**NEW PROGRAMME PROPOSAL FORM**

Section 1 (new programme summary), section 2 (market research and analysis) and section 3 (resources) must be completed before submission to Academic Standing Committee for final programme approval.

**Section 1: New Programme Summary**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **College** |  |
| **School, where the programme is primarily provided within and is the responsibility of a School** |  |
| **Programme Title (in full)** |  |
| **Award type** | Tick one box  Major  Minor |
| **Award Level (NQF)** |  |
| **Programme Director** |  |
| **Mode of Study** | Tick one or more boxes  Full-time  Part-time  Continuous |
| **Programme Duration** | Give information, in semesters, for one or more modes  Fulltime  Part-time  Continuous |
| **Programme outline** | Append a separate sheet showing by programme year the modules of the programme, obligatory and optional, together with their ECTS |
| **Programme ECTS (Total)** |  |

**Note:** The relevant College must have approved the required detailed information for the proposed programme, including information on the programme’s modules as required by Registry. Standing Committee may request that this information be provided to it prior to approving the programme.

**Section 2: Market Research and Analysis**

Completion of this section involves performing internal and external market analysis and consultation within the School and internal stakeholders to evidence support and market demand for any proposed programme. Further guidelines are available in the supporting document ‘Market Research Guide’, provided at the end of this form.

If you require assistance with any aspect of this form, please contact [sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie](mailto:sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie).

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| --- |
| 1. **Introduction to Proposed new Programme** |
| **a)** Provide a **brief overview** of the strengths, unique selling points and potential attractiveness of the proposed new programme. (80 words max) |
|  |
| **b)** Provide a brief explanation of the *rationale for this proposal* at this time**.** (80 words max) Has it arisen from change in:   * student demand * industrial and external requirements * developments/changes in subject area/discipline * developments in the School/Department/College etc. * other |
|  |
| 1. **Market Analysis**   This section outlines evidence of demand for the proposed new programme and results of market research on its future attractiveness and marketability. |
| 1. **Define Competition**   Outline the sources of potential students for the proposed new programme. Outline external and internal competition, competitor places available, geographic spread and unique selling points. (max 100 words) |
|  |
| 1. **Assess Potential Size and Calibre of the Applicant Pool**   UG: Outline results of desk research into national CAO applications in the broad subject area (ISCED) and CAO cut-off points (for the last three years) for competitor programmes.  PG: Outline results of desk research into national and international (where available) student enrolment statistics in the broad subject area (ISCED) and the entry requirements for EU and non-EU students for competitor courses.   (max 100 words) |
|  |
| 1. **Review NUI Galway’s Competitiveness**   Provide details of NUI Galway’s competitiveness in this subject area. Refer to market share in applications or enrolments, sources of applicants/enrolments and NUI Galway’s competitive selling points in this field (nationally and internationally). Does the programme align to NUI Galway’s priority research areas? (max 100 words) |
|  |
| 1. **Career Prospects and Consultation** |
| 1. What are the identified **career pathways** you would be promoting for graduates of this programme? (max 80 words) |
|  |
| 1. Outline the outcomes of internal (e.g. Career Development Centre, Regional Skills Forum) and external (e.g. employers, industry partners) **consultation on skills requirements and graduate demand.** (max 100 words) |
|  |
| 1. Outline the outcomes of **other internal and external consultation**. (max 100 words)   Internal:   * Student Recruitment and Outreach Office * International Affairs Office * Admissions Office   External:   * External Examiners * Guidance Counsellors/Teachers * Relevant Professional Bodies * Recruitment Agents (non-EU) |
|  |
| 1. **Summary of Marketability** |
| 1. Given the analysis outlined in previous sections, provide a **summary of the marketability** (nationally and internationally) of the proposed new programme and the potential scale of enrolments in the first five years (referring to % mix of EU and non-EU enrolments). (max 125 words) |
|  |
| 1. Outline the proposed **fee structure** and how it compares in the market to similar courses.   (max 75 words) |
|  |
| 1. **Strategic fit – To be completed by head of school** |
| Summarise how the proposed programme will fit strategically and be supported within the School. Does it align with the University’s Strategy in terms of distinctive research strengths and values? (max 100 words) |
|  |
| 1. **Checklist** |
| 1. Have all proposed titles (including Exit Awards) been reflected in the Proposal? 2. Have you consulted with the relevant internal Offices (Int.Office/Student Recruitment/Admissions/Career Development) about the proposed programme? 3. Have you surveyed current students for postgraduate programmes? 4. Has the Head of School completed their support of the proposed programme |
| 1. **Approval** |
| By signing below, you are indicating your agreement that Market Research and Analysis has been thoroughly conducted in line with the guidelines and the results indicate that sustainable demand exists for this Programme.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **NAME** | **SIGNATURE** | **DATE** | | **Programme Director** |  |  | | **Head of School** |  |  | |

