

**HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL, IRELAND**

Comhairle na nDámhachtainí Ardoideachais agus Oiliúna, Éire

**Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training**

**Institutional Review of Dublin Business School**

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**Report of Expert Panel**

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# HETAC Institutional Review

## Introduction

This is the Report of the Expert Panel, appointed by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), which carried out the Institutional Review of Dublin Business School in October 2010.

HETAC is the qualifications awarding body for third-level educational and training institutions outside the university sector in Ireland. All providers offering HETAC awards are subject to external quality assurance review of their institutions. HETAC carries out such reviews as part of its Institutional Review process.

HETAC appointed an expert panel to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Dr Richard Thorn, membership of the expert panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. HETAC wishes to record its thanks to the members of the panel for accepting this task and for their generous and professional commitment to the review.

Dublin Business School will submit a follow-up report to HETAC not more than 12 months after the publication of this report. Their follow-up report will outline how they have implemented the recommendations, as set out in its response to the Institutional Review, and evaluate the initial impact of such implementation. The follow-up report will be considered by the Academic Committee of HETAC, and a commentary by the HETAC Executive will be included. The Academic Committee may adopt the Institution's follow-up report and may consider further conditions. Following adoption by the Academic Committee of HETAC, the follow-up report will be published on the Council's website.

### *Note*

*HETAC's Institutional Review process is designed to address only those objectives described in the Terms of Reference included in Appendix A.*

*The expert panel points out that it cannot make any findings regarding:*

- 1. The financial standing and commercial viability of the institution reviewed*
- 2. The institution's compliance with its general statutory obligations*

*or*

- 3. The general fitness of the institution's systems and arrangements for the governance and management of financial matters.*

*The Report of the Expert Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations, express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.*

*While HETAC has endeavoured to ensure the information contained in the Report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will HETAC be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from or in connection with the use of the information contained in the Report of the Expert Panel.*

## Executive Summary — Report of the Expert Panel

This is the Report of the Expert Panel appointed by HETAC to undertake the Institutional Review of Dublin Business School on 4-5 October 2010. The review process was carried out in accordance with the HETAC *Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training*, 2007.

### Findings

The following is an Executive Summary of the Expert Panel's key findings:

- The effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by Dublin Business School has been assessed and the arrangements have been found to be effective in accordance with the seven elements of Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance* 2009, Helsinki, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, and the HETAC *Guidelines and Criteria for Quality Assurance Procedures in Higher Education*, 2004.
- Dublin Business School has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression, as determined by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland.

### Commendations and Recommendations

The Expert Panel made a total of three commendations and ten recommendations, identified in the body of the report, in relation to the Objectives for Institutional Review to which each corresponds.

The panel is grateful to DBS for the cooperation and assistance provided to the review team and wishes it well in its future work.

## Background to Dublin Business School

Dublin Business School (DBS) is an independent provider of higher education and professional training and part of a multinational corporation, Kaplan. The School is located in Dublin city centre and provides a range of undergraduate, graduate, professional and executive education programmes in the fields of Business, Arts and Law. The School has four faculties, which include the faculties of Arts, Business, Law, Professional Schools and the English/European Business School. DBS had a total of 8,738 (3284 full-time, 5454 part-time) learners registered in 2009.

Dublin Business School (DBS) was established in 1975 to provide programmes for students preparing for examinations of the professional accountancy bodies. The School developed rapidly and by the mid 1980s was providing professional accounting, marketing and banking programmes. The first undergraduate degree programme was offered in 1989 under a franchise arrangement with Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). DBS became a designated institution of the National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA) in 1992, and the relationship continued with the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) when it replaced the NCEA in 2001. In 1995, DBS became an Accredited Institution of LJMU with approval to design and deliver its own undergraduate programmes. The first postgraduate programme was offered in 1995, again under franchise from LJMU, and in 2008 DBS became an Accredited Institution of LJMU for both undergraduate and postgraduate provision.

Initially, DBS offered a small number of programmes leading to NCEA awards at National Certificate level. The number and range of programmes has expanded significantly over the years and DBS now offers 44 programmes leading to HETAC awards at Levels 6 to 9, including Higher Certificates, Ordinary and Honours Bachelor Degrees, Higher Diplomas and Masters Degrees. In addition there are a further 30 programmes which lead to awards jointly awarded by HETAC and Liverpool John Moores University and HETAC and the University of Wales. The majority of accredited programmes now offered by DBS lead to HETAC awards. The majority of academic students currently registered in DBS are studying on programmes leading to HETAC awards.

DBS has had major expansion over the last twenty years. This expansion has been based primarily on organic growth which has been supported by strategic acquisitions. DBS amalgamated with LSB College in 2000, another Dublin based independent college. LSB College is now known as DBS School of Arts.

In 2003, Dublin Business School was acquired by Kaplan Incorporated, the education division of The Washington Post Company. Kaplan Inc. is a leading provider of higher education, professional development and lifelong learning programmes with headquarters in New York City and locations throughout the U.S. Europe and other international locations. DBS is part of Kaplan UK and Ireland, which in turn is part of Kaplan Europe.

In March 2006, DBS acquired the European Business School (EBS). EBS was founded in 1993 and is a member of the EBSI group, a network of independent business schools located throughout Europe. EBS offers a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses for 'study abroad' students and provides DBS with an entry into a broader European market.

In July 2007, DBS acquired Portobello College, which was founded in 1991 and now provides a suite of qualifying programmes for the professional legal bodies in Ireland. The LLB (Hons) in Irish Law, validated jointly by the University of Wales and HETAC and offered by the Law School (now DBS School of Law) is accredited by the Honorable Society of King's Inns.

Distinctive features of DBS include the working relationship with Kaplan and the benefits that have resulted from the Kaplan group. Another aspect is the range of programme provision (including skills based programmes not currently recognised on the NFQ) and the multiplicity of awarding/professional bodies that DBS interacts with. The extent of the collaborative provision referred to in both Appendix A and B in the Terms of Reference, and the relationship management required to interact with these bodies is also acknowledged.

DBS considers that it has supported some innovative and distinctive achievements in Irish third level education. These have included the design and provision of HETAC accredited programmes in partnership with commercial organisations, ranging from a Graduate Diploma in Business Studies in Marketing which was launched in 1995 for senior executives in the then Telecom Éireann, to the Level 7 Bachelor of Arts in Retail Management programme that is currently being provided in partnership with the LIDL retail group. In relation to promoting Irish third level education abroad, a significant achievement was the design and provision of HETAC accredited programmes in Malaysia in association with Yayasan Pelajaran Mara, an Education Foundation sponsored by the Malaysian Government. Other achievements include recognition of DBS Professional School as a Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) Learning through Partnership Quality Partner. CIMA quality partner status recognises course providers who offer the highest quality tuition and support.

Staff and learner statistics for 2009 as provided in the Terms of Reference follow. Note: updated learner statistics were not available at the time of the site visit.

Dublin Business School employs 81 full-time equivalent lecturing staff and 217 part-time lecturing staff as set out in the table below under each faculty. Faculty members are supported by 115 administrative staff (89 full-time and 26 part-time). All non-academic departments are included in this number.

These are supported by staff numbers and profile as set out in the table below (2009):

FACULTY	FULL-TIME LECTURERS	ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	PART-TIME LECTURERS
Arts	28 (+1 FTE)	3	79
Business	37	2	57
Law	7+ 1 FTE	2	12
Professional School	4	5	59
English Language/European Business School <sup>1</sup>	1	1	10
Academic Registrar	1	8	0
Academic Director	1	1	0
Other Business Functions	0	93	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>217</b>

**TABLE 1: NO. OF ACADEMIC STAFF**

These Faculty members support the following undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers (2009):

TOTAL LEARNERS 2009-10	TOTAL	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	EU	NON-EU	MALE	FEMALE
School of Arts	1221	603	618	1202	19	121	1100
School of Business	2635	1698	937	2059	576	935	1700
School of Law	185	96	89	163	22	28	157
Professional School	3810	0	3810	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R*
EBS / English School	887	887	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8738</b>	<b>3284</b>	<b>5454</b>	<b>3424</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>1084</b>	<b>2957</b>

**TABLE 2: LEARNER NUMBER AND PROFILE**

- N/R \*= Not Recorded

DBS agreed an initial set of quality assurance procedures with HETAC in 2006. DBS updates its Quality Assurance Handbook annually; the most recent edition is the 2010 edition which is being implemented since September 2010. This sets out, *inter alia*, the quality assurance provisions relating to the Awards Council and other awarding bodies concerned (HETAC; Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Wales).

<sup>1</sup> Semester abroad programme - European Business School

Recent developments in the lead up to the site visit included:

- Publication of a single set of quality assurance and academic procedures to inform the operation of all three Academic Schools;
- The establishment of a Library, Careers and Student Services Department as a mechanism for the more effective integration of these services into the academic process;
- Implementation of a scoping exercise to develop a new Student Management and Records System in association with a Kaplan Europe wide initiative;
- The launch of the latest edition of the Quality Assurance Handbook in September 2010;
- The move to new DBS premises at Castle House in October 2010, bringing with it the benefits of enhanced student and staff facilities, and the opportunity for a more collaborative approach to projects and academic synergy across the School (Self Evaluation Update, p2-4, 7).

This is the first time that DBS has been subject to institutional review by HETAC.

Additional background on the profile of the College is set out in the Terms of Reference, Appendix A.

## Institutional Review Methodology

The Institutional Review process was carried out in accordance with HETAC's *Policy on Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, 2007*. The process consisted of the following six phases, with the Report of the Expert Panel coming at the end of phase 3.

1. HETAC sets the Terms of Reference following consultation with DBS.
2. Self-evaluation carried out by the Institution, followed by the production of a written Self-Evaluation Report (SER).
3. Visit of the expert panel appointed by HETAC, followed by the written Report of the Expert Panel.
4. Institutional response to the panel's report, including its implementation plan.
5. Publication of the Report of the Expert Panel and the Institutions subsequent response.
6. Follow-up report submitted by the Institution.

The Terms of Reference for Dublin Business School were discussed with HETAC over the period from September 2009 to February 2010. The objectives of the Institutional Review of Dublin Business School were set by HETAC as follows:

1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institution and the standards of the awards made.
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the Institution with the following special consideration: DBS is an independent institution, within a global education organisation. The strategic planning and governance of the School may differ in particular areas from those in place in Higher Education institutions that are publicly funded.
3. To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the Institution with the following special consideration for DBS:

### 3.1 Collaborative provision and Joint Awards

(a) The institutional review should consider the quality assurance procedures/arrangements in place for the following arrangements which fall under collaborative provision:

- DBS partnership with Lidl. The HETAC validated DBS three year level 7 Bachelor of Arts in the area of Retail Management is provided in conjunction with Lidl retail group. This programme commenced in April 2007.
- DBS International partners where formal collaboration arrangements include matters of entry to specific levels of programmes of study are set out in Appendix B of the Terms of Reference.

(b) The institutional review should consider the quality assurance procedures/arrangements in place for the provision of programmes leading to joint awards of HETAC and

- Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)
- University of Wales

4. To confirm the extent to which the Institution has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression.
6. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the Institution.

In addition to these prescribed objectives, the following Additional Objective was set out in the Terms of Reference:

7. The institutional review panel should consider issues arising from the incorporation of Portobello College into the Dublin Business School and the recent speculation and allegations against DBS in the public forum.

For the complete Terms of Reference for Dublin Business School, see Appendix A.

HETAC appointed a panel of experts to carry out the Institutional Review on its behalf. Under the chairmanship of Dr Richard Thorn, membership of the panel reflected a wide range of expertise and experience, in accordance with the Terms of Reference for the review. Panel members were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest prior to their appointment and none were declared. Panel members received induction training on the conduct of Institutional Reviews in advance of the site visit. The panel membership is outlined in full in Appendix B.

Prior to the panel's visit, Dublin Business School engaged in a self-study exercise. Since DBS was established, a range of Quality Assurance procedures has been developed, implemented and reviewed by the School. In all areas of activity development, implementation and review of procedures are on-going. Accordingly, the approach taken to self-study has focused on 'the effectiveness of quality assurance processes and on identification of opportunities for enhancement' (SER, p1).

DBS considers that the self-study process has been very collaborative and supportive in terms of the opportunities provided to have an input into the process (SER, p13). A steering group was established to manage preparation for the institutional review, with a focus on coordinating and monitoring all aspects of the planning process (The Self Evaluation Process, p1). Regular meetings were held to review feedback, and to consider documentation and supporting evidence. The opportunity was provided for input from all Schools and Departments, and broad participation in the ensuing discussions was facilitated (SER, p13). Staff and student feedback was gathered through a variety of methods including class representative meetings, student feedback questionnaires and staff consultation meetings. A significant event was the staff 'away day' which was organised to provide feedback on performance against each of the institutional review objectives.

Other stakeholder opinions were also canvassed as part of the self-study exercise (The Self Evaluation Process, p1-2).

In advance of the site visit, Dublin Business School submitted a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and additional supporting documentation. The SER was based on a critical review and evaluation of policies, systems, structures and processes, and designed to facilitate achievement of the objectives of institutional review as set out in the Terms of Reference. The Appendices included background information about DBS and a list of reference material submitted in support (SER, p1).

