

Panel Validation Report



Masters of Business in Digital Entrepreneurship, incorporating an exit award of Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Entrepreneurship Level 9

Programme Code: DL_XXX

Postgraduate Certificate in Business in Digital Start up (Special Purpose Award) Level 9

Date of Panel: Friday 27th May 2016

Panel members

Chairperson	Dr Dominic Dillane Head, School of Hospitality, Management & Tourism Dublin Institute of Technology
Academic	Dr Breda Kenny Head, Hinks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence Cork Institute of Technology
Industry	Mr Ken Nugent Commercial Manager, Digital/Video/Mobile RTE Dublin 4
IADT	Dr Annie Doona, President Dr Andrew Power, Registrar Dr Josephine Browne, Head Faculty Enterprise & Humanities Dr Therese Moylan, Head Department of Entrepreneurship <u>Programme Team:</u> Ms Audrey Stenson, Ms Eva Perez, Ms Niamh Gallagher, Ms Fiona McLoughlin, Mr Peter Weadack, Ms Sharon McGreevy Dr Christine Horn, Ms Siobhan Gallagher Ms Laura Devlin, Panel Administration

Overview of Programmes

The Masters programme is a one year, 90 credit Masters of Business in Digital Entrepreneurship. It will be completed within a full calendar year, intake in September, with the final project submission the following August, with results presented to the Autumn exam board.

Students who attain 60 credits and choose to leave after completing the modules associated with Digital Start up and Enterprise Support may graduate with a Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Entrepreneurship.

The Postgraduate Certificate in Business in Digital Start up is a one year, 30 credit special purpose award.

Private panel meeting

Issues noted for discussion with programme team:

- Demand for programme – potential to grow
- Delivery modes
- Graduate opportunities
- Imbalance of content and credits across some modules
- Varying skills sets of diverse applicants (cognate areas)
- Importance of inviting in expert leaders in e-commerce to guest lecture

Meeting of Panel/President/Registrar/Head of Faculty

The Panel were informed that IADT Masters programmes are self-funding. Part of the institute strategy is to grow international student numbers which has the potential to bring in sizable income. IADT offers niche programmes, producing graduates who are innovative, creative and entrepreneurial, and who are ready to meet the challenges of a digital age. The proposed Masters programme under review today reflects the Institute's approach to meeting changing demands from the educational and industry sectors. Current partnerships include Erasmus agreements for students across Europe and Loras students from the USA. Further potential international partners have been identified and a relationship with George Brown college in Canada and NARFU in Russia are under negotiation. A recently appointed Head of the Directorate of Creativity, Innovation and Research at IADT and a newly appointed Marketing Manager will be to the forefront in driving the Institute's 2014-2018 strategy.

Meeting of Panel/Head of Department/Programme Team

Rationale for the programme:

The Head of the Department of Entrepreneurship, Dr Therese Moylan, outlined the rationale for the programme. The Masters is a logical development of what the department currently offer at level 8 in the entrepreneurial space. The team recognise that business and technology are inextricably linked. Digital technology is vital nowadays even at undergraduate level. Research also indicated that current level 8 students expressed an interest in progressing to level 9. The programme is aimed at producing business savvy graduates for a digital world. The cohort of students will come from diverse backgrounds – media, computing or business. The skills sets that students would develop will be relevant in a large variety of jobs, not simply entrepreneurs. Not all students become entrepreneurs, but all students will develop skills to enable them to work either on their own or with employers. The panel noted the programme had the advantage of the IADT brand as a marketing tool for selling the programme.

The Masters programme will initially run on Wednesday evenings and all day Friday. A minimum cohort of 14 students will make the programme viable to run, but the anticipation is an intake of 20 – 25. Cost is €6,000 for the Masters. The postgraduate certificate at 30 credits could provide a 'taster' programme for people in employment, who would then have the option of transferring onto the Masters programme. The programme is very applied with a lot of work in laboratories.

The Certificate programme will run over a year, one evening a week. 25 students have been accepted onto the programme, funded by the Springboard project for the academic year 2016-2017.

Balance/Content of modules:

The panel noted an over emphasis on the 'Social Media Marketing Strategy' module and suggested building a media agnostic platform to give students a good start. The team feel the traditional market is still important and the introductory part of this module deals with basics such as interactive television and radio. To help retain a balance of emphasis however, the learning outcomes have been written broad enough to enable the programme to adapt to constant changes, on social platforms for example. The balance of content will be reviewed on an annual basis in the context of each student cohort and depending on the skills they bring with them coming onto the programme. The students will create a Weebly blog which can be a personal reflective journal and can be used for assessments, bringing all a student's work together.