**Section 3: Resources**

This section must be completed with the College Finance & Business Manager.

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| Summary Schedule of Income and Expenditure | |
| Programme Title |  |
| Proposed Commencement Date |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| What is the projected tuition fee? | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| How does THE projected tuition fee compare with competing programmes nationally and internationally?  *Remember to compare NUI Galway with similarly ranked universities worldwide* | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | |
| INCOME | | | | | | |
|  | **Set-up Costs**  **€** | **Year 1**  **€** | **Year 2**  **€** | **Year 3**  **€** | **Year 4**  **€** | **Cost of first cycle €** |
| Student Fees  * EU * Non-EU |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other Income\* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL INCOME |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 65% College Share |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| EXPENDITURE *Direct Variable Costs - Additional* | | | | | | |
| Pay |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Consumables |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equipment |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other Costs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Surplus/(Deficit) |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*\*subject to 65% RIGRAM model unless otherwise agreed.*

*Note:* The purpose of this table is to calculate the financial viability of the course under the RIGRAM model.  Allocation of resources to fund the running of the course will be at the discretion of the Dean of College.

“I agree that, with the information currently available, the above table is a true reflection of the budgeted income and costs of the proposed programme.  I also understand that given the working of the RIGRAM model, the additional income generated by this programme may not all be available to the College/School for distribution.”

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **NAME** | **SIGNATURE / REFERENCE (Minutes & date of meeting)** | **DATE** |
| **Head of School** |  |  |
| **College Board Approval** |  |  |
| **Graduate Studies Board Approval (*in case of PG Research Programme*)** |  |  |

**New Programme Development**

**Market Research Guide**

This document is intended to guide programme co-ordinators and schools on how to conduct effective market research for any proposed new programme, as an input into the Market Analysis section of the Programme Approval Form.

The purpose of this guide is to help staff assess and evidence the likely student demand and sustainability of any proposed new programme, enabling a clear estimate of projected student numbers to underpin an assessment of the programme’s potential financial viability.

This market research process can take many forms and involves assessing both internal and external indicators, including student feedback, competitors offering, employer feedback and employment opportunities, as well as professional and statutory body requirements.

If this is done properly, a thorough market research analysis will give a clear sense of likely demand, offer insights into desired course content and help avoid wasting time and resources on launching an unviable or unsustainable programme. The principles of completing this process are to

* Develop curricula which reflect our research expertise, are inclusive, and are responsive and attractive to the core student population which NUI Galway wishes to attract to fulfil the University’s strategic plan (including any new and alternative markets)
* Reduce investment in developing programmes that do not deliver plan targets and are not financially sustainable
* Prevent cannibalisation and reduce internal competition for the same students. Cannibalisation can occur when a higher education provider brings a new programme to market and is successful in attracting students, but at the expense of the recruitment efforts of other programmes offered by the same HEI. Cannibalisation occurs where there is not sufficient demand/limited applicant pool to sufficiently fill places on both an existing and a new programme and prospective students are choosing one over the other.
* Improve transparency of the progress of programme approval
* Encourage a more facilitated approach to programme approval
* More effective and timely launch of new programmes

1. **Before you start**

All new programmes must have supporting market research to evidence potential student demand and viability of any new programme. This market insight may highlight:

* a current buoyant, active market with realistic competitor institutions and no identified imminent threat
* a more limited niche market, but in which significant opportunity exists for the University
* a small or non-existent current market, but one which the University has the opportunity to be a trail blazer.