A desk-based review of the SER was undertaken by HETAC prior to forwarding the report to the review panel. Further information was requested and supplied by DBS in relation to Objectives 1, 3 and 4. The expert panel assessed the SER and Supplemental Documentation in advance of the site visit, and forwarded its initial thoughts to HETAC and the Review Chairperson.

An advance meeting was held between the Review Chairperson and Secretary and the HETAC Head of Institutional Review and representatives of DBS on 30 March 2010. The advance meeting:

- Discussed and agreed the agenda and logistics for the site visit.
- Highlighted areas of the SER where additional clarification would be required.
- Specified additional information and documentation to be made available to panel members prior to and during the site visit.

The site visit originally planned for 19-20 April 2010 was subsequently rescheduled to 4-5 October 2010 owing to an eruption of the Icelandic volcano Eyjafjallajökull and disruption of European air space. A further preliminary meeting was held on 8 September to reconfirm the visit arrangements.

The site visit took place on 4-5 October 2010. The full panel met with management and staff of DBS, learners and other stakeholders according to an agenda drawn up by the panel in consultation with the Institution. The agenda for the site visit, agreed in advance with representatives of DBS, is set out in Appendix D. With minor changes, that agenda was followed during the visit. Appendix E lists persons met by the panel during the site visit.

The members of the panel were satisfied that they received full cooperation from Dublin Business School and that they had the necessary documentation and discussions to reach their conclusions and produce their report.

## Findings in relation to objectives of Institutional Review

### Objective 1 — Public Confidence

*To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institution and the standards of the awards made*

This overarching objective covers all areas of the Institution's activity. The quality of the Institutional Review process itself is a critical part of this, as is the publication of the Self-Evaluation Report, the Report of the Expert Panel, and the Institution's own response and action plan. The information provided by the Institution to the public is part of this objective.

<b>Summary of Objective 1 — Public Confidence</b>
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Print, radio and online media are utilised by DBS as the basis of its student recruitment activities. Research has also shown that student word of mouth is a significant factor in recruiting students. Additional marketing activities involve school visits, corporate visits and Open Days and Evenings. DBS also participates in a range of exhibitions, conferences and fairs attended by Irish third level institutions both in Ireland and abroad. A range of prospectuses in electronic and in hardcopy format is used to promote and inform prospective students about the range of programmes which are offered.

The latest enhanced version of the DBS website was launched in December 2009. The website has been developed to facilitate ease of information access to new student admission enquiries. A significant feature is the student online application system for non CAO programmes. The sections relevant to the existing student population have also been considerably upgraded (SER, p50). An Employee-Liaison Officer has been appointed to co-ordinate and develop these relationships further (Supplemental Documentation, p2).

DBS considers that public trust 'is based upon trust and faith in the ability of an educational institution to admit students appropriately, teach and assess them, and ultimately to present these students for the awards which they have achieved from awarding bodies' (Supplemental Documentation, p1). Processes are reviewed and evaluated both internally through DBS policies and procedures and externally through External Examiners, Programmatic Reviews and Institutional Reviews, and through obtaining ongoing feedback from the public, students and staff through a series of surveys (Supplemental Documentation, p1). A commentary on the DBS self-study process, SER and approach to institutional review is provided in the Methodology section of this report.

## Key Findings of Objective 1 — Public Confidence

The panel concludes that evidence was provided of the communication channels and interactions documented in the SER and Supplemental Documentation, and acknowledges the commitment of DBS to work towards further strengthening its communications strategy. The panel was provided with evidence of the institution's good working relationships with external stakeholders demonstrating a clear commitment by DBS to ensuring that good communications are maintained. These included businesses, professional bodies and second-level schools (a list of people with whom the panel met and the organisations represented is provided in Appendix E). DBS has an excellent relationship with employer organisations including commercial, professional and Public Sector bodies. The panel was impressed with the very positive feedback from representatives of these groups and commends DBS on the strong level of stakeholder support. The discussions that ensued confirmed a high level of confidence in DBS and the quality of the programmes provided.

The panel notes feedback from representatives of Lidl who characterised their relationship with DBS in relation to collaborative provision of the Bachelor of Business in Retail Management programme as very positive, particularly in relation to the quality of tuition received by students on the programme. Lidl staff were actively involved in the development of the programme and have ongoing contact through Programme Board meetings. Staff from DBS and Lidl worked together to establish a three month block system to facilitate the integration of workplace learning. Feedback from Lidl to incorporate a study week between blocks had been taken on board. Further on-line opportunities are being explored.

The panel further notes the positive feedback from representatives of the professional bodies with whom it met, with particular reference to the perception of DBS graduates as 'well-rounded' and work ready, and high pass rates achieved for ACCA and CIMA programmes. Professional bodies have an ongoing involvement in curriculum review and accreditation processes. For example, the Psychological Society of Ireland membership of the Accreditation Committee and ACCA input into curriculum review.

Guidance Counsellors confirmed the very good relationship with DBS and ongoing involvement with the DBS School Liaison Team. Stakeholders met by the panel referred to the positive perception of DBS as a choice for third level study by local school leavers. The panel notes the appreciation expressed in relation to the scholarships provided by DBS to students at the CBS James Street School, which is located in a socially disadvantaged area of Dublin. These scholarships are provided as part of the institution's 'giving back to the community' initiative.

The HETAC Guidelines for Institutional Review state that the quality of the institutional review process itself and the SER are critical aspects of the objective "to enhance public confidence in the quality of education

and training provided by the institution and the standards of the awards made.” The panel wishes to make the following observations and findings in this regard.

### **Observations**

In general, the SER provided a readable overview of the quality assurance systems operating at DBS. The references made to the Quality Assurance Handbook were helpful. However, the content of the SER was not coherently organised to address the objectives for institutional review, and required additional reading time to determine the comprehensiveness of the document. The content tended to be descriptive, rather than evaluative and reflective.

The initial impression was one of a polished ‘scene setting’ document. There was little sense that this was a shared document from across the School and more that it was written centrally rather than as a collective owned report representing students, staff, governing body and stakeholders. The document would have benefited from the inclusion of a series of actions needing resolution under the various headings in the report. It was not clearly demonstrated that the self study process will lead to planned enhancements. There was a significant lack of evidence to back up assertions in all areas of the self evaluation.

### **Findings**

The panel found that there had been limited involvement of a wider range of stakeholders in the self evaluation process and the development of the SER. In discussions with the panel, DBS acknowledged that insufficient time had been made available for the preparation of the SER, resulting in the decision to focus on engaging staff as the major source of feedback. The panel notes a general lack of formal engagement with the SER outside the Steering Group established to oversee the self evaluation process. For example, there had been limited consideration of the report at Academic Board level. The external stakeholders with whom the panel met confirmed that they had not been consulted as part of the self evaluation process. The lack of participation of these stakeholders was also evident in terms of the content of the SER. It is recommended that in future that DBS should ensure wider stakeholder involvement in self evaluation processes.

The panel further notes a lack of knowledge of the institutional review process on the part of the external stakeholders and students it met with. It was confirmed that the only interaction that had taken place had been meetings with DBS to brief them on the forthcoming meetings with the panel as part of the site visit.

The panel considers that the lack of involvement of these groups has resulted in missed opportunities for an inclusive and reflective approach to the institutional review process. A further opportunity which was not capitalised on in the SER was to showcase good practices at the institution such as the quality of support services provided to international students.

The panel acknowledges that DBS was very keen to engage with the Institutional Review, and believes that the review process has made a timely and valuable contribution to its quality assurance processes. Further commentary and recommendations are included in the appropriate sections of this report.

**Commendation — Public Confidence**

The panel wishes to commend Dublin Business School on the following:

1. The strong level of external stakeholder support for DBS.

**Recommendation — Public Confidence**

In relation to Objective 1 (Public Confidence), the expert panel recommends the following:

1. In future DBS should ensure wider stakeholder involvement in self evaluation processes.

## **Objective 2 — Strategic Planning and Governance**

**To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the Institution (with the Special Consideration as indicated below)**

The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning.

The panel considered the Special Consideration requested by DBS under this objective:

- DBS is an independent institution, within a global education organisation. The strategic planning and governance of the School may differ in particular areas from those in place in Higher Education institutions that are publicly funded.

Note: this consideration has been reflected in panel discussions during the site visit and the key findings relating to this objective.

### **Summary of Objective 2 — Strategic Planning and Governance**

In terms of the Kaplan organisation, DBS is part of Kaplan UK and Ireland which is headquartered in the UK and is in turn part of Kaplan Europe. The Chief Executive of DBS reports directly to the CEO of Kaplan UK and Ireland in London. DBS remains a separate and distinct organisation within Kaplan and enjoys a high level of operational autonomy within broadly defined strategic and financial parameters. DBS contributes to the formulation of Kaplan strategy for Europe and is the vehicle for implementation of that strategy in areas where DBS has particular experience or expertise (SER, p7).

The SER outlines the mission and strategy of DBS. The guiding principle is to broaden access to third level education and to provide access and progression opportunities for students who otherwise may have had difficulty in securing a place on a course of their choice. This approach has informed programme development strategy, giving priority to provision of access level programmes and then investing in the development of higher level programmes to provide the students with opportunities for further progression. The provision of student support at DBS also recognises that, having offered students the opportunity for access and progression, they should also be offered a supplemental academic support and personal development to help them achieve their full potential (SER, p8).

The mission and strategy of DBS are based on the following core values, which are replicated throughout the Kaplan organisation:

Integrity  
Knowledge  
Support  
Opportunity  
Results

The mission of DBS is ‘to be the leading independent Irish third level institution, offering a diverse range of academic, professional and skills development programmes to meet the needs of both Irish and international students’ (SER, p9). The following critical success factors and core strengths provide a framework within which DBS pursues its mission:

- Adaptability and responsiveness to trends, needs and opportunities in the market place and design and development of programmes tailored to market needs
- Accreditation arrangements that underpin the recognition, status and marketability of programmes and contribute to continuing enhancement of academic quality and standards
- Investment in academic structures, systems, processes and resources, including academic management and staff with the expertise and qualities required to support enhanced academic quality and standards and to sustain continuing academic development
- A high level of commitment to student support and customer care, including extensive consultation processes with students and responsiveness to issues and needs
- Strong relationships within the wider Kaplan organisation, harnessing Kaplan expertise and resources to support and fund development opportunities (SER, p9).

The strategic planning process at DBS operates on three levels:

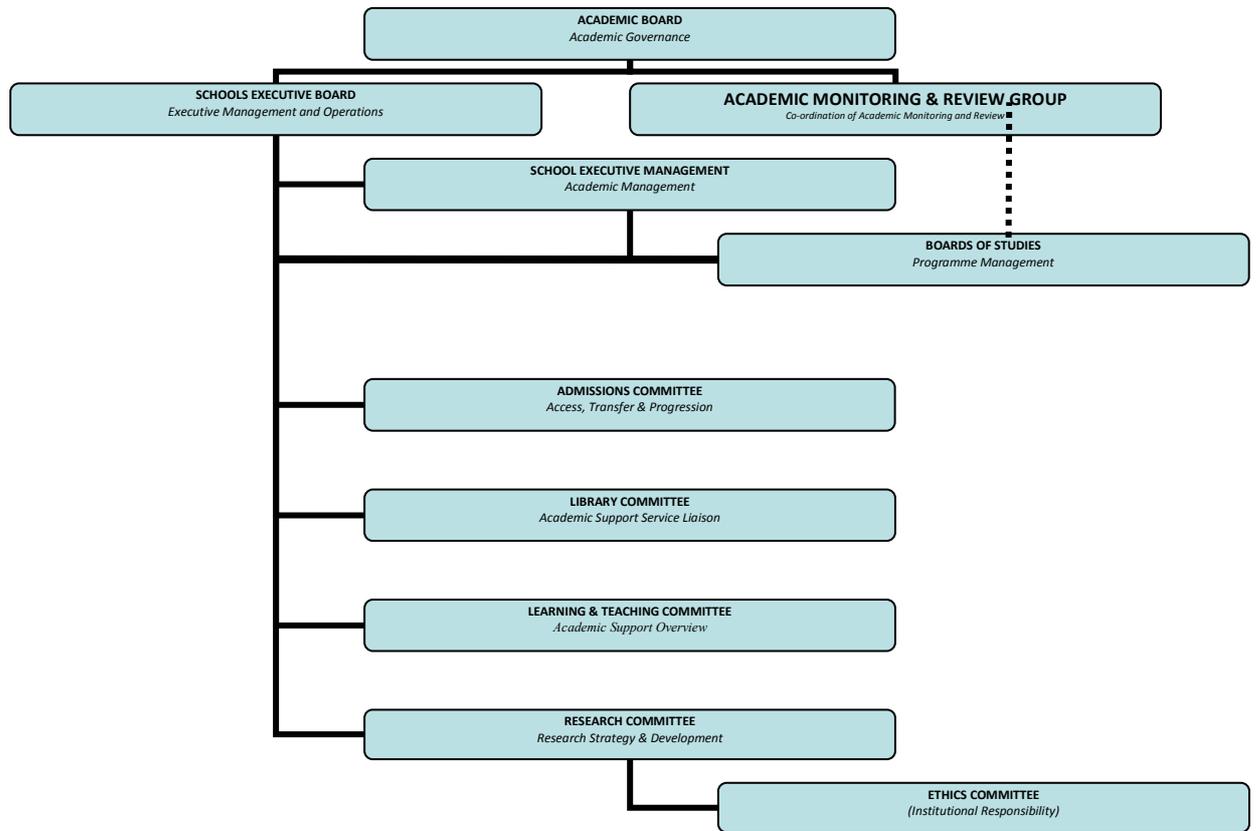
- strategic development plans that are focused on organic growth of the DBS organisation are formulated within DBS and ratified by Kaplan
- strategic development plans for DBS that are based on establishing new strategic alliances and/or strategic acquisitions are discussed and formulated in close consultation with colleagues in Kaplan
- opportunities for DBS to have a role in implementing Kaplan strategy are considered and progressed as part of the Kaplan strategic planning process (SER, p10).

