Programme Review Report

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Botanical Cuisine

TU941

Version of Report	*Author*	*Date*
Draft 1	AQA – Michael Keane	24th June 2025
Final	AQA – Michael Keane	8th July 2025

Approval	*Date*
Documentation for Review approved by Faculty Board	8th May 2025
Report of Programme Review Panel approved by AQAEC	Click or tap to enter a date.
New Programme Title approved by University Programmes Board (if applicable)	N/A

Section A Programme Details	
Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Botanical Cuisine & Food Sustainability[1]
NFQ Level	8
ECTS Credits	60
Mode of delivery	Part-time ✓ Full-time ☐
Duration	Part-time: 1Yr Full-time:
Modalities of delivery	In-person, On-campus ✓ Blended ☐
	Online ☐ Hyflex ☐
Classification of award	1st Class Honours; 2nd Class Honours, Upper Division; 2nd Class Honours, Lower Division; Pass
Discipline Programmes Board	N/A
Faculty Board	Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Schools involved in delivery	Culinary Arts & Food Technology
Delivery location	Tallaght
Collaborative Partner (where applicable)	N/A
Date of Commencement of revised programme	Sept 2025

[1] See recommendation #1.

Section B Awards

Award Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Botanical Cuisine & Food Sustainability
NFQ Level	8
Award Class	Major
ECTS Credits	60
Classification of award	1st Class Honours; 2nd Class Honours, Upper Division; 2nd Class Honours, Lower Division; Pass

Section C - Programme Derogations (if required)

Derogations from Assessment Regulations/Marks and Standards, requiring approval by University Programmes Board	
N/A	
University Programmes Board Approval	Date

Section D Review Process

Date of Programme Review	12th June 2025

Context for Programme Review
How was the programme review process instigated, by whom/via which process?
The School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology requested a full programme review, to include alignment with the University's Education Model, Graduate Attributes and Strategic Intent.

Please tick the type of programme review undertaken:

Full Programme Review ✓	Focused Programme Review ☐

Transitional arrangements
How will changes to revised programme be implemented, i.e. to be implemented with immediate effect in the next academic year of delivery, or phased in on a year-by-year basis.
The School of School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology wishes for the revised programme to be implemented with immediate effect for the next academic year of delivery i.e. 2025/26.

Panel Members

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Ciarán O'Leary	Chair	Assistant Head of Academic Affairs Learning, Teaching and Assessment TU Dublin
Alan Mc Cabe	External assessor	Department of Hospitality Studies Dundalk Institute of Technology
TJ O Connor	External assessor	Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism Department Munster Technological University
Eric Matthews	External assessor	Chef / Co-owner Kicky's Castlehouse Restaurants Ltd
Dr Irene Murtagh	Internal assessor	School of Informatics and Cybersecurity TU Dublin
Michael Keane	Academic Quality Advisor & Secretary to the Panel	Academic Affairs TU Dublin

Documentation Reviewed by the Programme Review Panel
▪ Programme Self Evaluation Report (PSER) ▪ Programme Descriptors (Extracted from the Programme and Module Catalogue - PMC) ▪ Books of Modules (Extracted from the Programme and Module Catalogue - PMC) ▪ External Examiner Reports (2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23) ▪ Exemplar Assessment Materials ▪ Legacy Programme Descriptors and Books of Modules ▪ TU Dublin Strategic Plan 2024-2028 ▪ Overview of the University Education Model