The 'Digital Storytelling' module uses tools to tell a business/product story blended with design thinking. This helps students to conceptualise their work and develop content for an overall marketing plan as entrepreneurs. Online consumer behaviour is examined. This model can cater to the different needs of students from different skills/experience backgrounds.

Noting a lot of student pivot in digital programmes, the panel noted 'The Online Consumer' module could be developed more, to highlight the online consumer journey. SEOs/SEMs could be invited to lecture on the programme.

For the 'Research Methods' and 'Research Project' modules, it is insights rather than data, that are crucial. Cross validation of research should be looked at – observation, focus groups, traffic data etc. Research needs to be linked to start-up companies and entrepreneurship, and this could provide an opportunity to build relationships with partners. Noting some students will never have engaged in any research before coming onto the programme, the team hope to create a space where the students can engage with current IADT research students.

Cost of programme:

The panel felt the registration cost for the Certificate (€1,500 a year) programme was on the low side, and urged the team not to undersell what was being offered. This is a significant course being offered one day a week over a year. The cost of the Masters (€6,000 a year) was standard for this level. There is also an opportunity to consider a programme for another cohort – small to medium enterprises – for around €3,000 a year

Marketing:

The panel noted the marketing opportunities in selling the programmes - launch an award for digital entrepreneurship for the first cohort of students and write an investor ready business plan. Such strategies would garner a lot of interest in the programmes. The panel were informed that the Institute is in the process of updating the website, and newly appointed staff - a Marketing Manager and a Director of Creativity, Innovation and Research – at IADT will be instrumental in highlighting the Institute's research strategy.

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy:

The Institute has a tried and tested policy in place. Applicants complete a Euro-pass CV, and write a small research piece. A matching exercise of the student's application is completed against the learning outcomes of the programme.

Resources:

Level 9 research Masters are self-funded and not governed by the Employment Control Framework. Anticipated numbers on the programme will ensure a claim on a budget for running the programme and staff can be released and back-filled if necessary. There is in-house staff expertise to teach on the programme

Decision of the panel

The panel recommended the validation of the proposed programmes, namely:

Banner Code	Description	Credits
DLXXX	Masters in Business in Digital Entrepreneurship	90
DLXXX	Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Entrepreneurship (exit award built into Masters programme)	60
DLXXX	Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Entrepreneurship	30

Friday 27th May 2016

Conditions

This validation is subject to no conditions.

Recommendations

The Panel made the following series of recommendations for the consideration of the programme team:

1. Target customer - the Panel would like to see a more global strategy developed, noting there is potential to attract large number of international Erasmus students onto the programme.
2. Price points – noting the Certificate is priced at 1,500 euros and the Masters is 6,000 euros, the panel were of the opinion that there is potential to also offer the programme to SMEs, for a cost of around 3,000 euros. Tapping into the international market could bring in a sizable income. The panel noted the large gap between the cost of the Certificate (too low?) and the cost of the Masters.
3. Content – the panel advised the team review the balance of credits across modules. The panel felt there was too much emphasis on social media compared to understanding the target customer, which should be a priority. Consider an up-weight for module 'The Online Customer' from the current 5 credits to 10 credits. Consider reducing module 'Social Media Marketing Strategy' from 10 credits to 5 credits.
4. Delivery – the programme team should monitor and review delivery modes. Flexible delivery modes could increase the capacity to grow applicant numbers – consider part-time, boot camp, blended delivery as options. A boot camp offering would be of particular interest to digital start-ups, who are keen to build their business online.
5. Progression - the range of career and progression options for graduates should be highlighted more in the document. The panel advised the team to lead with the key hooks of 'Online Data Management' and 'Social Media Marketing Strategy' as marketing propositions – these are the areas where people have the least amount of knowledge.
6. Content – emphasise the practical and applied nature of the programme. Highlight assessment and research strings and introduce cross modular, integrated learning as much as possible.

7. Student cohort – the panel recommended the team deliver an induction programme, to cater for the diverse cohort of students
8. Marketing strategy – a long term national and international plan is needed to position the programme. To this end, the panel suggest the team consider the advantages of a *Digital Ambassador* - a high profile individual who would attract and draw attention to the programme.
9. The panel recommend building more links - with LEO, the Media Cube, IADT alumni and associated roadshow...
10. The Panel suggested inviting guest lecturers to inform students of real life case studies - successful and not so successful stories.
11. There is a need to emphasise growth and scalability in the programme – not currently evident in the document. Demonstrate how to grow and scale up a business.
12. The panel suggested the team review the title of the Certificate in Business in Digital Start up. The current title may deter some potential applicants. A possible title could be Certificate in Digital Business – to attract the middle ground SMEs. The panel noted the latter are the sector that needs most support, as 51% currently don't do any business online. The panel suggested local chambers of commerce could be helpful in forging partnerships with SMEs.