DBS has identified the following strategic planning priorities for the next three to five years:

- a) consolidation of the position of DBS in the Irish third level sector, based on further development and enhancement of academic structures, systems and processes and further strengthening and development of academic management and staff
- b) development, reorganisation, re-branding and re-launching of the School of Law, including development and provision of postgraduate programmes
- c) further development of international opportunities, through expansion of direct recruitment of international students and extension of strategic alliances and joint venture arrangements with European and international partners
- d) development of a domestic and European online market, leveraging from Kaplan's experience, expertise, resources and networks
- e) acquisition of a suitable site and development of state-of-the-art facilities to accommodate all DBS operations on a single campus in a central Dublin location (SER, p10).

In recent years the academic management structure of DBS has been strengthened considerably with the establishment of separate Schools, the appointment of new Heads of School and the creation of the new post of Academic Director. The senior academic management team comprises the Academic Director, the Registrar and the Head of each School. The Academic Director is the academic head of DBS, providing academic leadership and direction and having overall responsibility for academic management.

The Governing Body of the academic affairs of Dublin Business School is the Academic Board. The functions of the Board include approval and oversight of academic policies, standards, processes and procedures, ratification of academic regulations, programmes and appointments, and oversight of liaison arrangements with accrediting bodies. The Academic Board has an independent chairperson and its membership includes the Chief Executive, the Academic Director, Registrar, Heads of School, Heads of Department, the Librarian, the Head of Student Services and a representative of the Academic Board in LJMU (SER, p7-8). The academic committee structure is shown in the diagram below.



**DIAGRAM 1: DBS ACADEMIC COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

The panel was given a presentation by the Chief Executive Officer of DBS to provide clarity on the strategic planning process. Key drivers of the strategic planning process are long term market trends, economic cycles and market position. Major strategic priorities were identified as expansion through acquisitions and online programme development opportunities.

As part of Kaplan UK and Ireland, DBS contributes to the strategic planning process for this group. The presentation included reference to DBS input into two Kaplan Europe initiatives:

- The major role played by DBS in shaping the requirements for a student information system;
- DBS involvement in the Irish Vocational Education and Training project to investigate opportunities in vocational education and training and remote learning.

A further presentation was made to the panel by the Chief Executive Officer Kaplan UK and Ireland and the Chief Executive Officer of DBS. Areas covered included the following key milestones from the academic years 2007/08 to 2009/10:

- Successful completion of the LJMU Institutional Review (08/09);
- Successful completion of LJMU Postgraduate Accreditation (08/09);
- 46 new programme validations and programme reviews completed (08/09, 09/10);
- Establishment of Joint Awards protocol with HETAC/LJMU (08/09);
- Successful completion of the Quinquennial Review of the LLB (Hons) in Irish Law by the University of Wales and HETAC (09/10).

The mission of Kaplan UK and Ireland was confirmed as helping individuals achieve their educational and career goals. The Kaplan focus is market driven but educationally led, on the basis that if educational success is achieved, commercial success will follow. The goals and objectives for DBS for the period 2010/11 were outlined. Priorities include business development, achievement of financial objectives and facilities development.

### **Key Findings of Objective 2 — Strategic Planning and Governance**

The panel concludes that the presentations and subsequent discussions provided; a clear sense of the strategic planning processes in place and how DBS is part of/links into the broader Kaplan strategic planning process; and a sense of ambition moving forward. The panel acknowledges that strong evidence was provided to support the vision of where DBS wants to be in the future, including a detailed analysis of market position. The panel notes the strong cultural predilection towards the utilisation of feedback into strategic planning processes, and the integration of strategic planning and quality assurance processes. This finding is supported by references from staff, students and external stakeholders through 360 degree feedback mechanisms, and the emphasis placed on the interrelationship between strategic planning and quality assurance processes by DBS.

The panel acknowledges the significant involvement of DBS in the wider activities of the Kaplan group. For example, the institution's input into a Kaplan Europe initiative to select a student management system to roll out across the Kaplan Colleges. DBS reviewed the proposed system and concluded that it was not suitable for their needs, and went on to take a leadership role in shaping the requirements for an alternative system.

The panel notes the role of the Academic Board as the governing body of the academic affairs of DBS, and the committee structure outlined in the Quality Assurance Handbook. The panel endorses the expectation of

DBS that each board or committee must add value to the work of the Executive Management Team and Schools. The panel recognises that programme or other monitoring is the overarching function of the Academic Board, managed through reporting processes. The Independent Chair of the Academic Board confirmed that he has regular interaction with the CEO and it is his perception that the academic perspective is considered in the strategic planning process. For example, Academic Board input into resolving issues arising from a recent staff survey. The panel notes and endorses the intention of Kaplan UK and Ireland to establish an Academic Council comprising of Academic Board representation across all Colleges associated with Kaplan. This will link DBS into the wider Kaplan network thus facilitating synergies and benchmarking opportunities.

The panel notes that the European Business School (EBS), which incorporates the English Language Department, is part of the DBS School of Business. In view of the high proportion of international students in that School, the major function of EBS is to provide support in programme design and development. Additional roles include English Language support for the other DBS Schools and other academic support initiatives such as e-portfolios and study skills. The panel endorses the strategic approach of DBS towards the improvement of facilities, the major project being the development of premises at Castle House.

The panel was informed that student input into strategic planning processes is achieved through learner representation on committees including the Student Council, the Class Representative Committee and Boards of Studies. The panel recognises the challenges involved in securing student representation on these committees, and endorses the commitment of DBS to work with students to strengthen representation. These challenges are due to the wide diversity of the student population (domestic, international, full-time and part-time) and the difficulties associated with ensuring that representation is consistent.

## Objective 3 — Quality Assurance

*To assess the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance arrangements operated by the Institution (with the Special Consideration as indicated below)*

This is based on Part One of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (QA)*.<sup>2</sup> By including this in the Institutional Review process, the statutory requirement for the review of QA is met. How the Institution reviews the effectiveness of its QA for the *seven elements* of the *European Standards and Guidelines* should be explicitly addressed by the review process.

Special Consideration for DBS:

Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards

The institutional review panel was requested by HETAC to consider the quality assurance procedures and processes in place for the following arrangements which fall under collaborative provision<sup>3</sup>: The policy and criteria in the HETAC document ‘Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards’, December 2008, are relevant in this regard.

- DBS partnership with Lidl. The HETAC validated DBS three year level 7 Bachelor of Arts programme in the area of Retail Management is provided in conjunction with Lidl retail group. This programme commenced in April 2007.
- DBS International partners where formal collaboration arrangements include matters of entry to specific levels of programmes of study are set out in Appendix B of the Terms of Reference.

and the quality assurance procedures/ arrangements in place for the provision of programmes leading to joint awards of HETAC and

- Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)
- University of Wales

### Objective 3 — Quality Assurance - Background

The SER confirms that DBS has established procedures for quality assurance for the purpose of further improving and maintaining the quality of education and training which is provided, in accordance with *section 28* of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999. The principles of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and the UK Quality Assurance

<sup>2</sup> “*Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*”. *European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 2009, Helsinki, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.*

<sup>3</sup> HETAC ‘*Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards*’ December 2008

Agency (QAA) have been addressed in order that all DBS policies and procedures satisfy the requirements of the accrediting, regulatory and awarding bodies. The DBS approach to the assurance and enhancement of quality and academic standards is to ensure that quality arrangements are kept under continuous review and such review and monitoring is an ongoing feature of the quality management systems and processes at DBS (SER, p15).

As stated in the SER, the DBS Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH 2009) is the repository for all DBS academic and quality policies and procedures and the associated documentation and templates required to access and implement those procedures. The QAH is intended to be comprehensive, accessible, user friendly and a complete source of all regulations and forms required to carry out the academic functions of the institution and ensure standards are adhered to. The Handbook is controlled by the Registrar's Office, and its implementation across all Schools is supported by the Academic Monitoring and Review Group (SER, p15). The QAH is reviewed on a regular basis and a new edition is produced annually. It is anticipated that future editions of the QAH will be housed on an intranet, and be easily navigable and more interactive (SER, p16).

Many of the policies, systems, processes and procedures have been in place in DBS for a considerable period of time, and inform the design, delivery and assessment of all academic programmes delivered. However, with three accrediting agencies across the academic Schools, regulations have varied between programmes. The 2009 edition of the QAH brings together all of the institution's policies and procedures and new procedures have been drafted to incorporate the requirements of all three agencies (SER, p16).

The Institution's SER describes the operation and effectiveness of its quality assurance procedures in addressing the seven elements of the European Standards and Guidelines. A summary of the key points follows.

### **Summary of Policies and Procedures for Quality Assurance**

DBS has established procedures for quality assurance for the purpose of further enhancing and maintaining the quality of education and training. The principles of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and the UK Quality Assurance Agency have been followed to ensure that DBS policies and procedures satisfy the requirements of the accrediting, regulatory and awarding bodies (SER, p15).

In general, the self-evaluation exercise carried out by DBS concluded that the statutory requirements under the Qualifications (Education and Training Act) 1999, Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance are being met, and that DBS is operating effective quality assurance and enhancement processes that inform the quality of its teaching, learning and facilities (SER, p12).

## **Summary of Approval, Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes**

The SER describes the processes in place at DBS for the approval, monitoring and review of programmes. When the need for a programme is identified, a team is established to review and develop the rationale, prepare the proposal and start the approval process. The proposal is evaluated in line with academic and commercial criteria. Following approval, an extensive process is followed to bring a new programme from inception, through validation, to realisation and delivery. Design of new programmes is based on a modular learning approach with appropriate access points (SER, p22).

The Academic Monitoring and Review Group (AMR) was established as a sub-committee of the Academic Board, to design and implement an infrastructure that supports annual monitoring and the review of academic programmes (SER, p23). Following the recent Institutional Review and Accredited Status Approval process carried out by Liverpool John Moores University, DBS has made significant progress in harmonising and strengthening annual monitoring. The most significant enhancement has been the redesign of the Boards of Studies as the major academic forum within each School or group of programmes (SER, p23/24). Boards of Studies processes are outlined in the Quality Assurance Handbook, section 2.1.3 (SER, p24).

Each School in DBS prepares an Annual Report which is reviewed by the Schools Executive Board and the Academic Board. The Annual Report for the School of Business is forwarded to LJMU, where it is subject to further review. Any matters to be addressed are discussed at a joint LJMU/DBS forum and appropriate actions agreed. The Annual College and Course Review prepared by the School of Law is forwarded to the University of Wales and a similar review process takes place. DBS has recently adopted a new template driven annual report format, which is linked to the standard agenda items of the Boards of Studies (SER, p24).

Student participation is an essential part of effective programme monitoring and review at DBS. Participation is facilitated through the Class Representative system, student representation on committees and formal student surveys conducted twice during the academic year. Identified issues are fed into School Action Plans with subsequent feedback provided to demonstrate and confirm close-out of actions (SER, p43/44).

Programmatic review provides the opportunity for all stakeholders, including employers, graduates, students and external examiners to make a contribution to the process, and the design of any updates to programmes. This approach aims to ensure that programmes retain their currency and viability (SER, p25).

## **Summary of Assessment of Learners**

According to the SER, the assessment of students at DBS is informed by clearly articulated principles, standards, regulations and procedures, which are subject to review, both internally and by External

Examiners. The entire process is also subject to further regular independent review by the Institution's accrediting bodies (SER, p30).

According to DBS, students are assessed using published criteria, regulations and procedures which are applied consistently. Methods of assessment are continuously reviewed across the School to ensure that assessment is at the 'level appropriate' to the standard of the award. The Level Managers work with the Heads of School and/or Heads of Department to identify staff development requirements in this area. A team within the School of Arts recently reviewed the School assessment strategy, with the initial focus on the first year experience. This project was timely as it coincided with programmatic reviews in the School. The same approach is being taken in the other Schools, supported by an informal 'Level Managers Forum' (SER, p30).