Schedule of Meetings

14.00 – 14.45	Private meeting of panel to discuss/provide initial feedback on the submission documentation and draw up an agenda of matters to be raised at subsequent meetings.	
14.45 – 17.00	Meeting of Panel with Head of School, Head of Discipline and staff teaching on the programme to discuss the PSER, revised programme, module syllabi (existing, revised and new), teaching, learning and assessment methods.	
	In attendance:	
	Dr. Denise O'Leary (Head of School)	James Murphy (Head of Discipline) Michael O'Connor (Head of Discipline)
	Annette Sweeney	Dr Brian Murphy
	Warren McElhone	Colm Foran
	Ita Holden	Niall Hill
	Orla McConnell	Thomas Meaney
	Vourneen Hennessy	Dr Elaine Mahon
	Denise Murray	
17.00 – 17.30	Meeting of Panel with current students and graduates.	
	In attendance:	
	Current Students	*Graduates*
	Nikki Kenny	Anissa Mokhtari
	Sarah Caldwell	Gavin McDonagh
	Aylin Aydin	Theresa Keane
	Sarah Browne	Caomhan de Bri
		Stephanie Moeran
17.30 – 18.00	Private meeting of Panel to discuss its findings.	
18.00	Oral Presentation of panel summary findings to Head of School of Culinary Arts & Food Technology, Head of Discipline and Programme Coordinator.	

Section E Programme Evaluation

Programme Review Process		
Was the programme review conducted in accordance with the Programme Review Process, i.e. were current students, graduates, employers, other appropriate stakeholders involved in the review process?	Yes ✓	No ☐

The programme review process provided the programme team with the opportunity to engage with the new initiatives in TU Dublin, such as the University Education Model, revised Graduate Attributes, Sustainable Education, EDI policies, and the three pillars of People, Planet and Partnership of the University's Strategic Plan.

Governance & Management		
Does the programme align with the University's Strategic Plan and the principles of the University Education Model, and relevant policies?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Evident from the submission documentation the programme aligns with TU Dublin's University Education Model (UEM) in its three core themes of Learner choice, Learner experience and Learner Support in the following areas:

- Learner Choice
  Student centred, and student engaged for student success.
  Connected, engaged, internationalised curriculum.
  Diversity of practice and provision and focus on practice and career development.
- Learner Experience
  Flexible agile teaching and learning.
  Knowledge creation to application.
  Engaged student experience.
  Inclusive, global and multicultural.
- Learner Support
  Continuously developing, committed and caring staff.
  Transition.
  Access and equal opportunity.

UEM Fundamentals

UEM Fundamental 1 - Module Duplication:
Modules within this programme have been reviewed, duplication of content avoided or minimised to ensure progression through this programme. No evidence was provided in the PSER as to the review of modules to remove duplication across culinary arts programmes offered by the School.

UEM Fundamental 2 - Mode of Delivery:
Practical modules by necessity are delivered in-person. Culinary graduates must develop hands-on tactile skills, sensory analysis, use of equipment, safety working with culinary equipment and real time feedback in a busy live environment. The panel noted however, that modalities was not considered as part of this process at this time. Recommendation #7.

UEM Fundamental 3 - Progression opportunities from awards at lower levels of the NFQ to university programmes:
Access, transfer and progression pathways on to the programme were evident within the PSER.

UEM Fundamental 4 - Capacity to offer student choice:
No evidence of any commitment to consider the possibility of widening elective choice within the programme was provided in the PSER nor through panel discussions. The panel encourages the programme team to consider introducing elective or free elective modules to enhance learner choice. Recommendation #4.

UEM Fundamental 5 – University Framework of Learner Experiences:
The use of an applied learning approach facilitates the implementation of Universal Design for Learning in the programme delivery. This is further supported by the practice-focused design of modules allowing many opportunities for learners to process the content for their learning style. Within the programme, inclusivity is promoted through the following:

- Teamwork
- Event organisation decision-making by consensus
- Giving choice within tasks and assessments
- Peer-to-peer learning
- Flexibility and accessibility
- Student support sessions

UEM Fundamental 6 - Common pan-University modules:
No evidence was provided.

UEM Fundamental 7 - Learning outcomes related to sustainability are transparent:
The revised programme has an embedded food sustainability focus to help the graduate to lead sustainable culinary and business practices. The sustainable goals 2, 3, 4, and 12 are embedded in a series of unique modules offered in this programme. Each module addresses aspects of sustainability and all interconnect with each other. It encourages students to choose areas of research that will address sustainability in their workplace for example, food waste/preservation, food provenance, regenerative agriculture, all of which encompasses a 'food system'. Also, embedded in the programme is an applied nature of food sustainability as an emerging innovative programme design using the Constructivist Learning Theory (Kurt. 2021) as it's pedagogy to move away from traditional teaching models.

