

Programme Amendment Panel

Higher Diploma in Medical Science

School of Biological and Health Sciences

Programme Amendment

A panel was convened by Academic Board to consider for validation a submission by the School of Biological and Health Sciences for an amendment to the School's Higher Diploma in Medical Science that would allow students to undertake the programme on a part-time basis. This would involve the creation of a stream on the programme that students would undertake over three rather than two years, while in employment in a hospital. No changes to the modules or credits on the programme are proposed.

The membership of the panel was as follows:

1. Dr Ciarán O'Leary, Head of Learning Development, Chairperson
2. Mr Gareth Morgan, Lecturer, Department of Laboratory Medicine, Pathology Division, Karolinska Institute, Sweden
3. Ms Irene Regan, Chief Medical Scientist, Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin, Dublin 12
4. Prof Izabela Naydenova, Principal Investigator and Lecturer, School of Physics & Clinical and Optometric Sciences
5. Ms Nicole O'Neill, Quality Assurance

With the exception of the Chairperson, all other members of the panel had been members of the validation panel for the programme, and were therefore familiar with the programme structure and content.

The agenda for the meeting of the panel, which took place online on Monday, 14th December 2020, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm was as follows:

- 2:00pm: Introductions
- 2:05pm: Presentation by School
- 2:20pm: Private Meeting of Panel
- 2:45pm: Meeting with School
- 3:30pm: Private Meeting of Panel
- 3:50pm: Report to School

During this meeting, the panel met with the following staff involved in the programme management, design and delivery.

- Assoc. Prof Mary Hunt, Head of School of Biological and Health Sciences
- Dr Steve Meaney, Assistant Head of School of Biological and Health Sciences
- Dr Jan Guerin, Assistant Head of School of Biological and Health Sciences
- Dr Kathleen Brosnan, School of Biological and Health Sciences
- Ms Alison Malkin, Head of School of Biological and Health Sciences

The panel had been provided with the following documentation in advance of the meeting:

1. Programme Document for the part-time version of the programme. This document was an amended version of the programme document for the full-time version of the programme, with the amendments focussed on the following areas
 - a. Entry requirements
 - b. Structure of the programme
 - c. Requirement to be in employment in a hospital laboratory for the duration of the programme
 - d. Letter of support from employer
2. Student Handbook
3. Placement Logbook
4. Book of Modules

Programme Amendment Panel Outcome

The panel commends the School of Biological and Health Sciences on the development of the part-time version of the programme, which is designed to meet a specific national need. The panel was very pleased with the quality of the presentation provided by the School and by the high standard of the documentation developed. The panel also recognised that the School had taken on board feedback from the initial programme validation to enhance the programme, and the School was thanked for doing so.

The panel, having reviewed all documentation and having met with representatives of the School of Biological and Health Sciences, proposes to Academic Board that the programme amendment is approved and that the School is enabled to offer the Higher Diploma in Medical Science on a part-time basis as per the amended programme documentation, subject to the School addressing the matters raised in this report to the satisfaction of the panel.

Actions Required by School

1. The School should revisit the wording regarding the requirement for accreditation of the hospital laboratories, taking into consideration the advice of the panel in relation to the number of accredited laboratories per hospital, and the requirement for final sign off by a registered medical scientist.
2. The School should make explicit in the documentation the requirement for confidentiality and anonymising of patient data, and make it clear that the student has substantial responsibilities in this regard.
3. The School should update the documentation to revise or remove the wording regarding international students, considering the part-time admission route.
4. The School should make a number of minor and editorial corrections to the documentation, details of which have been provided by the panel.