Where comparable programmes exist, consideration should be given to whether these programmes have been withdrawn from the market in recent years, or if they attract only small numbers over many years. Consideration should also be shown as to whether the reputation or established status of existing providers might hinder attracting their existing pool.

Where it’s a small or non-existent market, and hence lacks comparable historical data and trends, if evidence and data exists that supports demand for such a programme, such as insights from overseas recruitment partners or industry leaders identifying skills gap, then this market data, and any other supporting data, should be used to demonstrate the opportunity and risks.

Market research can also help in the design of the programme and modifications that can be further tested to ensure the programme is attractive to the target audience.

1. **Types of Market Research:**

*Desk research* involves sourcing and reviewing existing data sources to get a broad view of the existing marketplace including an overview of existing courses and programmes from a range of providers. It can identify trends in market demand, which can enable you to predict whether a specific type of course is increasing or decreasing in popularity. Alternatively it may reveal gaps that could offer an opportunity for the University.

*Field research* involves gathering new market information to gain a further understanding behind the numbers, and usually involves gathering information directly from students, employers, professional bodies or other interested parties. The findings of desk research will inform your field research. Questionnaires are valuable tool, as are focus groups and interviews. Current or past students are a rich source of information. Also speak with colleagues from feeder schools, IOTs, or contacts in Industry/ professional bodies or any other relevant external stakeholder.

To avoid bias in conducting field research, it is recommended that programme directors, where possible, take a step back from the administration of the field work (e.g. moderating the focus group, interviewing etc.). To improve the objectivity of the field work, it is recommended to seek the assistance of a colleague to review questionnaires or to act as the moderator for a focus group or assist in other elements of the field work where there is potential for bias to occur.

1. **Market Analysis Priorities**

The market analysis section of the Programme Approval Form requires the programme director to address the following three key marketability questions:

**a) Define competition**

Outline the sources of potential students for the proposed new programme. Outline external and internal competition, competitor places available, geographic spread and unique selling points.

**b) Assess Potential Size and Calibre of the Applicant Pool**

For a proposed new UG programme, outline results of desk research into national CAO applications in the broad subject area (ISCED) and CAO cut-off points (for the last three years) for competitor programmes.

For a proposed new PG programme, outline results of desk research into national and international (where available) student enrolment statistics in the broad subject area (ISCED) and the entry requirements for EU and non-EU students for competitor courses.

**c) Review NUI Galway’s Competitiveness**

Provide details of NUI Galway’s competitiveness in this subject area. Refer to market share in applications or enrolments, sources of applicants/enrolments and NUI Galway’s competitive selling points in this field (nationally and internationally). Does the programme align to NUI Galway’s priority research areas?

The sources of information to assess the above will vary depending on whether the proposed new programme is in an existing subject area or is a new non-existing subject area. See tips below on how to tackle each of these scenarios.

**For an existing subject area**, identify external competitors as well as information about their offer(s) to determine how similar or different the proposed programme might be. This information is very valuable. In order to measure potential interest, and to improve upon your marketing strategies and differentiate your program offerings, you have to know your competition.

Quantitative research on competitor programme should include data on enrolment trends, EU non EU student composition, fees charged and any other relevant available data. Ideally a review of the data over a 3-5 year time frame will help identify trends.

Identify if any similar courses run internally at NUI Galway, obtain data on historic application, enrolment and conversion trends.

Sources for such data include the University and public websites and government statistical sources (eg HEA, HESA).

Qualitative research on the proposed programmes content, title and unique selling points, may include surveys, focus groups and interviews. Information should be sought from current and potential students and where relevant, decliners and recent graduates in addition to input from potential employers. The promotional stance and offer behaviour of competitors should also be explored to help inform your planned promotional and recruitment activity.

**For a new non existing subject area,** quantitative research should include data on skills shortages, or labour market gaps, survey results, socio-economic data, study visa applications from international markets. Look into reports from Local Authorities, employers groups, regional bodies, including IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Professional trade bodies or Chartered Institutes and Central Statistics Office.