Criteria for assessment are published in module guides, and programme documents. Assessment regulations are published on the 'Registrar's Office' site on the student intranet. Key principles in any assessment regulations encompass both fairness and consistency. DBS has three key accreditors, HETAC, LJMU and The University of Wales. To date three sets of rules were used to determine the classification of an award. All three sets of rules have been reviewed to produce a consistent set of DBS regulations that satisfy the requirements of HETAC and the Quality Assurance Agency UK (QAA). The recent HETAC publication on Assessment and Standards, 2009 has informed the proposed new Award Classifications. The revised regulations are undergoing final review before they are formally presented to the accrediting bodies for approval in 2010 (SER, p30/31).

### **Summary of Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff**

According to the SER, staffing policy in DBS is focused on the objective of establishing a balanced team in terms of academic qualifications, teaching skills, professional and business experience. It is important to maintain an appropriate balance of full-time permanent academic staff and part-time teacher practitioners. The trend over recent years has been to move the balance to more full-time staff (SER, p33).

A formal recruitment process is in place which is overseen by the Human Resource Department (SER, p34). The performance of all academic staff is monitored through regular appraisal by Programme Leaders and Heads of School using student feedback to inform the process. Annual appraisals are conducted, providing an opportunity for discussion of staff development and other opportunities. The HR department proposes to implement an online staff appraisal system for all staff members which will also include an individual development plan (SER, p36).

Peer review of teaching has been trialled throughout DBS and its broader application is under consideration. A Module Review and Development Plan (MRDP) was introduced in the 2008/09 academic year, to provide academic staff with the opportunity to reflect on the performance of their module (SER, p36).

## **Summary of Learning Resources and Learner Support**

DBS is committed to the maintenance of a safe, well-resourced physical environment. An ongoing refurbishment and redecoration programme is in place to ensure that the physical environment supports the learning process (SER, p46).

Student induction seminars are held to coincide with the student registration. The induction process is viewed as the first important step to help students to integrate and progress (SER, p39). The Learning Support Committee coordinates the provision of academic support and learning support services across DBS. The primary focus is to provide assistance in relation to programme-specific continuous assessment and examination tasks (SER, p40).

There is a comprehensive range of student support services available including accommodation assistance, counselling, provision of sports and social activities, and facilitation of societies. These activities are coordinated by the Student Services Department (SER, p41).

## **Summary of Information Systems**

DBS gathers and analyses information that pertains to a range of institution activities. The vast majority of this information is captured on the *Prestige* student records and management system. This is the central repository for all interactions with students, covering all academic and financial activities. Each student is allocated a 7-digit number which is unique to that person for the duration of their study lifecycle at DBS. Staff can access the Prestige system from their PC. It is planned to implement an enhanced records and management system, and there is an ongoing consultation process with stakeholders (SER, p49).

## **Summary of Public Information**

DBS publishes information about programmes and awards offered principally through print publications such as full-time and part-time prospectuses in electronic and hard copy format and DBS website [www.dbs.ie](http://www.dbs.ie). Print, radio and online media are utilised as the basis for student recruitment activities (SER, p52-53).

## **Summary of Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards (Special Consideration)**

The taught Major Award programmes offered by DBS, at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, are accredited by:

- The Higher Education and Training Awards Council and;
- Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) and;
- University of Wales and HETAC

Appendix i of the Terms of Reference refers to the programmes recognised under each arrangement.

DBS's collaboration with HETAC has made a significant contribution to the enhancement of quality assurance arrangements at DBS (SER, p19). The relationship with HETAC has been particularly beneficial when collaboration has involved other parties such as LIDL. The interaction between DBS, HETAC and LIDL proved to be highly productive in terms of both programme design and staff development (SER, p18).

In terms of the collaboration with LJMU, Relationship Managers are appointed by the University to support co-operation and communication between the two institutions. The Relationship Managers take on the role of 'critical friends' and serve on a number of committees as part of the cross institutional agreements (SER, p19). The External Moderators appointed by the University of Wales also act as 'critical friends.' Three moderators are currently utilised across two Schools. The Joint Board of Studies with the University of Wales meets annually and has the authority to recommend changes to programmes for approval (SER, p20).

In relation to Joint Awards, the updated Memorandum of Understanding signed by HETAC, LJMU and DBS in 2009 is a template for the management of collaborative provision and accreditation (SER, p20). The quality assurance arrangements for the Joint Awards are as rigorous as those for other programmes, and must satisfy the requirements of both HETAC and QAA (SER, p21).

Major advantages for DBS include the rationalisation of delivery, the consistency of programmes and assessment, the streamlining of all procedures into a coherent Quality Assurance Handbook, and the administration of joint reviews, where the two accrediting bodies agree to cooperate and participate in each others quality procedures (SER, p21).

The panel was provided with an overview of the quality assurance system. DBS contends that the systems in place support a culture of responsiveness, adaptability and reflection. Creating a quality culture is leadership driven and the implementation of quality assurance procedures is management driven. Monitoring and reporting systems are supported by action plans for enhancement. A recent highlight has been the development of a streamlined set of policies and procedures to be applied consistently across DBS.

### Key Findings of Objective 3 — Quality Assurance

The Expert Panel considered the Institution's procedures in relation to the seven elements of the *European Standards and Guidelines for Internal Quality Assurance* and concludes that the criteria have been met.

The panel notes the high level of understanding of, and engagement with the quality assurance procedures by staff. This was demonstrated by the feedback given by all staff members with whom the panel met and supported by documentation provided by DBS. The panel acknowledges the core mission of DBS of excellence in teaching and learning, which should be supported by appropriate structures to underpin strategy. In relation to the Learning and Teaching Committee, the panel considers that this group has an advisory rather than a strategic focus. It is recommended that DBS reviews structures, systems and policies to ensure that the development of pedagogical practices are in line with its mission as a teaching-led institution.

Learners and graduates who met with the panel were generally positive about their experiences at DBS. The panel considers that there are appropriate formal and informal student feedback mechanisms available. The panel notes the success of the paper-based student survey system, and considers that the implementation of the Class Representative system has been variable with some representative positions vacant. Issues have arisen in relation to selection processes, finding students to participate, access to and availability of training. It is recommended that DBS considers the variety of strategies used to capture, review and report on student opinion fully across all levels of provision, and utilises the outcomes to enhance opportunities for student feedback.

The panel notes that there is no staff representation on the Academic Board. The major vehicles for staff input and feedback are programme meetings and Boards of Studies meetings. The intention to appoint a student representative is also noted. It is recommended that serious consideration be given to including elected staff representation on the Academic Board.

In relation to each of the seven elements of the *European Standards and Guidelines*, the panel has made the following findings:

#### **Element 1 — Policy and procedures for quality assurance findings**

The panel found that DBS is operating in accordance with the approved policies and procedures for quality assurance as outlined in the SER, p15-16 and referenced in this report (Objective 3 – Quality Assurance – Background). The panel notes the 2010 version of the Quality Assurance Handbook (QAH) dated September 2010 which is about to be implemented and considers that an opportunity was not provided to review this edition of the document prior to the site visit. The panel acknowledges the level of staff engagement with and awareness and appreciation of the DBS QAH.

## **Element 2 — Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards findings**

The panel concludes that DBS has formal mechanisms and procedures in place as outlined in the QAH. A cross-section of learner representatives and graduates who met with the panel characterised their experiences as positive in terms of the opportunity to give feedback and the institution's commitment to follow up on the issues identified. For example, resolving issues identified in relation to the operation of the Moodle system.

External stakeholders have an ongoing input into programme approval and review. Refer to commentary in Objective 1 for examples of participation on Accreditation Committees and Programme Boards, and the utilisation of feedback for new programme development/enhancement of existing programmes.

## **Element 3 — Assessment of learners findings**

The panel found that DBS is assessing learners using published criteria, regulations and procedures. Criteria for assessment is published in module guides and course documents. Assessment regulations are published on the 'Registrar's Office' site on the student intranet. The panel notes several references made in the 2008/09 Summary of External Examiners Reports to a lack of material on continuous assessment. The panel considers that the QAH procedures provide a coherent, comprehensive articulation of the arrangements for approval of continuous assessment assignments by External Examiners and the sampling of continuous assessment and other summative methods of assessment. It is recommended that DBS ensures that their new quality assurance procedures include the HETAC Guidelines on Assessment and Standards, December 2009, in respect of all aspects of assessment.

The panel also concludes that the student appeals process is not clearly articulated, accessible or transparent. This finding is based on the fact that the panel was unable to find evidence in published documentation of policies and procedures indicating all stages of the process surrounding and governing this area. It is recommended that DBS gives particular attention to student appeals, procedures to ensure that they are clear, consistent, understandable and available to students.

## **Element 4 — Quality assurance of teaching staff findings**

The panel concludes that DBS has appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff involved in the teaching of learners are qualified and competent to do so. It is noted that the minimum requirement for academic appointments is a Masters degree or professional qualification. The panel further notes that

although there is no requirement for teacher training, staff are encouraged to gain a Certificate in Third Level Teaching or Masters in Education.

The panel commends DBS on the professionalism and commitment of the teaching staff, which was evidenced by feedback from the students who met with the panel. Particular mention was made of the quality of teaching and ease of access to teaching staff. DBS maintains a balance between full time and part time staff, as access to part time staff who are practitioners is valued by DBS and its students.

The panel was informed that professional development focuses on induction, familiarisation with quality assurance processes and career progression. Peer mentoring is currently being implemented. Opportunities are provided for staff to upgrade qualifications relevant to their role and the needs of DBS. The panel notes that DBS is primarily a teaching institution. In view of that context, research activities to inform teaching and learning practices are facilitated within budget constraints. The panel considers that it is important for teaching and learning to be informed by research, and encourages DBS to enhance opportunities for staff and students to participate in research and scholarship activities.

The panel concludes that although professional development is available, there is variability in terms of staff accessing these opportunities. None of the teaching staff with whom the panel met are currently engaged in upgrading qualifications. However, teaching staff confirmed that applications for sponsorship to attend conferences were generally successful. For example, a number of DBS staff will be attending the forthcoming Marketing Institute of Ireland Conference.

#### **Element 5 — Learning resources and learner support findings**

The panel considers that adequate learning resources and support are provided for learners. The panel notes and endorses the establishment of a Library, Careers and Services Support Department as a mechanism for more effective integration into the academic process. Students and graduates with whom the panel met represented a cross section of all programmes and stages (see Appendix E). They gave generally positive feedback about the quality of learning resources and support. Particular mention was made of small class sizes facilitating queries and feedback, and the support received from the Careers Service in accessing internships.

The panel acknowledges the investment made by DBS in the new facilities at Castle House, which demonstrates a clear commitment to students and staff. The opportunity to view the facilities was taken up by the panel at the site visit. The panel notes that the housing of teaching staff together at Castle House has provided enhanced opportunities for synergies and collaboration.

The panel was briefed on the learning support and support services available at DBS. Learning support has been built into timetables. Services available include English Language laboratories, maths literacy and academic writing. Student services are located at Aungier Street, Balfe Street and Castle House, and there are libraries located at Dame Street and Aungier Street. Access is provided to a student intranet, College website and Moodle via an integrated system with a single log on. The panel notes that approximately 70% of DBS programmes are now on Moodle with a target of 100% compliance by the end of 2010.

The panel acknowledges the quality of support services provided for international students, and notes the appointment of an International Students Services Officer to address the academic and welfare needs of international students. International students also have representation on the Class Representative Committee. Further commentary on services provided to students prior to, and on arrival at DBS is included in the commentary to Objective 4. The panel encourages DBS to monitor service standards in the light of planned expansion to ensure that the services provided continue to meet the needs of international students.

Feedback from students met by the panel indicated that the mix of international and domestic students in classes has prompted the issue of a lack of technical/business English leading to queries by students which slow down the teaching and learning process. Students also commented on difficulties experienced in accessing core texts through the Library. The panel further notes that the separate location of the School of Law that had been perceived as a barrier was being addressed by the recent move to Castle House.

#### **Element 6 — Information systems findings**

The panel considers that there are appropriate information systems in place to support effective management of programmes and other activities as noted in the Summary of Information Systems section of this report. The panel acknowledges the commitment of DBS to resource information technology in order to enhance the collection and analysis of data as a basis for informed decision making. The panel notes and encourages the intention of DBS to invest in a new student management system.

#### **Element 7 — Public information findings**

The panel found that DBS publishes current impartial and objective information about the programmes and awards it offers through prospectuses and the utilisation of websites as described in the SER and Supplemental Documentation in accordance with National requirements of the NFQ.

However, the panel noted a mismatch in the listings of validated programmes indicated in the appendix of the Terms of Reference for Institutional Review (as established by HETAC), and listings of programmes

delivered by collaborative partners in relation to the BA in Tourism and Event Management (Appendix B pp16-18). It is recommended that DBS more closely monitors programme titles across the range of institutional literature.

### **Special Consideration – Collaborative Provision and Joint Awards**

The panel concludes that, in general, the quality assurance procedures and arrangements in place for collaborative provision and joint awards are operating effectively. Lidl staff who met with the panel confirmed their satisfaction with the operation of the Bachelor of Business in Retail Management. Particular mention was made of Lidl's ongoing input into the programme and the willingness of DBS to make changes where appropriate as a result of feedback (refer to commentary in Objective 1). This view was endorsed by students enrolled in the Lidl programme with whom the panel met and who reported generally positive experiences.