Do the Programme Management and Quality Assurance arrangements align to TU Dublin Quality Framework processes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Has the Annual Monitoring/Academic Quality Enhancement process been used to identify issues and actions that continually enhance the programme and student learning experience?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Student Data		
On consideration of student recruitment data, is there evidence that there continues to be a market demand for the programme and that the programme remains viable?	Yes ☐	No ☐
The panel noted the low recruitment figures and recommended that the School implement a strategic marketing plan to further support student recruitment for the next 5 years. Recommendation #2.		

On consideration of student engagement, performance and progression data, are students engaging with their programme and performing as expected? If not, has this been acknowledged and addressed through the programme review process?	Yes ✓	No ☐
On consideration of graduate destination data, is there evidence that students are securing employment in the field or progressing to further study in the discipline?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Evidenced within the PSER and provided graduate profiles.		

Awards Standards		
Are the programme aims and learning outcomes clearly written using appropriate terminology?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are the programme aims and learning outcomes aligned to the proposed level of the award on the NFQ in accordance with applicable Award Standards?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Will the curricula, teaching, learning and assessment methods enable students to reach the appropriate standard to qualify for the award(s)?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Having reviewed the syllabi and assessment methods as proposed the panel was of the opinion that learners would be capable of attaining the standards of knowledge, skill or competence relevant for the awards.		
Is ongoing programme development appropriately informed by internal and external stakeholder input (including industry/practice, professional/regulatory bodies, and community organisations)?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Does ongoing programme development take account of relevant external discipline benchmarks and Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Programme Design		
Is the programme design informed by current development in the discipline and associated subject areas, having taken into consideration current trends, stakeholder feedback and market analysis?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Evident within the submission documentation, staff are active in a wide range of national organisations within the food industry ensuring an industry-focused approach to programme design and delivery.

Programme design was informed by ongoing stakeholder feedback (external examiners, students, staff and industry) as captured in the Annual Programme Evaluation process and through surveys involving graduates, meetings with students and staff, organised specifically as part of the programme review process

Programme content has and continues to be influenced by the USA National Restaurant Association (NRA) survey of chefs on the 'What's Hot Trends' for each year envisioning what the programme should include to empower students for changing skills and approaches in industry. For 2025, the NRA has predicted that the overall leading trend is linked to a commitment to sustainability. The trends are linked to personal and planetary wellbeing, sustainable ingredients, reduced waste cooking, fermentation of foods and global cuisines.

Further influences include:

- The European Green Deal (EU Commission, 2019) which sets out to create a sustainable food system that can produce social, health and environmental benefits.
- The Farm to Fork Strategy (EU Commission, 2020). This strategy intends to fast-track the transition to a sustainable food system by establishing regulatory and non-regulatory initiatives. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland in partnership with Healthy Ireland have created a Food Reformulation Taskforce to support the food industry in meeting voluntary reformulation targets proposed by the Farm to Fork Strategy.

Is there a mechanism to ensure the input of external stakeholders in the ongoing development of the programme?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is the programme curriculum well-structured with a logical progression of learning and development across the modules and stages?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Evident within the module syllabi and through discussion with the programme team, the panel was informed of the logical progression of learning and development as a student progresses through the programme. It was also clear to the panel how the standards of knowledge, skill and competence evolve throughout each of the individual modules within the revised programme.

Are there appropriate opportunities for students to undertake work-based learning, through work placements or work-based projects or assignments?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Throughout the programme students engage with industry through live-learning, masterclasses, guest lecturers, dining experiences, site visits, alumni, chef conferences and the final botanical cuisine performance for industry and the media. This showcases the potential of their abilities and skills in carving out a career path in the food sector, tailored to sustainable food production in line with current and future trends.		
Are work/practice placements appropriate and fit for purpose, having regard to the requirements of professional, regulatory, and associative bodies where applicable, in the context of student achievement of learning outcomes and in the overall student experience?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		
If applicable, have the relevant Blended Learning Checklists (i.e. Learning Experience Context & Programme Context) been fully completed and submitted to the Panel?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Is the required programme and module information provided in the correct format?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Extracts from the PMC of both programme descriptor and book of modules were provided to the panel.		