Qualitative research should include interviews and feedback from industry leaders, employers and overseas recruitment partners. Other relevant data which may be used includes:

* Web/Google activity data
* Socio-economic data
* Potential employment markets and government and sector data
* Other data specific to the market research brief

1. **General Tips:**

* Spend time on surfing websites of universities, colleges, commercial companies or institutions offering comparable courses, both in Ireland and abroad. This can provide insight into the subject area, how it is promoted and other beneficial information to help inform your programme.
* Be realistic on forecasts, if competitors only offer 10 places, a forecast of 20 places per annum may be overly ambitious. Mystery shopper telephone calls where you pose as a potential customer is another effective way of accessing this sort of information.
* As you collate this information think about how you can differentiate your course from your competitors, particularly how it can be made more attractive – hours, fees, scholarships, access to placements, resources etc.
* If no one else is offering a similar course field research with potential students is essential to explore whether the gap represent a viable opportunity that meets the demands of students.

1. **Sources of Data, Tools and Support**

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| **Data Sources** | |
| NUI Galway Planning and Institutional Research Office intranet has a number of data resources and examples on how to use these resources to aid Market Research – click [here](https://staff.intranet.nuigalway.ie/Institutional%20Research%20Office%20Intranet/Market%20Analysis%20Supporting%20Documents%20and%20Data/Forms/AllItems.aspx?InitialTabId=Ribbon%2EDocument&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence) for access.  If the data you are looking for is unavailable via the above resources, please contact the following colleagues who may be able to provide assistance or guidance:  **Planning and Institutional Research**   Dr Aksana Chyzheuskaya [aksana.chyzheuskaya@nuigalway.ie](mailto:aksana.chyzheuskaya@nuigalway.ie)  For application data:  **Admissions Office** [undergradadmissions@nuigalway.ie](mailto:undergradadmissions@nuigalway.ie)  [postgradadmissions@nuigalway.ie](mailto:postgradadmissions@nuigalway.ie)  [internationaladmissions@nuigalway.ie](mailto:internationaladmissions@nuigalway.ie) | |
| **Research Tools** | |
| NUI Galway Planning and Institutional Research Office [intranet](https://staff.intranet.nuigalway.ie/Institutional%20Research%20Office%20Intranet/Market%20Analysis%20Supporting%20Documents%20and%20Data/Forms/AllItems.aspx?InitialTabId=Ribbon%2EDocument&VisibilityContext=WSSTabPersistence) has the following resources available:   * sample focus group guide * sample questionnaire   Most research for a new programme can be conducted at a local level. If you require further advice on how to proceed, contact:  **Student Recruitment and Outreach Office**  Sarah Geraghty [sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie](mailto:sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie) | |
| **Internal Sources of Insights** | |
| The following offices may be able to provide useful insights relevant to your proposed new programme. They may have market knowledge, industry contacts or access to reports relevant to the subject area or the target markets. | |
| Institutional Data and Research | **Planning and Institutional Research**   Dr Aksana Chyzheuskaya [aksana.chyzheuskaya@nuigalway.ie](mailto:aksana.chyzheuskaya@nuigalway.ie) |
| Irish and EU Markets | **Student Recruitment and Outreach Office**  Sarah Geraghty [sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie](mailto:sarah.geraghty@nuigalway.ie) |
| Non EU Markets | **International Affairs Office** Anna Cunningham [anna.cunningham@nuigalway.ie](mailto:anna.cunningham@nuigalway.ie) |
| Graduate Demand and Skills Requirements | **Career Development Centre** Josephine Walsh [josephine.walsh@nuigalway.ie](mailto:josephine.walsh@nuigalway.ie)  **Regional Skills Forum** [denise.rocks@nuigalway.ie](mailto:denise.rocks@nuigalway.ie) |
| **External Sources of Insights** | |
| Labour market Insights | * Enterprise Ireland * IDA * Department of Business, Enterprise & Innovation (DBEI) * Department of Education & Skills |
| External Experts | * External Examiners * Relevant Professional Bodies * Teachers/Guidance Counsellors |