In relation to joint awards, the panel notes feedback from teaching staff, examinations staff and School administrators that the quality assurance procedures are well understood and are working effectively. Teaching staff who met with the panel characterised their work on joint award programmes as proactive, positive and supported by good communication channels and provided examples of enhanced practice in DBS. Opportunities for collaboration have included participation of DBS and LJMU staff at the Boards of Studies meetings held at each institution and team teaching ventures. The panel notes that DBS acknowledges the need to revisit and re-establish the University of Wales joint award agreement in accordance with HETAC Policy on collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards (SER, p21).

### **Commendation — Quality Assurance**

2. The panel commends DBS on the professionalism and commitment of its teaching staff.

### **Recommendations — Quality Assurance**

The panel recommend that DBS:

2. Review policies, structures and systems to ensure that the development of pedagogical practices is in line with its mission as a teaching-led institution.
3. Review the variety of strategies used to capture, review and report on student opinion fully across all levels of provision, and utilise the outcomes to enhance opportunities for student feedback.
4. Give serious consideration to including elected staff representation on the Academic Board.
5. Ensure that its new quality assurance procedures align with the HETAC policy on Assessment and Standards, 2009 in respect of all aspects of assessment.

6. Give particular attention to student appeals, recheck and review procedures to ensure that they are clear, consistent, understandable and available and accessible to students.
7. More closely monitors programme titles across the range of institutional literature and cross reference the data with HETAC information.
8. Revisit and re-establish the university of Wales joint award agreement in accordance with the HETAC *Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards' December 2008.*

## Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

*To confirm the extent to which the Institution has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and its procedures for access, transfer and progression*

This objective has two main strands:

1. Review of the Institution's activity in implementing the National Framework of Qualifications
2. Procedures for access, transfer and progression

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland has produced guidelines in relation to this.<sup>4</sup> These include issues such as credit, transfer and progression rules between levels and award types, entry arrangements, information provision, and policies and procedures for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

### Summary — Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression

DBS supports the application of access, transfer and progression policies as set out by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. As previously mentioned in the commentary under Objective 2, a guiding principle is to broaden access to third level education and to provide access and progression opportunities to students who may otherwise have difficulty in securing a place on the programme of their choice. The SER and Supplemental Documentation (SD) describe the processes operating to ensure that its programmes comply with the requirements of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

According to the SER, DBS operates a fair and transparent admissions process in which applicants are selected on the basis of merit, ability and potential. The Registrar oversees the process, supported by the Admissions Committee. Many of the learners at DBS are admitted to full time programmes via the Central Admissions Office (CAO). However many others are admitted directly through the DBS admissions system. Direct entry, including advanced entry by way of exemption, is monitored rigorously to ensure that all applicants are suitable and have a realistic chance of success (SER, p27).

DBS recognises that knowledge, skills and competencies can be acquired from a range of learning experiences, including formal, non-formal and informal learning. This approach is consistent with the aims of the NFQ to recognise all learning achievements by supporting the development of alternative pathways to qualifications and by facilitating the recognition of prior learning (SER, p31). To this end, DBS has

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<sup>4</sup> *"Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression"*. National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. 2003. [www.nqai.ie](http://www.nqai.ie).

implemented policies and procedures for assessing applications for advanced standing on the basis of recognition of prior learning (RPL). All requests for RPL are approved by the Admissions Committee (SD, p2).

In relation to progression, DBS operates a 'ladder of opportunity' to encourage learners to build on each stage of learning, and progress to the next (SD, p4). Progression is tracked and recorded across the board and benchmarked against other higher education institutions across Ireland and the UK. A performance indicator of 85% progression is used as a guideline to assess individual subject or programme performance. Progression rates of less than 85% are discussed at the appropriate Board of Studies, and issues identified for further investigation are referred to the programme team (SER, p31).

The DBS Careers Service continues to be available to students after they graduate. The service is also used by Alumni returning from overseas. Data on graduates' first destinations is also collected and made available on the DBS Careers Service website (SER, p50).

#### **Key Findings — Objective 4 — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression**

The panel considers that DBS has effectively implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression. It is further concluded that DBS is meeting the statutory requirement specified in Section 46 of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999 to provide information about programmes. The panel notes DBS's commitment to open access as part of its strategic focus. It is further noted that programme offerings are centred on levels 6 and 7, with staircasing to higher level programmes. It was confirmed that the Schools interface is managed by the DBS Schools Liaison Officers whose duties include provision of advice, updating programmes on the website and organising open days.

In relation to international students, DBS operates a TEFL/IELTS level 6 minimum entry requirement. An English test is administered in marginal cases and there is also access to a bridging programme. DBS utilises the services of agents and partners overseas. There is a strict admissions process, including a requirement for a notarised translation of transcripts. The panel notes that the effectiveness of the admissions process is assessed through student feedback.

The panel further notes that customised induction/orientation programmes are provided for both international students and school leavers. Access for students with disabilities is facilitated on a 'one-on-one' basis to ensure that facilities such as buildings and equipment are suitable and ongoing support is put in place.

The process for RPL applications was outlined to the panel. RPL applications are assessed by the Admissions Team in conjunction with Heads of School in line with the policy and procedures in the Quality Assurance Handbook. Applications are considered for advanced standing, exemptions and RPL.

The panel endorses the institution's commitment for provision in relation to disadvantaged groups. An example discussed in the commentary to Objective 1 is the provision of scholarships to school leavers as part of the 'giving back to the community' initiative. The panel commends DBS for making the scholarship programme available and recommends that consideration is given to widening the programme.

In relation to transfer and progression, the panel notes that the proposed student management system will enable transcripts to be available at any time. It is further noted that DBS would welcome a move to a 100 hour 5 ECTS credit system to enhance the institution's engagement with special purpose/minor awards, which are currently constrained by a 10 credit system. Progression is also facilitated by a strong link with the further education sector, through acceptance of FETAC awards and collaborative arrangements with further education Colleges. The panel encourages DBS to put more special purpose/minor award programmes on the framework, and to enhance its engagement with the further education sector and FETAC.

### **Commendations — Qualifications Framework, Access, Transfer and Progression**

3. The panel commends DBS on its scholarship programme as a mechanism for enhancing access opportunities.

## Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

*To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the Institution*

This includes both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and the recommendations arising from the internal self-evaluation process.

### Summary — Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

The SER states that enhancement initiatives at DBS are built on the significant developments that have taken place in terms of Academic structures, systems and processes. The guiding principle going forward is to ensure that the implementation is consistent and sustainable. The self evaluative process has provided a timely opportunity to reflect, to evaluate progress and to identify opportunities for improvement.

‘The main focus of enhancement initiatives is on the following areas:

- more formalities of academic processes across the institution, supported by streamlined audit trails and evidence of execution
- enhancement of academic and scholarly activity across the institution
- better integration of Law faculty and development of the School of Law
- enhancement of the student records system to support the generation of more comprehensive, more focused and more timely information
- enhancement of facilities for staff and students
- enhancements to meet the standards required to achieve delegated authority’

(SER, p 56)

### Key Findings — Objective 6 — Recommendations for Enhancement

The panel notes the areas for enhancement outlined in the SER and the absence of an action plan and timelines to implement these initiatives. The panel endorses the commitment of DBS to implement and monitor the recommendations arising out of the institutional review process, as has been the practice with the outcomes of other review processes. It is recommended that DBS’s own recommendations for enhancement in the SER be fully articulated in the implementation plan that will be agreed with HETAC arising from this review.

## **Recommendation**

9. The Institution's own recommendations for enhancement in the SER be fully articulated in the implementation plan that will be agreed with HETAC arising from this Review.

## **Additional Objective**

In addition to the prescribed HETAC objectives and the special considerations noted in relation to them, institutions have the option to include additional objectives to maximise the benefits of the review process.

DBS has added one additional objective to the Terms of Reference for institutional review.

7. The institutional review panel should consider issues arising from the incorporation of Portobello College into the Dublin Business School and the recent speculation and allegations against DBS in the public forum.

## **Summary – Objective 7 – Incorporation of Portobello College**

The SER refers to the challenges associated with the management of substantial changes in the organisation at critical stages of its development. The most significant factor has been the changes experienced during periods of transition such as from a professional school to a third level institution, from a single institution to a more broadly based academic institution, from an exclusively Irish student body to a multi ethnic student body, and from an owner managed institution to a small unit in a multinational organisation. The most challenging transitions have been those related to the acquisition of other third level institutions, particularly the blending of different cultures and the integration of staff (SER, p11).

Reference is made to the continuing challenges associated with the integration of Portobello College. Although significant progress has been made with the integration of the School of Law, there have been serious issues with a small group of staff, the outcome of which has been allegations made against DBS in the public forum in relation to academic quality and standards, and contractual issues, culminating in the initiation of a litigation process by three staff members (SER, p11). DBS contends that these allegations are unfounded and welcomes the opportunity to have these matters reviewed by the panel (SER, p12).

## **Key Findings – Objective 7 – Incorporation of Portobello College**

The panel met with the CEO of Kaplan UK and Ireland, the Chair of the Academic Board and senior management at DBS. At the outset of the meeting, the Review Chair confirmed that the focus of discussions would be on the lessons learned from the issues which arose in relation to the incorporation of Portobello College. The panel was impressed by the constructive and transparent nature of the discussion that ensued.

The panel notes the key issues associated with the incorporation of Portobello College including the contrast between DBS as a larger independent institution within a global education organisation, and the smaller owner-operated status of Portobello College. Further factors related to the physical distance between the two

locations, and the delay to the proposed move of the School of Law to Castle House due to health and safety compliance issues.

The panel further notes that the most significant barrier to successful integration had been the cultural differences between the two organisations, which had not been identified as part of the ‘due diligence’ process. Portobello College had enjoyed a high level of autonomy and student support, and the prevailing culture had manifested itself in terms of the development of quality assurance procedures. According to DBS management the major contributory factor was the dominant stance taken by a small number of Portobello College staff.

The major lessons learned from the incorporation were summarised as:

- An acknowledgement by DBS that the ‘light touch’ approach adopted to the acquisition had not been appropriate;
- The need for more comprehensive ‘due diligence’ from an academic perspective;
- The need to strengthen consultation and induction, including taking a more comprehensive approach to engagement;
- Outsourcing contractual issues to an external Human Resources organisation had led to delays of approximately one year before reports were received.

Note: this risk has been mitigated by the subsequent repositioning of the human resources structure within Kaplan UK and Ireland.

The panel considers that given the expansionary strategy of the institution, it is important that the lessons learned are documented and drawn upon for future reference. It is therefore recommended that DBS should formalise the lessons learned from the Portobello College acquisition in the form of guidelines to be drawn upon in the future. The format of these guidelines should be at the discretion of the institution. Suggestions include the development of a statement of practice or including the guidelines as part of the ‘due diligence’ process. The panel requests that action should be taken to address this recommendation as soon as possible.

### **Recommendation – Objective 7 – Incorporation of Portobello College**

10. DBS should formalise the lessons learned from the Portobello College acquisition in the form of internal corporate guidelines to be drawn upon in the future as part of the corporate due diligence. Action should be taken to address this recommendation as soon as possible.

## Appendix A Terms of Reference

### Higher Education and Training Awards Council TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OF Dublin Business School in October 2010

STATUS: SET

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#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to specify the Terms of Reference for the institutional review of Dublin Business School in October 2010. The HETAC Institutional Review policy applies to all institutions providing HETAC accredited programmes, or programmes accredited under delegated authority. These Terms of Reference are set within the overarching policy for institutional review as approved in December 2007 and should be read in conjunction with same. These Terms of Reference do not replace or supersede the agreed policy for Institutional Review. The Terms of Reference once set may not be amended and any significant revision required to the Terms of Reference will result in a new Terms of Reference to be set by HETAC following consultation with the college. These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for institutional review.

The objectives of the institutional review process are

1. To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the institution and the standards of the awards made;
2. To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution;
3. To assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution;
4. To confirm the extent that the institution has implemented the national framework of qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression;
5. To evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted;
6. To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution.

It is possible that, within the objectives outlined above, Institutions may have specific sub-objectives to which they will attach particular importance and wish to emphasise in their TOR. To maximise the benefits of the review process, an Institution may also consider including additional objectives relevant to its context.

The approach taken by HETAC to institutional review will:

- Acknowledge that institutions have ownership of and responsibility for their activity;
- Be conducted in a spirit of partnership with institutions, with a view to improvement and enhancement, whilst acknowledging statutory requirements for accountability;
- Be conducted in a manner which adds value to the institution, minimises overhead and assists in building institutional capacity;
- Be flexible, adaptable and scalable in order to meet the needs of diverse institutions;
- Be conducted in an open, consistent and transparent manner;
- Be evidence-based in accordance with established criteria;
- Promote learning and development for all involved;
- Reward innovation and experimentation when it seeks to enhance our understanding of good practice;
- Promote collaboration and sharing of good practice between institutions;
- Take cognisance of international best practice and contribute to European and international developments in this area.