Learning, Teaching & Assessment		
Is there an effective student-centred learning and teaching strategy that aligns with the University's strategies and guidelines in this regard?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Does the assessment strategy provide an appropriate mix of assessment types that will enable students to demonstrate that they have met the module and programme learning outcomes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Do the learning outcomes and assessment strategy ensure that academic integrity can be maintained and attempted breaches of academic integrity are minimised/easily detected?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is there a comprehensive mapping of assessment methods and module learning outcomes and between module learning outcomes and programme learning outcomes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
A comprehensive mapping is evident within the assessment section of the module syllabi and tables mapping the module learning outcomes to the programme learning outcomes as provided within the submission documentation.		
Are there opportunities in all modules to provide students with timely and constructive feedback on their learning and development?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Do the teaching and assessment methods consider the diversity of the student cohort?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Student Supports & Learning Environment		
Are there sufficient and appropriate resources (e.g. human, financial and physical) to support the proposed programme aims and objectives, to deliver the programme as specified?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are there sufficient staff that are appropriately qualified and capable to support the programme delivery?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are there appropriate arrangements in place to support the student experience and to monitor student performance?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are the access, transfer and progression arrangements including RPL clearly defined and appropriate, and aligned to TU Dublin policy/strategy in this regard?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Do the student supports and learning environment cater for equality, diversity and inclusivity of students?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is the relevant programme information clearly communicated to the students to ensure they are informed, guided and cared for?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Collaborative Provision (if applicable)		
Are the roles and responsibilities of each partner clearly defined?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		
In the case of Joint or Multiple Awards, has due diligence on the capacity of the partner institution to meet the QA/QE requirements for the programme been undertaken?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Section F Overall Recommendation of the Panel

1.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme as submitted, without amendment**	☐
2.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme, subject to minor amendments/editorial changes to be completed as soon as possible and with recommendations for consideration.** **Note:** recommendations are attached where it is considered that the programme would benefit from particular changes, or from a review of certain aspects of the programme over a period of time, with changes made if required. While recommendations are advisory in nature, there is an expectation that all recommendations are responded to appropriately and acted upon as appropriate.	☒
3.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme subject to the fulfilment of conditions. Recommendations for consideration may also be attached.** **Note:** conditions are attached where it is agreed that changes must be made to the programme / programme documentation prior to the commencement of the programme. Conditions must be set where issues are identified that relate directly to academic standards or to University regulations or procedures. It should be clear what is required in order to meet the conditions. A new programme cannot go forward to Faculty Board for consideration unless a response to the Review Report is submitted with revised programme documentation.	☐
4.	**Do not recommend continuing approval of programme.**	☐

Areas for commendation	
	The panel commended the: ▪ Passion, skills and expertise of the programme teaching team. ▪ Quality of the documentation. ▪ Open and frank engagement by Staff at all sessions. ▪ Very engaged and very passionate students and graduates who complimented the programme team and articulated very clearly the value of the programme.

