

**Response of the BSc (Hons) in Sustainable Timber Technology Programme Team  
to the Q3 Report on Programme Validation  
following the Programme validation Event of 10 February 2020.**

**31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

The following table schedules the three requirements and ten recommendations of the Q3 Report on Programme Validation and the response of the BSc (Hons) in Sustainable Timber Technology Programme Team to each of these.

	<b>Panel requirements</b>	<b>Response of Programme Team</b>
<b>1</b>	It should be clear within all modules what the assessment strategy is, i.e. the types of continuous assessment or coursework expected, with weightings attached, and aligned to specific module learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– On 20th February the Programme Team met to consider this requirement and review all module descriptors.</li> <li>– Since then, revisions have been made to assessment type, alignment to LOs and weightings of some modules. In a limited number of cases the opportunity has been taken to also revise Learning Outcomes.</li> <li>– The attached ‘Assessment Schedule’ now identifies formative and summative assessment revised modules, makes clear where thresholds apply (Y or N) and in another column indicates (Y) where a revision has taken place. If the only change has been to display more fully the nature of assessment in the ‘Assessment Schedule’, (N) has been indicated.</li> <li>– The attached ‘Register of Changes’ provides more detail on changes made.</li> <li>– All module descriptors are attached in a zipped file.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	The Programme Team should produce a placement handbook that describes the organisation and management of the placement including the process whereby a student is placed as well as supervision and assessment arrangements. These arrangements should include a placement contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Programme Team has created a placement handbook (including contract) as required.</li> <li>– See Section 3.2.8.1 of the Programme Document and the attached ‘<i>Forest Product Sector Work Placement Handbook</i>’.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	The minimum entry requirements for CAO applicants to the ab initio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– See Section 2.1.2.1 - Minimum entry requirements of the Programme Document.</li> </ul>

	<p>programme should follow TU Dublin standard requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>‘The TU Dublin minimum requirement for this Programme is a Leaving Certificate where Grade H5 has been obtained in two subjects and Grade H7 / O6 has been obtained in four other subjects.’</i></li> <li>- <i>‘The Programme Team have set an additional minimum requirement that Grade H6 / O5 has been obtained in English or Irish, and Mathematics.’</i></li> <li>- The reason for this additional minimum requirement is that the Programme Team have found from experience that students with H7 / O6 in English or Irish, and Mathematics, tend to struggle in the existing Programme. At the same time a suitable applicant’s best grades might be achieved in other subjects such as woodwork or science.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Panel recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>Response of Programme Team</b></p>
<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>The Programme Team should consider reinforcing the sustainability thread that goes through the programme, for example, it suggests that students research the various different concepts and models of sustainability and address this in a project/thesis that they approach from a perspective of personal interest. Connected to this, the Panel also recommends that the Sulitest be incorporated into the programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On 25th February the Programme Team invited Andy Maguire (City Campus Sustainability Coordinator) to lead a workshop on sustainability (addressing its meaning &amp; value, the SDGs, the emerging practice of auditing for compliance and its integration in the Programme). In addition at the Programme Team’s invitation, TU Dublin’s Transform EDU Team (Philippe Lemarchand, Tandeep Kaur, Cormac McMahon &amp; Philip Owende) have now commenced auditing all modules in the Programme using their recently created ‘Sustainable PMC Interrogator’ tool. (This spreadsheet-based tool uses definitions from the ‘Sustainability Tracking, Assessment &amp; Rating (STARS) System’ (from USA) to categorise references to sustainability in the text of a module, then links these to specific SDG Goals, Targets and Indicators.) Over the next few months this process will highlight opportunities to further embed sustainability in various modules. The Programme Team welcomes this engagement &amp; looks forward to adjusting module content further, if required, through AQEC/PMC submission post-validation.</li> <li>- Members of the Programme Team have also taken the ‘Sulitest’ and see the value of incorporating its repeated use within the Programme as a measure that reinforces the sustainability thread. That test is</li> </ul>