## 2. Institution Profile

Dublin Business School (DBS) is an independent provider of higher education and professional training and part of a multinational corporation, Kaplan. The School is located in Dublin city centre and provides a range of undergraduate, graduate, professional and executive education programmes in the fields of Business, Arts and Law. The School has four faculties – Arts, Business, Law, Professional Schools and the English/European Business School. DBS has a total of 8738 learners registered in 2009.

Dublin Business School was established in 1975 as Accountancy and Business College to provide evening courses for students preparing for the examinations of the professional accounting bodies. By the mid 1980s the School was providing accounting, marketing and banking courses for full-time and part-time students.

The first undergraduate programme was introduced in 1989 when the BA in Business Studies Programme was offered under a franchise arrangement with the then Liverpool Polytechnic, now Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). The relationship with Liverpool has developed successfully and the School became an Accredited Institution of LJMU in 1995. As an Accredited Institution of Liverpool John Moores University, DBS is authorised, subject to approval by LJMU, to develop its own programmes and to nominate its own external examiners. There are review arrangements in place to ensure that the programmes developed by Dublin Business School meet the standards and quality assurance procedures required and students completing these programmes are conferred with LJMU degrees.

Today some of the programmes provided by DBS are validated as follows:

- Some programmes are validated solely by HETAC;
- a significant number are validated solely by Liverpool John Moores University
- a smaller number are validated solely by the University of Wales.
- a number of programmes are jointly validated by HETAC and Liverpool John Moores University leading to joint awards.
- One programme is jointly validated by HETAC and the University of Wales.

All programmes are categorised in Appendix A attached.

DBS amalgamated with LSB College in 2000, another Dublin based independent college. LSB College is now known as DBS School of Arts. The first programme to be validated was with both the predecessor organisations: National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA) predecessor to HETAC and LSB College. The BA in Psychoanalytic Studies was validated in 1994.

In 2003, Dublin Business School was acquired by Kaplan Incorporated, the education division of The Washington Post Company. Kaplan Inc. is a leading provider of higher education, professional development and lifelong learning programmes with headquarters in New York City and locations throughout the U.S. Europe and other international locations. DBS is placed within the European arm of Kaplan Professional, but operates independently in respect of its structure and programme provision. Kaplan Professional is part of Kaplan Europe, itself part of Kaplan Inc.

In March 2006, DBS acquired the European Business School (EBS). EBS was founded in 1993 and is a member of the EBSI group, a collective group of eight independent business schools located throughout Europe. EBS offers a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses for ‘study abroad’ students and provides DBS with an entry into a broader European market.

In July 2007, DBS acquired Portobello College, which was founded in 1991 and now provides a suite of qualifying programmes for the professional legal bodies in Ireland. The LLB (Hons) in Irish Law, validated jointly by the University of Wales and HETAC offered by the Law School (now DBS School of Law) is accredited by the Honorable Society of King’s Inns.

DBS provides programmes leading to professional awards offered by the DBS Professional School. According to DBS the Professional School provision is significant and is an integral part of DBS. The programmes of the following Professional Accountancy bodies are offered by DBS professional:

- The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) - ACCA Diploma in Financial Management, ACCA Diploma in International Financial Reporting ) and a range of Professional Evening Diploma programmes,
- The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA),
- Accounting Technicians Ireland,
- Certified Accounting Technician (CAT).

DBS states that graduates of the professional school continue to achieve exceptionally high pass rates and several world status awards and prizes in the professional examinations.

DBS Professional School is a CIMA LTP Quality Partner (Learning through Partnership). CIMA quality partner status recognises course providers who offer the highest quality tuition and support. In addition, the Professional School is an ACCA & ACCA CAT – Platinum Approved Learning Partner. According to the DBS this status is the highest award given by ACCA to a tuition provider. The Professional School, following an audit of its provisions has been enrolled by the Project Management Institute (PMI) as a Registered Education Provider (R.E.P.).

In addition, the Professional School holds Vocational Qualifications status in respect of JEB/EDI Teachers Diploma in information Technology and holds the Microsoft IT Academy Program Status in respect of the Microsoft Business Certification Diploma.

Dublin Business School employs 88 full-time equivalent lecturing staff and 229 part-time lecturing staff as set out in the table below under each faculty. Faculty members are supported by 115 administrative staff (89 full-time and 26 part-time). All non-academic departments are included in this number.

These are supported by staff numbers and profile as set out in the table below:

FACULTY	FULL-TIME LECTURERS	ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	PART-TIME LECTURERS
Arts	29	2	92
Business	37	3	57
Law	6	2	11
Professional School	4	5	59

FACULTY	FULL-TIME LECTURERS	ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	PART-TIME LECTURERS
English Language/European Business School <sup>5</sup>	10	1	10
Academic Registrar	1	8	0
Academic Director	1	1	0
Other Business Functions	0	93	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>229</b>

**TABLE1: NO. OF ACADEMIC STAFF**

These Faculty members support the following undergraduate and postgraduate student numbers.

TOTAL LEARNERS 2009-10	TOTAL	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	EU	NON-EU	MALE	FEMALE
School of Arts	1221	603	618	1202	19	121	1100
School of Business	2635	1698	937	2059	576	935	1700
School of Law	185	96	89	163	22	28	157
Professional School	3810	0	3810	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R*
EBS / English School	887	887	0	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8738</b>	<b>3284</b>	<b>5454</b>	<b>3424</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>1084</b>	<b>2957</b>

**TABLE 2: LEARNER NUMBER AND PROFILE**

- N/R \*= Not Recorded

DBS agreed an initial set of quality assurance procedures with HETAC in 2006. DBS has recently revised and published an updated Quality Assurance Handbook which was implemented in September 2009. This sets out, *inter alia*, the quality assurance provisions relating to the awarding bodies concerned (HETAC; Liverpool John Moores University and the University of Wales). This Quality Assurance Handbook is subject to annual review by DBS.

### 3. Institution's Team

- Head of Institution - Mr Gerry Muldowney ,Chief Executive, [Gerry.muldowney@dbs.ie](mailto:Gerry.muldowney@dbs.ie) 01 417 7547.
- Dr Eileen Buckley-Dhoot, Academic Director, [Eileen.buckley-dhoot@dbs.ie](mailto:Eileen.buckley-dhoot@dbs.ie) 01 475 7564
- Mr Stuart Garvie, Registrar, [stuart.garvie@dbs.ie](mailto:stuart.garvie@dbs.ie) 01 417 7580
- Ms Susan Gray, Project Liaison [susan.gray@dbs.ie](mailto:susan.gray@dbs.ie) 01 417 7510

### 4. HETAC objectives for institutional review

There are six prescribed objectives for institutional review as outlined below. Institutions may wish to highlight any areas of specific importance to the Institution within each of the objectives.

<sup>5</sup> Semester abroad programme - European Business School

**Objective 1 To enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the institution and the standards of the awards made**

This objective is to enhance public confidence in the quality of education and training provided by the Institution and the standards of the awards made. This is an overarching objective which covers all areas of the Institution's activity. The quality of the institutional review process itself is a critical part of this as is the internal self study, the publication of the Self Evaluation Report and panel report. The information provided by the Institution to the public falls within this objective.

*Special considerations*

None

**Objective 2 To contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution**

This objective is to contribute to coherent strategic planning and governance in the institution. The review may address the coherence of institutional mission, vision and values and overall institutional strategic planning. For recognised institutions with delegated authority this objective also includes the Operation and Management criterion of the review of delegated authority (governance, management, administration, planning and evaluation) and the Objects of the Qualifications Act criterion relating to national contributions *etc.*

*Special consideration*

Dublin Business School is an independent institution, within a global education organisation. The strategic planning and governance of the School may differ in particular areas from those in place in Higher Education institutions that are publicly funded.

**Objective 3 To assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution**

This objective is to assess the effectiveness of the quality assurance arrangements operated by the institution. This will be based on Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance<sup>6</sup>. By including this in the institutional review process the statutory requirement for review of QA is met. How the Institution manages its QA for the “seven elements” of Part One of the European Standards and Guidelines should be explicitly addressed by the review process including : Policy and procedures for quality assurance; Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards; Assessment of students; Quality assurance of teaching staff; Learning resources and support; Information systems; Public information.

*Special consideration*

**1. Collaborative provision and Joint Awards**

1.1 The institutional review should consider the quality assurance procedures/arrangements in place for the following arrangements which fall under collaborative provision:

- DBS partnership with Lidl. The HETAC validated DBS three year level 7 Bachelor of Arts in the area of Retail Management is provided in conjunction with Lidl retail group. This programme commenced in April 2007.
- DBS International partners where formal collaboration arrangements include matters of entry to specific levels of programmes of study are set out in Appendix B attached.

1.2 The institutional review should consider the quality assurance procedures/ arrangements in place for the provision of programmes leading to joint awards of HETAC and

- Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU)
- University of Wales

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<sup>6</sup> “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area”. European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, 2009, Helsinki, 3rd edition.

Appendix A provides an extract of programme provision in Dublin Business School

The policy and criteria in the HETAC document - *Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards' December 2008* are relevant in this regard. **An Extract of the quality assurance criteria in this policy document is set out below:**

## Collaborative provision

### 2.1 Preliminaries

- 2.1.1 Collaborative provision for the purpose of this document means two or more providers being involved by formal agreement in provision of a programme of higher education and training. ....

### 2.2 Quality procedures for collaborative provision

- 2.3.1 The document 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area'<sup>7</sup> specifies the broad requirements for internal and external quality assurance in general. More specific requirements are set out in the HETAC document entitled 'Guidelines and criteria for quality assurance procedures (2002)'. The 'Policy for collaborative programmes, transnational programmes and joint awards' (this document) sets out supplementary requirements for collaborative programmes.
- 2.3.2 Collaborative programmes are subject to at least the same quality assurance standards as other types of programmes accredited by HETAC or validated by a recognised institution of the Council. Partner providers in a consortium are subject to at least the same quality assurance standards as other providers of programmes accredited by HETAC.
- 2.3.3 The consortium responsible for a collaborative programme and its partner providers should establish appropriate and transparent corporate governance arrangements for the collaboration that safeguard against academic and/or financial impropriety, recklessness and negligence.
- 2.3.4 The consortium agreement governing the provision of the collaborative programmes should interface with each partner provider's quality assurance procedures. Guidelines on consortium agreements are provided in the Appendix to this document.
- 2.3.5 Unless included in the consortium agreement itself, the consortium will generally need to establish quality assurance procedures for its operations and these will be shared by the partner providers and included in their individual quality assurance procedures.

### 2.4 Agreement and review of quality procedures

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 2.4.1 | Provider's quality assurance procedures for collaborative programmes, including consortium agreements where relevant, should be submitted to HETAC for its agreement where not already agreed. |
|-------|--|
- 2.4.2 Quality assurance procedures for collaborative programmes may be agreed in the context of accreditation evaluation or delegation of authority review.
- 2.4.3 HETAC may review the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures for collaborative programmes distinctly from that of other programmes. This may be done in conjunction with partner providers and/or other relevant external quality assurance agencies.

**Note Section 2.3.1 and 2.4 above applies to joint awarding and associated programmes.**

## Objective 4 To confirm the extent that the institution has implemented the national framework of qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression

This objective is to confirm the extent that the institution has implemented the National Framework of Qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression. The National Qualifications Authority has produced guidelines in relation to this<sup>8</sup>. For example this includes issues such as credit, transfer and

<sup>7</sup> European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. [Internet]. (2005). *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Available from: [http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main\\_doc/050221\\_ENQA\\_report.pdf](http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/050221_ENQA_report.pdf). Last Accessed: 23rd September 2008.

<sup>8</sup> *Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression*". National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. 2003. [www.nqai.ie](http://www.nqai.ie).

progression routes between levels and award types, entry arrangements and information provision. As part of this objective, HEA-funded Institutions should be mindful of the goals of the HEA's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (2008-2013) and pay particular attention to the objectives relevant to Higher Education Institutions.

*Special considerations*

None

**Objective 5 To evaluate the operation and management of delegated authority where it has been granted**

This objective does not apply to the Institutional Review of Dublin Business School

**Objective 6 To provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution**

This objective is to provide recommendations for the enhancement of the education and training provided by the institution. This will include both the recommendations arising from the external peer review process and recommendations arising from the internal self study process.

*Special considerations*

None

**5. Institution-specific objectives**

In addition to the prescribed HETAC objectives and the special considerations noted in relation to them, there is an option to include additional objectives to maximise the benefits of the review process.

*Additional Institutional Objective*

The institutional review panel should consider issues arising from the incorporation of Portobello College into the Dublin Business School and the recent speculation and allegations against DBS in the public forum.

## 6. Schedule for Dublin Business School

As outlined in the Institutional Review policy, the process consists of six phases

1. HETAC sets terms of reference following consultation with institution;
2. Self-study by the institution;
3. Visit by expert panel appointed by HETAC and written panel report;
4. Institutional response including implementation plan;
5. Panel report and response published;
6. Follow-up report submitted by the institution.

The major milestones in the timeframe for the institutional review of Dublin Business School are outlined below. This should be read in conjunction with the supplementary guidelines for institutional review.