Commendations

The Panel thanked the team for their well-informed engagement, and commended them on the quality of the programme, noting the very strategic position such an offering would have in the marketplace, with a potential to garner sizable income.

Panel signatures

Chairperson

Dr Dominic Dillane _____ Date _____

Secretary

Dr Andrew Power _____ Date _____

**FACULTY OF ENTERPRISE AND HUMANITIES RESPONSE
TO**

Panel Validation Report

**Masters of Business
in Digital Entrepreneurship, incorporating an exit award of
Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Entrepreneurship
DL909**

Level 9

Programme Code: DL910

**Postgraduate Certificate in Business in Digital Start up (Special
Purpose Award)
Level 9**

Date of Panel: Friday 27th May 2016

Conditions

This validation is subject to no conditions.

Recommendations

The Panel made the following series of recommendations for the consideration of the programme team:

1. Target customer - the Panel would like to see a more global strategy developed, noting there is potential to attract large number of international Erasmus students onto the programme.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty is working with the Marketing Department to articulate an appropriate marketing strategy to attract international Erasmus students to the programme.

2. Price points – noting the Certificate is priced at 1,500 euros and the Masters is 6,000 euros, the panel were of the opinion that there is potential to also offer the programme to SMEs, for a cost of around 3,000 euros. Tapping into the international market could bring in a sizable income. The panel noted the large gap between the cost of the Certificate (too low?) and the cost of the Masters.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty is reviewing the cost models for both programme noting the recommendation of the Panel.

3. Content – the panel advised the team review the balance of credits across modules. The panel felt there was too much emphasis on social media compared to understanding the target customer, which should be a priority. Consider an up-weight for module 'The Online Customer' from the current 5 credits to 10 credits. Consider reducing module 'Social Media Marketing Strategy' from 10 credits to 5 credits.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty programme team has reviewed the credit distribution and will re-examine this based on the first roll out experience.

4. Delivery – the programme team should monitor and review delivery modes. Flexible delivery modes could increase the capacity to grow applicant numbers – consider part-time, boot camp, blended delivery as options. A boot camp offering would be of particular interest to digital start-ups, who are keen to build their business online.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. A strategic priority of IADT is to grow our student numbers including post graduate numbers. The Faculty team is reviewing different delivery models to attract and grow numbers on this programme.

5. Progression - the range of career and progression options for graduates should be highlighted more in the document. The panel advised the team to lead with the key hooks of 'Online Data Management' and 'Social Media Marketing Strategy' as marketing propositions – these are the areas where people have the least amount of knowledge.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty team is currently reviewing career and progression options for graduates of this programme. The team also notes the Expert Skills report and the various job vacancies reports seeking skills in this area.

6. Content – emphasise the practical and applied nature of the programme. Highlight assessment and research strings and introduce cross modular, integrated learning as much as possible.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty will promote the applied nature of this programme and will work to achieve cross modular delivery model.

7. Student cohort – the panel recommended the team deliver an induction programme, to cater for the diverse cohort of students

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty team has developed an induction programme to cater for the diverse cohort of students including different discipline backgrounds and experience.

8. Marketing strategy – a long term national and international plan is needed to position the programme. To this end, the panel suggest the team consider the advantages of a Digital Ambassador - a high profile individual who would attract and draw attention to the programme.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty Team is currently reviewing potential Digital Ambassador's that would be suitable to discharge this role and promote the programme on a cost neutral basis.

9. The panel recommend building more links - with LEO, the Media Cube, IADT alumni and associated roadshow.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty Team is currently engaging with DLR LEO, the Media Cube and IADT alumni to promote the programme and encourage applicants.

10. The Panel suggested inviting guest lecturers to inform students of real life case studies - successful and not so successful stories.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty Team has developed a list of guest lecturers active in the field to present case studies – successful and unsuccessful – to the students.

11. There is a need to emphasise growth and scalability in the programme – not currently evident in the document. Demonstrate how to grow and scale up a business.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty team has considered the issues of growth and scalability and will reflect these within modules of the programme. The modules have been revised with these issues referenced.

12. The panel suggested the team review the title of the Certificate in Business in Digital Start up. The current title may deter some potential applicants. A possible title could be Certificate in Digital Business – to attract the middle ground SMEs. The panel noted the latter are the sector that needs most support, as 51% currently don't do any business online. The panel suggested local chambers of commerce could be helpful in forging partnerships with SMEs.

Faculty Response

The Faculty welcomes this recommendation and proposes to use the suggested title.