		<p>now listed in the indicative syllabus of the 'Regulatory Environment' module.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sustainability thread of the programme will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
2	<p>The Programme Team should adopt a holistic view of the programme in terms of assessment, in particular further consideration of the following: the use of formative as well as summative assessment, increasing the amount of group work and how this might be managed and assessed, greater use of presentations and assessments relating to field trips. The Team should also consider alternative and innovative assessment methods that are not time-consuming either for students or staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognising that the previous format of the 'Assessment Schedule' did not display the holistic nature of assessment in the new Programme (despite it being a progressive feature adopted from its antecedent, DT169 / TU732 B.Tech in Timber Product Technology), the Programme Team has revised the Schedule to show the full range of formative and summative assessment methods proposed, this includes additional opportunities for group work and presentation.</li> <li>- See attached 'Assessment Schedule' and module descriptors.</li> </ul>
3	<p>The Team should consider classifying the Bachelor of Technology exit award.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme Team now seeks to include in the proposal the classification of the (NFQ L7) B. Tech (Ord.) (Timber Technology) exit award.</li> <li>- See Section 3.2.7.2 'Level 7 exit award' in the Programme Document.</li> </ul>
4	<p>The Team should consider the parameters around which a student who has exited the programme with the Bachelor of Technology can re-enter the programme to complete the Honours Degree.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See Section 3.2.7.2 and 3.2.7.3 of Prog Document.</li> <li>- The Programme Team will form an Admissions Committee that will review all applications for advanced entry including re-entry (to Stage 4) after obtaining Level 7 exit award (at end of Stage 3).</li> <li>- The parameters of this will be set out in the Admissions Committee's advanced entry admissions policy document (see response to recommendation #5).</li> <li>- The Programme Team have removed the requirement that those re-entering the BSc STT programme who were awarded the Level 7 exit award (B Tech (Ord) Timber Technology) forfeit the exit award.</li> </ul>
5	<p>The Team should reconsider the work experience requirement for Bachelor of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme Team have re-considered the rationale for the entry requirements and re-worded them for clarity (see Section 2.1.4.5).</li> </ul>

	<p>Technology graduates to enter the Level Eight bridging programme as the Panel is currently unclear of the rationale for this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Programme Team will form an Admissions Committee that will review all advanced entry applications (including requests to enter the Bridging Programme).</li> <li>- The Committee will develop an advanced entry admissions policy document that will include (a) a framework to judge advanced entry applications to Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the full-time programme, and the part-time bridging programme, and (b) Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) to facilitate a range of applicant types. APCL and APEL will be in line with TU Dublin policy.</li> <li>- To be offered a place, applicants must have sufficient relevant work experience in the Forest Products Sector. The parameters for judging this will be set out in the admissions policy document. Work experience will provide students with invaluable insights and industry context during the four semesters of the bridging programme, particularly in preparation of the thesis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p>The School should ensure that collaborative interdisciplinary activities within the School and across Schools are incorporated into this and other programmes, for example, through shared events, field trips, projects etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The School Executive is open to, and supportive of, inter-disciplinary activities and shared events within the School.</li> <li>- The Dublin School of Architecture has a cross-programme student society (the Architectural Students Association) that promotes a range of social and sectoral events.</li> <li>- The Timber Talks, Timber Technology Day and Build Project are annual fixtures that always involve at least two programmes in the School.</li> <li>- Inter-disciplinary activities takes place within specific modules of School programmes (for example, furniture design-make projects involving students of BArch and (current) BTech (Timber Product Technology) Programmes.</li> <li>- The Yearbook, End of Year Show are celebrations of all Programmes in the School, requiring input on all sides.</li> <li>- The creation of the Programme has been used to create a cross-disciplinary module that is intended for use by programmes across TU Dublin. This provides the opportunity for inter-disciplinary projects within the School as well as projects that span sectors of society and industry.</li> </ul>

7	<p>The module title for the Visual Communications 4 module should be reviewed, as the Panel considers that it does not accurately reflect the module content. It also recommends that all module titles are reviewed with a view to supporting the marketability of the programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The title of the 'Visual Communications IV – CNC+CAD/CAM' module has been changed to 'Computer Aided Manufacture'.</li> <li>- All module titles have been reviewed and the eight revised names are on attached 'Schedule of module names'.</li> <li>- The Panel should note that a previous internal review resulted in the Wood Science series of modules being renamed in a way that allowed them to be seen as a sequence of modules, while also making their content clearer and their status as individual CPD modules more marketable.</li> </ul>
8	<p>The Team should proofread the programme documentation to ensure completeness and accuracy throughout and that reading lists are updated. For example, the two business modules should now be incorporated within the documentation and tables refer to the correct modules.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The programme documentation has been proofread and changes made.</li> <li>- The two business modules are now incorporated within the documentation and tables refer to the correct modules.</li> </ul>
9	<p>The assessment strategy for the Enterprise Development module should be clarified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Enterprise Development / Business Process Management module was created by another School.</li> <li>- Discussion are ongoing with that School to ensure the assessment strategy of the module aligns with the learning outcomes of BSc STT.</li> </ul>
10	<p>Staff professional development should be prioritised with regard to technological updating, standards and legislation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dublin School of Architecture recognises the importance of upskilling and welcome the encouragement of the validation panel.</li> <li>- The opportunities for upskilling and re-training will be captured in the School Staff Development Plan.</li> <li>- Upskilling in key areas and attendance at key industry events (such as general assemblies of Innovawood Network and at Ligna 2021 Expo) will continue to be encouraged and supported by Dublin School of Architecture.</li> </ul>

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On behalf of the BSc STT Working Group