Condition(s) of Approval	
	N/A

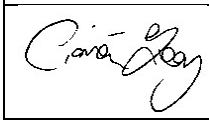
Recommendations	
1.	Programme Title Reconsider the programme title as proposed to clearly highlight the food sustainability focus of the programme. Suggested title for consideration 'Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Food Sustainability & Botanical Cuisine.
	Response: The school welcomes the panel's programme new title recommendation which we believe will properly reflect this programme's significant areas of focus. The programme team conducted further research (post programmatic review) towards the new programme title (see Appendix I), which supports the new title of Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Food Sustainability and Botanical Cuisine**.**
2.	Strategic Marketing Plan Implement a strategic marketing plan to further support student recruitment for the next 5 years. Also, capture the positive feedback received from graduates and incorporate into the marketing material for the programme.
	A School Marketing and Engagement Committee was created in 2023 and a *SCAFT Marketing Strategy and Action Plan* was developed in 2024 with the aim of: • increasing student enrollments and applications • increasing awareness of the world-class School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology programmes and facilities at TU Dublin which build on a strong legacy of excellence and success at Cathal Brugha St, Grangegorman, Tallaght and Blanchardstown The plan contains a number of elements and these are being actioned on an ongoing basis eg a number of social media marketing campaigns have been undertaken by the School. The school will ensure that positive feedback from graduates is prominently featured in future campaigns.
3.	Entry Requirements Reconsider the entry requirements to possibly broaden the providing opportunity for admission to non-professional chefs.
	Response: Non-professional chefs are already accepted onto the programme as the minimum entry requirements are a level 7 culinary degree and TU Dublin's policy on application of prior learning also applied. The school welcomes this recommendation, however, as it highlights the potential for marketing more strongly to this cohort. Thus, the school in association with the TU 941 programme team will work with the TU Admissions team and the TU comms and marketing team to develop further recruitment and marketing strategies to attract non-professional chefs.

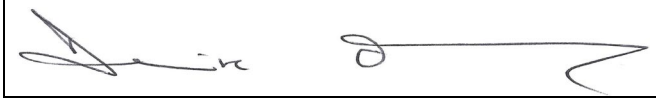
4.	Electives The panel encourages the programme team to consider introducing elective or free elective modules to enhance learner choice. While maintaining disciplinary focus, the absence of electives limits alignment with TU Dublin's strategic goals around choice, agency, and flexible pathways. It also constrains opportunities for learners to fully engage with and evidence the University's Graduate Attributes. Introducing elective options, even on a phased basis, would strengthen the programme's responsiveness, coherence, and alignment with institutional priorities.
	Response: The programme team will take this recommendation under consideration, with the aim of increasing elective choice on a phased basis.
5.	University Education Model Reflect on the School's intention in relation to the implementation of the University Education Model and consider how the fundamentals can be further incorporated in the programme design.
	Response: The school will identify additional areas to incorporate/implement the University Educational Model (UEM)'s 10 guiding principles across our programme curricula. This on-going development will help to deliver a brand new and unique educational experience which will meet the needs of our learners for the current and next generation.
6.	Gen AI Reflect on the Critical literacy, critical practices and ethical use of tools in the area of Gen AI throughout the delivery of the programme. In this regard, the School is referred to the recently approved 'Guidelines on the Responsible use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Teaching, Learning, Feedback and Assessment in TU Dublin'.
	Response: The school welcomes the panel's advice. Work towards meeting this objective has already begun with a number of school staff having undertaken recent AI training. Additionally, in the last academic year, while waiting for TU Dublin Guidelines on GenAI to be issued, the school had already adopted an adapted version of the Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh (2024) AI Assessment Scale. The school management team has committed to organising Gen AI workshops early in Semester 1 next year to provide additional training and guidance to staff.
7.	Modalities The panel encourages the programme team to reflect on how delivery modalities might be diversified in future iterations of the programme to better support the diverse needs of learners. While maintaining the value of in-person engagement, the team is invited to consider validating modules in more than one delivery format where appropriate. This would offer greater flexibility for learners facing logistical or socio-economic barriers, while enhancing the programme's adaptability and resilience.
	Response: Because of the practical nature of a large number of modules on the programme, the face to face modality is most appropriate in many cases. Practical/timetabling limitations can also play a part. However, the School recognises the desire of the University to offer content in

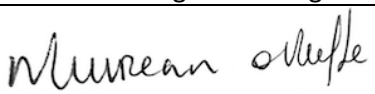
	different modalities and post-programmatic review, supports to address the strategic and appropriate use of modalities across all school modules were disseminated to academic staff and discussions were held. Accordingly, academic staff are updating modules, if appropriate. Additionally, the school intends to hold additional 'Modalities workshops' in the early Autumn to offer staff further assistance and support.

