aspects of the Higher Diploma in Science in Computer Science 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:

- Ciaran Lynch, Former Development Manager, Limerick Institute of Technology (Chair)
- Dr Enda Fallon, Head of Department of Computer and Software Engineering, Technological University of the Shannon
- Joseph Kellegher, Head of Discipline, Electrical Services Engineering, Technological University Dublin
- Brendan O'Farrell, Programme Manager, General Engineering Talent Development, Red Hat, Waterford
- Dr Colette Moloney, Assistant Registrar, South East Technological University
- Vincent Ryan, Senior Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, Munster Technological University
- Siobhan Wall, Academic Council Representative, South East Technological University

In accordance with the regulations set out in the aforementioned *Programme Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy and Procedures*, a review meeting took place on 20 June 2025. The review meeting was conducted virtually via MS Teams. The following members of the South East Technological University team were present:

- Dr Alan Davy, Head of Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Dr Rosanne Birney, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Dr Bernard Butler, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University

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- Eamonn Delestar, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- David Drohan, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Jerry Horgan, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Mary Lyng, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Jimmy McGibney, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Laura McGibney, Online Engagement Advisor, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Mairead Meagher, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- John Rellis, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Siobhan Roche, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Frank Walsh, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, South East Technological University
- Peter Windle, Lecturer, Department of Computing and Mathematics, 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 team on their wealth of knowledge and expertise in delivering programmes in the area, and their innovative online engagement support structure for learners. The panel **recommends approval of the changes proposed for the Higher Diploma in Science in Computer Science** until the next Review in the Faculty of Science and Computing.

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

- **The module descriptor for the ‘ICT Skills Placement’ module was not included in the programme document, but it should be added to the revised documentation.** In conversation with the panel, the team indicated that learners who could not undertake a placement were being facilitated in completing professional certification *in lieu*. **The team should therefore either revise and re name the current ‘ICT Skills Placement’ module to allow for either placement or professional certification to be undertaken or change the status of the ‘ICT Skills Placement’ module to elective and provide a corresponding elective module for learners who complete the certification pathway. There should be clear criteria provided as to the types and volume of professional certification that a learner will be required to successfully complete to meet the requirements of the SETU module.**
- There was some ambiguity re the utilisation of an interview as part of the admission process; there is no mention of an interview in the proposed entry requirements but an interview was referenced in the entry process discussed with the panel. **The team should review the entry requirements and process for the Higher Diploma in Science in Computer Science and clarify if an interview is being proposed as part of the process, and, if yes, clarify the function of the interview i.e. an entry requirement that applicants must successfully complete for entry, a shortlist process in the event the programme is over subscribed, or purely to advise applicants on the nature of the programme. If an interview is proposed as part of the entry requirements then the function and any associated grading criteria should be explicit in the programme proposal.**


- **The team should review the programme learning outcomes as PLO 4 and PLO 5 are identical and PLO 3 does not include the additional specialisms proposed as part of the CE3 application.**
- **The level of ‘The Evolution of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence’ module should be reconsidered;** the module is currently given as ‘Intermediate’ whereas all other modules, including all modules on the parallel streams, are proposed at ‘Advanced’ level. **The new modules should be entered on the SETU module catalogue once access to same is restored.**

2.3 *Recommendations*

- **The reading lists should be reviewed to ensure that all contain up-to-date resources and the latest editions of same.**
- **The team should consider modelling the structure of any future elective streams on the current Artificial Intelligence stream i.e. 20 credits of taught modules which prepares for a 10-credit mini project module in the area. The project would be an addition to a graduate’s portfolio and provide experience in ethics *et cetera*. The Software Engineering, and Cybersecurity and Forensics streams could be amended to include a 10-credit project module at the next opportunity to review.**
- **The team should review the module descriptor for ‘The Evolution of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence’ to better articulate where the practical elements are incorporated into the module, and also to identify additional opportunities for practice in the module.**
- **The module learning outcomes and indicative content should be reviewed in new modules now, and at the next opportunity to review for existing modules, to articulate where the areas of DevOps and security are covered in the programme. Given that there are three elective streams, which are also standalone Minor Awards, the topics of DevOps and security should be at least addressed in each at a basic level.**
- **The team should consider how the use of Generative AI could be incorporated into the programme and how the assessments could be designed to discourage the**

inappropriate use of AI. In discussion with the panel, the team mentioned elements of practice in individual modules (e.g. interview *et cetera*) to ensure that the assignments are a learner's own work, but these were not captured in the document or consistent across modules. **The team should consider using in-person practical assessments in the programme to assure the assessment process.**

Signed:



Ciaran Lynch (Chair)

Date:

09/07/2025
