EXTETNAL VALIDATION REPORT FOR

Master of Arts in Aquinas Studies (Taught)
with the embedded award of
Graduate Diploma in Arts in Aquinas Studies

LEVEL 9

School of: **Business & Humanities**

Department of: **Humanities**

Panel Meeting date:	22ND May 2018

Decision: *tick one only*	**Approved** - an excellent submission not requiring modification other than minor typographical corrections before resubmission to the Registrar for approval at Academic Council prior to release for external evaluation	
	Approved subject to modification – a very good submission requiring minor modifications to be carried out by the Programme Development Committee and approved by the Chair of the IPRB before resubmission to the Registrar	√
	Retained - a good proposal but requiring some significant modification and additions. Modifications/additions must be approved by the Chair of the IPRB in consultation with the other members before resubmission to the Registrar	
	Returned - a deficient proposal that needs to be reconsidered in detail by the Programme Development Committee, rewritten and resubmitted.	

INTERNAL REVIEW PANEL REPORT

PART 1   GENERAL INFORMATION

School	Business & Humanities
Department	Humanities
Date of panel meeting	22nd May 2018
Programme evaluated	MA in Aquinas Studies (Taught) with Embedded Graduate Diploma in Aquinas Studies
National framework Qualification level	NFQ Level 9
Programme approved title	Master of Arts (Aquinas Studies) Graduate Diploma in Arts (Aquinas Studies)
Panel	Dr. Simon Gaine OP, Regent of Studies, BlackFriars Hall, Oxford (Chairperson) Dr. Catherine Kavanagh, Lecturer in Philosophy, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

	Mr. Philip Cremin, lecturer in Theology, WIT
	Sinéad O'Neill, Quality Manager (Secretary)

STAFF

Name	Grade / Responsibility
Dr. Damien Roche	Head of School of Business & Humanitites, IT Tallaght
Helena Doody	Head of Department of Humanities, IT Tallaght
Bláth McGeough	Priory Institute Academic Council Member, IT Tallaght
Fr. John Littleton	Director, The Priory Institute
Dr Mary McCaughey	Academic Executive, The Priory Institute
Fr. Philip Mc Shane OP	Academic
John Robinson	Academic
Liam Walsh OP	Lecturer
Dr. Gaven Kerr	Lecturer
Fr. Alan O'Sullivan OP	Lecturer

Eamonn Gaines	Lecturer

PART II   RECOMMENDATION/COMMENT

The External Review panel recommends the validation of the Programmes:

Master of Arts (Aquinas Studies)

with the Embedded Award of Graduate Diploma in Arts (Aquinas Studies)

for the purpose of the award of:

Master of Arts (Aquinas Studies)

Proposed Start Date: September 2018

Mode of Delivery: Part-time, Blended, On-line, Distance

Subject to the conditions and recommendations set out below:

Commendations

1. The Panel commends the Programme Team on the timeliness of their unique product.

2. The Panel commends the Programme Team on the overall coherence of the Programme.

Conditions

1. Ensure the indicative content is completed for all modules.

Recommendations

1. Review and revise how 'study weekends' are described on page 35 and page 63 of the documentation to ensure consistency in both descriptions.
2. Consider revising the elective module descriptors in the context that potentially not all may be offered.
3. Regarding subject description of Latin – it is suggested that a more nuanced description is used.
4. De-capitalise words throughout and address various typos as described during the review of modules.

PART III   FINDINGS OF THE VALIDATION PANEL

INTRODUCTION

Comment:

The Programme documentation was provided to the panel members prior to the meeting. The panel used the internal review template as per the Quality Assurance Manual to assist in their deliberations.

MEETING WITH MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Programme Title and Award Title.

Comment: The panel was satisfied that the Programme title and award title are clear, accurate and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders.

Justification for the Programme

Comment: The justification for the proposed Programme was discussed. The Programme Team outlined the *Masters of Arts in Aquinas Studies* is a unique offering which will set it apart from competitors where the focus has been on *Thomistic Studies* and are confident that there will be interest from the *Dominican Community*, nationally and internationally.

Conformance with Institute's Mission and Strategy

Comment: The panel was satisfied that the proposed Programme conforms to the Institute's mission of providing learners with flexible higher education opportunities which are of the highest quality.

Access, Transfer and Progression Arrangements

Comment: The panel was satisfied with the arrangements stated for access and progression. Applications are invited from those with cognate disciplines. The selection process includes an interview which will determine the suitability of applicants and inform potential applicants of the work-load and commitment required to successfully complete the Programme.

Programme Structure and Design

Comment: The Programme structure and design was discussed and the panel was satisfied with the information supplied. Whether Latin should be mandatory or an elective was discussed. The Programme Team advised that the reason it is mandatory is because a cursory knowledge of the language is essential to better appreciate the original texts with the aid of a dictionary and understand the references to the original texts which may appear in the critical analysis of the Philosopher. It is the opinion of the Panel in this context that the learning outcomes are achievable.

Programme Learning Outcomes and Award Standards.

Comment: The panel was satisfied that the learning outcomes of the Programme are compliant with the Award Standard.

Teaching and Learning Strategy

Comment: The proposed approaches to teaching and learning were indicated and justified. The blended, distance, on-line mode of delivery was discussed. The Programme Team outlined that the strategy would mirror generally that which is in operation currently and is working well for the Masters of Arts in Biblical Studies.

Learner Assessment

Comment: The learner assessment methods were clearly documented. Each module is assessed by a number of continuous assessments/short essays through the year and a final essay of 3,000 words. It is envisaged that as with the MA in Biblical Studies that this approach of continuous assessment will ensure Learners are successful.

Quality Assurance

Comment: The procedures in developing the Programme were outlined to the panel as per the Institute's quality assurance procedures. The Programme Team noted that the *Institute of Technology Tallaght* policies and procedures and *Marks and Standards* are followed.

Information Provision

Comment: The panel was satisfied with the proposed information that would be available to learners and potential learners.

Library and Physical Facilities / Resources

Comment: The panel was satisfied that the staffing and physical resources were available to deliver the proposed Programme. Learners will have access to an extensive library and study rooms.

Learner Support Services

Comment: The panel was satisfied that adequate provisions are in place. The Panel recommends that the supports for Learners are adequately described.

Academic Staff and Qualifications

Comment: The panel was satisfied that the lecturing and support staff is available within the Institute to deliver the content of this Programme.

Part V: Approval

Programme Evaluation Report Approved by:

Signature: *SiFiGud*	Signature: *Sinéad O'Neill*
Print name: SIMON GAINE op Dr. Simon Gaine OP, Regent of Studies, BlackFriars Hall, Oxford (Chairperson)	Print name: Sinéad O'Neill
Title: **Chairperson to Panel**	Title: **Secretary to Panel**
Date: 8/2/19	Date: 30 August 2018