

Micro-credential Validation Report

Report of the External Review Panel

Micro- credential Reference Number:	MC052 - MC055
Faculty/School(s):	Faculty of Business and Social Sciences
Department(s):	Business
Type of Review:	Micro-credential validation
Date	15 November 2024

Details of Micro-credential (s) Reviewed:

Title:	NFQ Level:	ECTS:	Duration:	Delivery Mode:	Proposed Student Intake:	Proposed Start Date:
<i>LIA05 – QFA Regulation</i>	7	5	Semester	Part Time	20	Jan 2025
<i>LIA04 - QFA Loans</i>	7	5	Semester	Part Time	20	Jan 2025
<i>LIA03 - QFA Investment</i>	7	5	Semester	Part Time	20	Jan 2025
<i>LIA02 - QFA Pensions</i>	7	5	Semester	Part Time	20	Jan 2025
<i>LIA01 - QFA Life Ass</i>	7	5	Semester	Part Time	20	Jan 2025

Review Panel

Panellist Role	Name	Job Title
Chair	Seamus Lennon	Head of School
External Expert*	Helana Boland	Neptune Financial
Industry/ Community Representative*		
Head of Department	Michael Gill	Head of Dept.
Student Representative	Mallikharjuna Rao Sakhamuri	
Academic Secretary	Dr Simon Stephens	Assistant Registrar
Recording Secretary	N/A	

*One or two external members of panel in total.

All external members of the panel have declared that they are independent of ATU (Atlantic Technological University), and all have declared that they have no conflict of interest.

Programme Design Team

The panel met the staff listed below during the review process.

Breda McTaggart, Rosaleen Rooney, Eva Lavin (LIA) and Graine Henry (LIA),

Rosa Whitfield, Emma Casserly, Dara McGoldrick, Stephen Dunne, Brendan OMahony, Anne McGlynn

Rationale for Programme(s)

With rapid transformations in the insurance industry impacting on how it operates, continuing professional development has assumed a pivotal role in shaping professional growth. Shorter forms of learning opportunities than traditional qualifications are being developed rapidly across Europe and the world. Micro-credentials can be particularly useful for people who want to upskill or reskill to meet labour market needs or to develop professionally after starting work.

These 4 modules are embedded in the *Certificate in Professional Financial Advice* (30 ECTS) and are product specific which makes them suitable for bespoke offerings to employees who won't complete the full award.

Validation Criteria

ATU's Micro-credentials Policy specifies that new programmes must comply with the following criteria for validation:

1. The rationale for the micro-credentials is well informed and justified. *Clear Industry need based on partial completion of the 30ECTS Cert as many industries only require a sub-set of product modules.*
2. There is demand for the micro-credential from industry partners/professional bodies/voluntary sector. In-demand knowledge and skills are addressed, and content is relevant. *Yes, the move to MCs will add valuable additional interest/participation in professional body approved training.*
3. The micro-credential is appropriately structured and fit for purpose. The teaching and learning strategy is flexible and appropriate to the needs of the intended students. *Yes.*
4. The aims and learning outcomes (LOs) of the micro-credential are clear and aligned with the relevant NFQ level. The micro-credential is designed to ensure students can successfully achieve the LOs. *Yes.*
5. The learning environment and mode of delivery are consistent with the needs of the intended students of the micro-credential. Teaching, learning and assessment practices and associated activities and resources provide every student with an equitable, fair, and realistic opportunity to achieve the intended learning outcomes. *Yes.*
6. Assessment techniques are fair, valid, reliable, consistent and provide a credible mechanism to measure the academic standard required. *Yes.*

7. The planned resources, including administrative infrastructure, staffing, physical, online, and library sufficiently support the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the micro-credential. *Yes, excellent existing resources and systems exist.*
8. The micro-credential facilitates lifelong learning for a diverse student population by setting out clear entry requirements and opportunities for 'stacking' (where relevant), progression and RPL. *Yes, excellent existing resources and systems exist.*
9. Students will be well informed on the requirements of the micro-credential, guided to relevant resources and supported in their studies. *Yes, excellent existing resources and systems exist.*

Findings

Overall Finding

Validated without changes	
Validated subject to condition(s) and/or recommendation(s)	YES
Rejected	

Reason for Overall Finding

A strong presentation by the Programme team who have extensive knowledge of the industry and extensive experience of the TLA requirements of these modules. The programme team have an excellent record of working collaboratively with industry stakeholders and ATU.

Commendations

The Validation Panel advises Academic Council of the following commendations.

1. The Programme team are to be commended for their innovative approach to maximising the take-up of these existing modules and expanding ATUs portfolio of micro-credentials.
2. The Programme team are to be commended for responding to industry need for individual "product" modules to be made available as micro-credentials.

Conditions

The Validation Panel advises Academic Council that subject to satisfying any condition(s) detailed below, the panel is satisfied that the proposed programme(s) meets the validation criteria as set out in Atlantic Technological University's Developing and Validating New Programmes Policy.

N/A

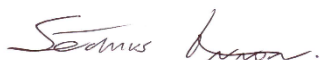
Recommendations

The panel advises Academic Council that the Programme Development Team and/or the Department should take cognisance of any recommendations outlined below.

1. Remove reference “*to all other applicants*” from entry requirements. RPL will address all potential applicants.
2. Review and update the entry requirements to assure they align with ATU (AQAE037 Access, Transfer and Progression Policy).
3. Please review the presentation in the APS of the “hours” associated with module delivery and independent learning. Please engage with carmel.brennan@atu.ie (AR for Programmes) to identify support with this process.
4. Review module content to ensure inclusion of capital acquisitions and inheritance related taxation.
5. Review the consistent use of both acronyms and abbreviations and the general readability of the modules.
6. Review module content for **LIA01 - QFA Life Assurance** to include “existing (employee) benefits”.

Report Approval

This report has been agreed by the review panel and is signed on their behalf by the chairperson.



Seamus Lennon

Validation Panel Chair

15.11.2024

Section B

Quality Enhancement Plan in Response to New Programme Validation Report

Response submitted on behalf of the Programme Development Team by:	
Date:	

(Note to Programme Development Team: Copy Condition(s) and/or Recommendation(s) below, providing a detailed response to each. State specifically whether they have been met, how and where it has been completed and/or timeline for implementation. Where a recommendation has not been addressed a strong rationale for same must be provided.)

Quality Enhancement Plan Approval

Compliance with conditions have been verified and responses to recommendations have been considered as appropriate.

Signed:	
Name Quality Office	Date

Appendices

Note: Appendices are added post-validation as part of the response to the report showing any amendments.

Appendix A Entry Requirements

Appendix B Programme Learning Outcomes

Appendix C Approved Programme Schedule