Relative timeframe	Actual Date	Milestone
At least 6 months before panel visit		Institution indicates timeframe for institutional review as per overall HETAC schedule of reviews
At least 6 months before panel visit	September 2009-February 2010	Terms of Reference set following consultation with Institution and post on HETAC website
3 to 6 months before panel visit		Institution undertakes self study process and produces self evaluation report (SER)
Approx. 8 weeks before site visit	15 February 2010	Submission of Self Evaluation Report and other documentation
1 week after this	22 February 2010	HETAC Desk based review of SER and feedback to Institution
Approx. 3 weeks before site visit	30 March 2010	Advance Meeting between Chair, Secretary and Institution
	8 September 2010	Update meeting
Panel Visit	4-5 October 2010	Site visit by external peer review panel (2 days approximately as determined by TOR) Preliminary (oral) feedback on findings <b>**Rescheduled date</b>
Approx 12 weeks after site visit	<i>Estimated:</i> 17 January 2011 <i>Actual:</i> 16 December 2010	Draft report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to Institution for factual accuracy
Usually 4 days following this	10 January 2011	Final report on findings of panel sent by HETAC to Institution
6 weeks following receipt of final report	11 January 2011	Response by Institution to HETAC including plan with timeframe for implementation of any changes
Next available HETAC Academic Committee meeting	24 January 2011	Consideration of report and institutional response by HETAC Academic Committee  Publication of report, response and SER on website once adopted
12 months after adoption	January 2012	Follow-up report by Institution to HETAC on implementation of recommendations

## **(Appendix to Terms of Reference)– Appendix i**

### **Extract of programme provision at Dublin Business School**

#### ***A. Programmes (and award title) currently jointly validated under the Joint Awards agreement between HETAC and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU):<sup>9</sup>***

1. Master of Business Administration Executive Leadership (revalidated July 09)
2. Master of Business Administration Business Management
3. Postgraduate Diploma in Executive Leadership
4. Postgraduate Diploma in Business Management
5. Postgraduate Diploma in Computing and Information Systems
6. Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Business with Psychology
7. (Legum Baccalaureus) LLB (Hons) Bachelor of Laws
8. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Business Management (Leisure and Recreation Management)
9. BA (Hons) Marketing with Event Management
10. BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance
11. BA (Hons) Financial Services
12. BA (Hons) Business Studies
13. BA (Hons) Business Management
14. BA (Hons) Business Management (Accounting)
15. BA (Hons) Business Management (Human Resource Management)
16. BA (Hons) Business Management (Law)
17. BA (Hons) Business Management (Marketing)
18. BA (Hons) Business Information Systems
19. BA (Hons) Marketing
20. MA Human Resource Management (Not revalidated July 09, i.e. only validated for 9/10)
21. MSc International Accounting and Finance
22. MA Marketing (Not revalidated July 09, i.e. only validated for 9/10)
23. MSc in Marketing (added July 2009)
24. MBA in Business Management (added July 2009)
25. MBA in Marketing (added July 2009)
26. MBA in Project Management (added July 2009)
27. MBA in Human Resource Management (added July 2009)
28. MBA in Finance (added July 2009)
29. MBA in Executive (added July 2009)\*\*
30. MSc in International Banking and Finance (added July 2009)
31. MSc in Information and Library Management (added July 2009)
32. BA (Honours) Business Management (Project Management) (added July 2009)

Note: Dublin Business School is in the process of phasing out a number of programmes with similar titles to those listed above which were initially run with LJMU validation only. All of these programmes are now captured under the HETAC/LJMU joint validation leading to joint awards.

#### ***B. Programmes (and award title) currently jointly validated under the University of Wales and HETAC/Portobello College (now under Dublin Business School) Agreement:***

1. Bachelor of Laws/ LL.B (Hons) in Irish Law

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<sup>9</sup> Note the list of programmes under the joint awards agreement was revised following the validation and revalidation of programmes in June 2009. This list replaces Appendix One in the Memorandum of Agreement LJMU HETAC DBS.

### **C. Programmes validated by HETAC (only)**

#### **Honours Bachelor Degrees (Level 8)**

1. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Counselling and Psychotherapy
2. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Film, Literature and Drama
3. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Film Studies
4. Bachelor of Arts (Hons)
5. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Journalism
6. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Media and Cultural Studies
7. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Psychology
8. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Social Science
9. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Business Studies
10. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Marketing
11. Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Accounting and Finance

#### **Ordinary Bachelor Degrees (Level 7)**

12. Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Multi-Media
13. Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies
14. Bachelor of Arts in Legal and Business Studies
15. Bachelor of Arts in Film and Media
16. Bachelor of Arts in Social Studies
17. Bachelor of Business
18. Bachelor of Business in Retail Management
19. Bachelor of Business in Accounting
20. Bachelor of Business in Marketing
21. Bachelor of Business in Information Technology

#### **Higher Certificates (Level 6)**

22. Certificate in Cultural Studies (minor award)
23. Certificate in Business and Language (minor award)
24. Higher Certificate in Business
25. Higher Certificate in Business in Accounting
26. Higher Certificate in Business in Marketing
27. Higher Certificate in Arts in Legal Studies
28. Higher Certificate in Arts in Legal and Business Studies
29. Higher certificate in Arts in Applied Social Studies in Counselling Studies

#### **Postgraduate Programmes - level 9**

30. MA in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy
31. MA in Addiction Studies
32. MA in Psychotherapy

#### **Higher Diplomas Level 8**

33. Higher Diploma in Arts in Counselling and Psychotherapy
34. Higher Diploma in Arts in Psychoanalytic Studies
35. Higher Diploma in Arts in Psychology
36. Higher Diploma in Business Studies

**D. Programmes Not Running 2009-2010:**

1. Master of Business Studies
2. Master of Science in Computing and Information Systems
3. MSc in Human Resource Management (added July 2009)
4. MBA in Information Systems (added July 2009)
5. Higher Diploma in Arts in Legal Studies
6. Higher Diploma in Business Studies (HRM)
7. Higher Diploma in Business Studies (Information Technology)
8. Higher Certificate in Business in Information Technology

**(Appendix to the Terms of Reference)-Appendix ii –Collaborative Partners of Dublin Business School**

**TABLE 3: NON-EU COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS**

<b>INSTITUTE</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>PROGRAMME TITLE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>STAGE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESSION TO</b>
Beijing College of Finance & Commerce	China	Beijing	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	3 Years	Sep-06	Jun-09	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Beijing College of Finance & Commerce	China	Beijing	Diploma in Financial Services	Chinese Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	3 Years	Sep-06	Jun-09	HETAC BA (Hons) Financial Services
Heze University	China	Shandong	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	3 Years	Sep-07	Jun-10	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Xuchang Vocational Technical College	China	Henan	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	3 Years	Sep-07	Jun-10	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Xuchang Vocational Technical College	China	Henan	Diploma in Financial Services	Chinese Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	3 Years	Sep-07	Jun-10	HETAC BA (Hons) Financial Services
Cosmic Business School	India	New Delhi	Pre-Masters Diploma	None - DBS Award	Approved & Recruiting Students	6 Months	TBC	TBC	LJMU / HETAC MBA (International)
Liaoning Information Vocational Technical College	China	Liaoning	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Xiamen University	China	Fujian	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Xiamen University	China	Fujian	Diploma in Financial Services	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Financial Services
Xiamen University	China	Fujian	Diploma in Communications	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	TBC
Xiamen University	China	Fujian	Diploma in Leisure & Recreation Management	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	BA (Hons) Business Management (Leisure & Recreation Management)
TEDA Polytechnic	China	Tianjin	Diploma in Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Effort International School	China	Tianjin	Certificate in Business & Language	None - DBS Award	Undergoing Approval Process	1 Year	TBC	TBC	Various Programmes

<b>INSTITUTE</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>PROGRAMME TITLE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>STAGE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESSION TO</b>
Shanghai Lixin university of Commerce	China	Shanghai	Bachelors of Accounting	Chinese Ministry of Education	MOU just drafted	3 years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance
Hebei University	China	Hebei	Various Programmes	Chinese Ministry of Education	MOU just signed	TBC	TBC	TBC	Various Programmes
Anhui College of Finance & Commerce	China	Anhui	Various Programmes	Chinese Ministry of Education	Undergoing Approval Process	3 Years	TBC	TBC	HETAC BA (Hons) Accounting & Finance

**TABLE 4: EU COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS**

<b>INSTITUTE</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>PROGRAMME TITLE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>STAGE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESSION TO</b>
ESG	France	Paris	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-07	Jun-12	Level 7 and Level 8
ESCE	France	Paris	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-07	Jun-12	Level 8
ESC Toulouse	France	Toulouse	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-07	Jun-12	Level 7
ESC Troyes	France	Troyes	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-09	Jun-12	Level 8
ESC Clermont	France	Clermont	Bachelor degree level 7	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-09	Jun-12	Level 7
ESC Pau	France	Pau	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-09	Jun-12	Level 8
EGC Marseille	France	Marseille	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-06	Jun-12	Level 8
IDRAC	France	Lyon	Bachelor degree level 8	French Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-07	Jun-12	Level 8
IHM	Sweden	Stockholm	Business Diploma	Swedish Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-06	Jun-12	Level 8
CUNEF	Spain	Madrid	Bachelor degree level 7	Spanish Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-09	Jun-12	Level 7
Fachhochschule Hof	Germany	Hof	BA in Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Fachhochschule Aschaffenburg	Germany	Aschaffenburg	BA in Business Administration	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Fachhochschule Coburg	Germany	Coburg	BA in Business Administration	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Fachhochschule Hamm	Germany	Hamm	BSc Industrial Engineering & Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Fachhochschule Worms	Germany	Worms	BA in Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
International Business School Berlin	Germany	Berlin	BA in Tourism and Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes

<b>INSTITUTE</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>PROGRAMME TITLE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>STAGE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESSION TO</b>
International Business School Berlin	Germany	Berlin	BA in International Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
International school of Management	Germany	Dortmund/Munich/Frankfurt/Hamburg	BA in International Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
International school of Management	Germany	Dortmund/Munich/Frankfurt/Hamburg	BA in Business Communication	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
International school of Management	Germany	Dortmund/Munich/Frankfurt/Hamburg	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Munich Business School	Germany	Munich	BA in International Business	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Nord Akademie Business & Information Technology School (BITS)	Germany	Elmshorn	BA in Industrial Engineering & Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Business & Information Technology School (BITS)	Germany	Iserlohn	BA in Communication & Media Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Business & Information Technology School (BITS)	Germany	Iserlohn	BA in Sports & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Berlin	Germany	Berlin	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Berlin	Germany	Berlin	BA in International Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Bielefeld	Germany	Bielefeld	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1-Year	Sep-09	Jun-12	EBS Certificate Programmes Level 8

<b>INSTITUTE</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>CITY</b>	<b>PROGRAMME TITLE</b>	<b>ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>STAGE</b>	<b>LENGTH</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>FINISH DATE</b>	<b>PROGRESSION TO</b>
Euro Business College Bonn	Germany	Bonn	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Dresden	Germany	Dresden	BA in International Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Dusseldorf	Germany	Dusseldorf	BA in International Business Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Dusseldorf	Germany	Dusseldorf	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes
Euro Business College Hamburg	Germany	Hamburg	BA in Tourism & Event Management	German Ministry of Education	Programme Approved & Running	1 semester	Jan/Sep	Apr/Dec	EBS Certificate Programmes

## **Appendix B Panel Membership**

### *Chairperson*

#### **Dr. Richard Thorn**

Director, Flexible Learning and Research for Institutes of Technology, Ireland (IOTT)

### *Secretary*

#### **Ms. Donna Bell**

Academic Strategy Manager, Massey University, New Zealand

#### **Dr. Jacques Kaat**

Academic Director for Webster University in Leiden, the Netherlands

#### **Ms. Anne Breakell**

Retired. Former Vice President, Academic and Administration, at the National College of Ireland (NCI)

#### **Mr Frank O'Connor**

Retired. Former Manager, International Education Services at Enterprise Ireland

#### **Mr Daniel McGarrigle**

Night Club Manager for Northwest Bar Ltd. Former Western Area Officer for the Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

## **Appendix C Supporting Documentation**

- 1) Self Evaluation Document
- 2) Quality Assurance Handbook
- 3) Library Services
- 4) Reference Documentation

### **Documentation received in advance of the site visit**

- Staff Register
- Index of Documentation
- Information on Diploma Supplement
- Information on Online Library Resources
- Staff Development activity summary
- Samples of Annual Reports (School of Arts and Law)
- Document of Flow of Academic Reports
- Annual college and course review University of Wales 2008/09
- Annual Report Liverpool John Moores University 2007/08
- summary of self evaluation process
- strategic planning document
- updated staff register
- Statistical analysis staff/learners

## Appendix D Agenda for Site Visit

### Dublin Business School Institutional Review Site Visit Agenda 4-5 October 2010

The format of each session is a discussion in question and answer format unless otherwise indicated. Dr. Richard Thorn, Review Chairperson, will chair all sessions unless otherwise indicated.

<p><b>Sunday 3 October panel induction</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Day One Monday 4 October</b></p>	<p><b>Sunday 3 October, 2010</b></p> <p><b>5.00pm - 8.00pm Panel induction &amp; planning meeting at hotel</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>IR Panel arrive at Dublin Business School, Aungier Street, at 9am Monday 4 October, 2010.</b></p> <p><b>9.00am- 9.15am - Presentation by Gerry Muldowney, CEO, DBS on the strategic planning process and other projects/linkages of DBS into Kaplan.</b></p> <p><b>9.15am- 11.45am - Planning meeting of panel members and review of supplementary evidence – documentation.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>11.45am – 1.00pm - Session One with College Representatives - Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance.</b> Setting the scene - an overview of the College context, mission, and vision. Kaplan context. Environmental factors including competitive position. Strategic planning and governance and Kaplan link. Links between internal reflection and strategic planning decision making. <b>Brief presentation by Peter Houillon, CEO, Kaplan UK &amp; Ireland and Gerry Muldowney, CEO, DBS on preparation for institutional review and other reviews and the mission of Kaplan UK &amp; Ireland (10 minutes).</b></p> <p><b>1.00pm – 1.45pm -Panel private working lunch in meeting room</b></p> <p><b>1.45pm – 3.00pm – Session Two - Objective 1: Public confidence. Objective – Special Objective 7- incorporation of Portobello.</b></p> <p>Objective 1 - Overarching objective. Demonstrating evidence of public confidence in the quality of education and training and standards of awards made. Information provided by the Institution; Stakeholder interaction. Overall approach taken to self study for Institutional Review (outline of self study process etc). <i><b>The institutional review panel should consider issues arising from the incorporation of Portobello College into the Dublin Business School and the recent speculation and allegations against DBS in the public forum</b></i></p> <p><b>3.00pm- 3.30pm Break for coffee / brief panel discussion</b></p> <p><b>3.30pm – 4.30pm – Session Three -Meeting with External Stakeholders</b> (for example employers and others to be clarified by the College in advance of the site visit – refer to note of advance meeting).</p> <p><b>4.30pm- 4.45pm Break for coffee / brief panel discussion</b></p> <p><b>4.45pm- 5.45pm –Session Four - Objective 3 : Quality Assurance - Overview of Quality Assurance system/framework in place in the College (Brief presentation 10 minutes maximum) and management of change to QA system. Special considerations – Collaborative provision – Lidl QA arrangements</b> The “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines and the stage of development of the Colleges QA system in each area ; evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes and strategic planning etc. The session will also consider the Institution specific objectives and special considerations.</p> <hr/> <p><b>5.45pm- 6.00 pm Break for coffee / brief panel discussion</b></p>
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	<p><b>6.00pm – 6.45pm Session Five – meeting with Learners and Graduates</b>  Two parallel sessions with representative learners and graduates – maximum of 12 learners in each session.  <b>1. Learners/graduates mature/part-time:</b> representing different programmes /international/Postgraduate/minority etc.  <b>2. Learners /graduates full-time:</b> representing different programmes &amp; different stages/international/different stages up to Postgraduate/minority etc</p> <hr/> <p><b>Private meeting of panel 6.45 pm – 7.45pm in College</b></p>
<p><b>Day Two 5 October</b></p>	<p><b>Day two - DBS - Tuesday 5 October</b></p> <p><b>9.00am – 10.00am Session Six- Objective 3 : Quality Assurance continued - Meeting with <u>Staff of Learner Support Services</u> and some administrative staff</b>  This session will deal with the “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines in particular learner support issues - the stage of development of the Institutions QA system in this area ; evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes, governance, management and planning etc</p> <p><b>10.00am – 10.45am Session Seven -Objective 3: Quality Assurance continued (Seven Elements Review): Meeting with <u>non committee</u> lecturing staff - faculty and associate faculty.</b>  This session will deal with the “seven elements” covered by the European Standards and Guidelines and the stage of development of the Institutions QA system in each area ; evidence of performance of QA system in each area; evaluation of effectiveness of QA system in each area; improvements identified; integration between processes, governance, management and planning etc)</p> <hr/> <p><b>10.45 am-11.00 am Coffee and brief meeting of panel</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>11.00am – 12.00pm Session Eight - Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression:</b> Review of Implementation of the national framework of qualifications and procedures for access, transfer and progression. Learning outcomes, learner assessment etc. This session will also consider the special objectives.</p> <p><b>12.00pm – 1.00pm Documentation trail</b> - Format: Opportunity for panel members to review supplementary evidence in private.</p> <p><b>1.00pm - 2.00pm - Panel private lunch and opportunity</b> for panel members to review supplementary evidence – documentation</p> <p><b>2.00pm - 2.30pm –Session Nine- Supplementary meeting with senior staff/ Clarification session if required</b></p> <p><b>2.30pm – 4.30pm Private meeting of panel</b> to consider its findings and recommendations</p> <p><b>4.30pm – 4.45pm Session Ten- Meeting with President, and College’s Senior Management team</b> to provide preliminary feedback on findings and recommendations.</p>

## Appendix E List of People met by the Panel

### Monday 4 October 2010

#### 11.45am – 1.00pm - Objective 2: Strategic Planning and Governance

Mr Gerry Muldowney	CEO Dublin Business School
Mr Peter Houillon	CEO Kaplan UK and Ireland
Dr. Eileen Buckley –Dhoot	Academic Director
Mr Stuart Garvie	Registrar
Ms Sinéad O’Brien	Head of School of Business
Dr Lee Richardson	Head of School of Arts
Professor Cedric Bell	Head of School of Law
Ms Louise Devlin	Head of Professional School
Mr Donal Quill	Director of Finance and Operations
Ms Cliona O’Beirne	Director of Marketing and Admissions
Mr Philip Ryan	Chair of Academic Board

#### 1.45pm – 3.00pm – Objective 1: Public Confidence. Special Objective 7- incorporation of Portobello.

Mr Gerry Muldowney	CEO Dublin Business School
Mr Peter Houillon	CEO Kaplan UK and Ireland
Dr. Eileen Buckley –Dhoot	Academic Director
Mr Stuart Garvie	Registrar
Ms Sinéad O’Brien	Head of School of Business
Dr Lee Richardson	Head of School of Arts
Professor Cedric Bell	Head of School of Law
Ms Louise Devlin	Head of Professional School
Mr Donal Quill	Chief Operations Officer
Ms Cliona O’Beirne	Director of Marketing and Admissions
Mr Philip Ryan	Chair of Academic Board

#### 3.30pm – 4.30pm –Meeting with External Stakeholders

Company	Name	Title	Nature Of Relationship
Irish Hospice Foundation	Laura Rooney Ferris	Librarian	Employs DBS Intern students on MSc Library and Information Systems
Volunteer Centre Ireland	Yvonne McKenna	CEO	Employs DBS Placement students for BA( Hons) Business Studies
ACCA	Ms Liz Hughes	Head of ACCA Ireland	Professional body
Lidl	Paul Martin/ Stephen Cahill	Career Development Manager	Liaison for LIDL programmes
IFS	Orla Nolan	Skills Training Manager	Sends students to DBS to pursue ACCA and CIMA
Psychological Society of Ireland	Prof. Julian Leslie	Chair of Undergraduate Accreditation Committee	Professional Body

Company	Name	Title	Nature Of Relationship
Loreto College Dalkey	Ms Anne Tuffy	Career Guidance Counsellor	Recommends potential students to DBS
Association for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Ireland	Kay Murphy	Member of Executive Committee	Professional Body
Association for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Ireland	Gerry Moore	Member of Executive Committee	Professional Body
CBS James Street	Ashlinn Craemer	Career Guidance Counsellor	DBS provides scholarships for students from this local school annually as part of our “giving back to the community” initiative

**4.45pm- 5.45pm - Objective 3: Quality Assurance - Overview of Quality Assurance system/framework in place in the College**

Dr Eileen Buckley –Dhoot	Academic Director
Ms Sinéad O’Brien	Head of School of Business
Mr Stuart Garvie	Registrar
Ms Ann Masterson	Senior Lecturer – School of Business
Dr Barnaby Taylor	Lecturer – School of Arts
Dr Patricia Moriarty	Head of Department – Management & IT
Ms Linda Moran	Head of Department – Marketing
Mr Michael KIELTY	Head of Department – European Business School
Dr Lee Richardson	Head of School of Arts
Professor Cedric Bell	Head of School of Law
Mr. Barry O’Donnell	Head of Dept of Counselling & Psychotherapy

**6.00pm – 6.45 pm - Meeting with learners and Graduates (2 parallel sessions)**

**Group A**

Name	Programme	Stage	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)	Group
David McHugh	BABS	8	Graduate PT	A
Akem Taiwo	Psychology	8	Student PT	A
Jean McCabe Strange	Psychology	L8	Graduate PT	A
Barry Sherry	Masters (Business)	9	Student PT	A
Paul Ringer	Business/IT	8	Graduate PT	A
Cliona Judge	LLB	8	Graduate PT	A

Name	Programme	Stage	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)	Group
Fiona Concannon	Exec MBA	9	Graduate PT	A
Alice Carroll	CIMA		Affiliate	A
Terry Lawless	ACCA		Affiliate	A
Caitriona Lanigan	Psychology	8	Graduate PT	A
Mei Xue	Accounting & Finance	8/3	Student FT	A
Yue Zhang	Accounting & Finance	8/3	Student FT	A
Xin Wang	Accounting & Finance	8/3	Student FT	A
Jennifer Gavin	Psychology	8/3	Student FT	A

### Group B

Name	Programme	Stage	Representing (e.g. P/T learners, International Students etc)
Michelle Brien	Social Science	8/2	Student FT
Nicola Elmer	Masters (Psychoanalytic)	9	Student FT
Clara Mallon	Film, Literature & drama	L8/3	Student FT
Claire Mullins	Lidl	7/2	Student FT
Laurelin Van Der	Marketing & Event Management	8/3	Graduate FT
Anjulee Van eeden	Business Management	8/1	Student FT
Daragh Price	Marketing	8	Graduate FT
Jason Dee	Higher Certificates( Legal)	6/7/2	Student FT
Lydia Liassides	LLB	8/2	Student FT
Frank Lennox	LLB	8/3	Student FT
Orna O'Connor	General Arts	8/3	Student FT
Michael Power	BA Psychology	2	Student FT
Richard Bolger	Film	8/2	Student FT

**Tuesday 5 October 2010**

**9.00am – 10.00am - Objective 3: Quality Assurance continued - Meeting with Staff of Learner Support Services**

Mr Michael Kielty	Head of Department – European Business School
Ms Bernadette Higgins	Lecturer and MOODLE Co-ordinator
Ms Mary Nolan	Year One – Level Manager
Ms Marie O’Neill	Head of Library, Careers and Student Services
Mr Eddie Ormonde	Manager of IT Department
Ms Caitriona McGrattan	Student Services Officer
Ms Sara- Jayne Cawley	Examinations Officer
Ms Emma Balfe	Business School Manager
Ms Louise Collins	Operations Manager – BA Counselling and Psychotherapy
Ms Carol Clifford	Head of Careers and Appointments
Mr. Robert Campbell	Administrator, School of Arts

**10.00am – 10.45am - Objective 3: Quality Assurance continued: Meeting with non committee lecturing staff- faculty and associate faculty**

Mr James Browne	Lecturer – Accounting and Finance
Mr Bill Kirwan	Lecturer – Management
Ms Claire Devlin	Lecturer – Management and Strategy
Mr Ray McDonnell	Lecturer – Marketing
Mr David Hurley	Lecturer – Marketing
Dr Chris McLoughlin	Lecturer- Psychology
Ms Terry Ball	Lecturer – Psychoanalysis
Ms Sharon Sheehan	Lecturer – Law
Dr Eimear Long	Lecturer- Law
Mr Barry Halton	Lecturer – Law
Ms Orna Farrell	Lecturer – Arts
Ms Ann Masterson	Senior Lecturer – School of Business

**11.00am – 12.00pm - Objective 4: Access, Transfer and Progression**

Ms Genevieve Daly	International Department Manager
Mr Declan Coogan	International Admissions
Ms Cliona O’Beirne	Director of Marketing and Admissions
Dr Barnaby Taylor	Lecturer – Film Studies
Mr Stuart Garvie	Registrar
Ms Carol Clifford	Disability Officer and Head of Careers
Mr Michael Kielty	Head of Department – European Business School
Dr. Patricia Moriarty	Head of Department – Management and IT

**4.30pm – 4.45pm - Preliminary feedback meeting on findings and recommendations**

Mr Gerry Muldowney	CEO Dublin Business School
Mr Peter Houillon	CEO Kaplan UK and Ireland
Dr. Eileen Buckley –Dhoot	Academic Director
Mr Stuart Garvie	Registrar
Ms Sinéad O’Brien	Head of School of Business
Dr Lee Richardson	Head of School of Arts
Professor Cedric Bell	Head of School of Law
Ms Louise Devlin	Head of Professional School
Mr Donal Quill	Director of Finance and Operations
Ms Cliona O’Beirne	Director of Marketing and Admissions