Other matters to be brought to the attention of Faculty Board and/or Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee
N/A

Section G Approvals

Review Report	
This Review Report has been agreed by the Review Panel and is signed on its behalf by the Panel Chair.	
Dr Ciarán O'Leary	
	Date: 15/7/2025

School Response	
The response to the conditions and recommendations has been agreed by the School and is signed by the Head of School.	
Dr. Denise O'Leary	
	Date: 24/07/2025

Faculty Board	
The report and response have been approved by Faculty Board	
Faculty Head of Teaching & Learning:	25/July/2025
Signed: 	Date: Click or tap to enter a date.

List of Appendices

TU941 Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Botanical Cuisine

Appendix I - Feedback from Graduates and Industry on renaming TU941, BA (Hons) in Botanical Cuisine. (July 2025)

Following the programmatic review meeting In June and the panel's feedback at the meeting in relation to renaming the programme title, the programme team followed their suggestion to carry out further research.

Four titles were chosen and graduates and industry providers were sent the following short survey question:

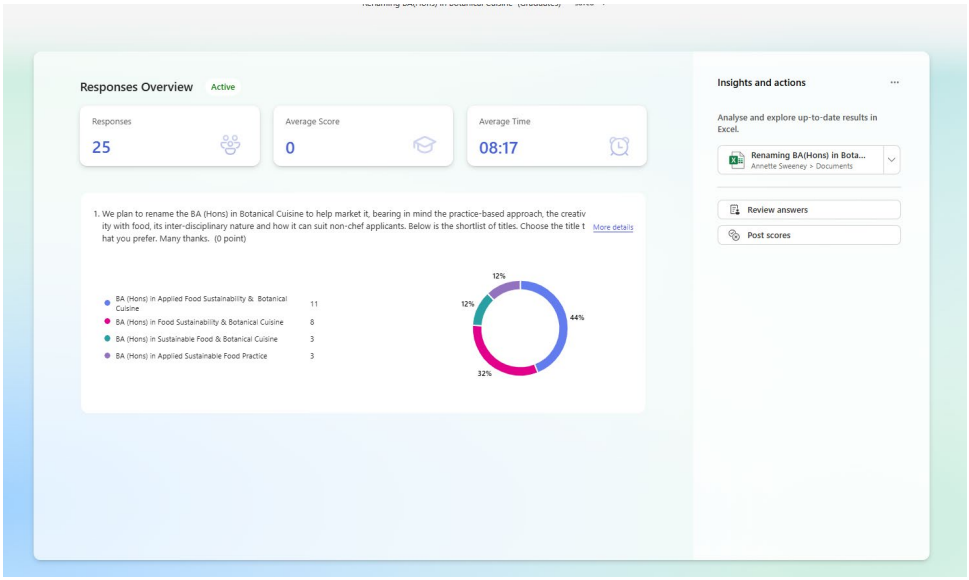
We plan to rename the BA (Hons) in Botanical Cuisine to help market it, bearing in mind the practice-based approach, the creativity with food, its inter-disciplinary nature and how it can suit non-chef applicants. Below is the shortlist of titles. Choose the title that you prefer. Many thanks for your input.

The Botanical Cuisine Team @TU Dublin.

Proposed Title	Graduate Response 25	Industry Response 52	Total
BA (Hons) in Applied Food Sustainability & Botanical Cuisine	11	16	**27**
BA (Hons) in Food Sustainability & Botanical Cuisine	8	19	**27**
BA (Hons) in Sustainable Food & Botanical Cuisine	3	7	**10**
BA(Hons) in Applied Sustainable Food Practice.	3	10	**13**
Total	25	52	**77**

As can be seen from the table above, there were a total of 77 respondents. Although the first two titles received the same number of votes, considering the weighting of the industry response it would appear that the new title should be *BA (Hons) in Food Sustainability & Botanical Cuisine*, the title proposed by the panel at the review meeting.

Graduate Survey:



Industry Survey: