

EXTENSION OF APPROVAL

Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment

FdEng Civil Engineering NWRC FT

FdEng Civil Engineering NWRC PT

FdEng Civil Engineering NWRC PT (Fast Track)

COVER SHEET

Presenter: Mrs M Paris

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below.

To consider a request from the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and the Built Environment for a one-year extension of approval.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

REQUEST TO EXTEND APPROVAL AND POSTPONE REVALIDATION

Form CA6b)

SECTION A: FACULTY REQUEST

FACULTY: Computing Engineering and the Built Environment

SCHOOL: Architecture and the Built Environment

SUBJECT UNIT NUMBER AND NAME:

7518 FdEng Civil Engineering DER FT
7516 FdEng Civil Engineering DER PT
7517 FdEng Civil Engineering DER PT (Fast Track)

MONTH/YEAR CURRENTLY SCHEDULED: September 2019

PERIOD OF EXTENSION REQUESTED:
(eg one year to include the September 2019 intake)

Revalidate new programme for September 2020 year 1 intake.
Retain validation of existing validated programme to allow enrolment of September 2019 intake and retain validation of this programme to enable completion of this cohort.

COURSE(S): Civil Engineering
(Identify specific courses unless the whole unit)

REASON FOR REQUEST:

The college is currently undergoing some transition in relation to staff resources. The Curriculum Manager for the Built Environment, who is also the Director for this programme, will be leaving the college at the end of August and the college is currently in the process of recruiting more staff. In order to prepare properly for the revalidation and design of the curriculum. NWRC would be most pleased if you could consider our request for a postponement in the date for revalidation as requested above.

Whilst numbers on the existing programme are low, the provision is highly valued by the college and the existing specification maintains high industry relevance, delivering the six key areas of learning required by the Engineering Council which sets the overall requirements for the Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP) in engineering, in line with the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC):

Science and Mathematics
Engineering Analysis
Design
Economic, Social, Ethical and Environmental
Engineering Practice
Additional General Skills

Although currently approved to do so, the college has never run the FastTrack model and does not intend to do so.

The quality, currency and standards of the existing programme are high and extracts from the most recent External Examiner's report are included below and support this.

We would be most pleased if you could consider our request for postponement

CURRENCY AND VALIDITY:

(Please confirm that the curriculum remains current and valid and provide evidence of this (eg extract from most recent external examiner reports and those of relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body)

Extract from EE report - 19th June 2018 (IG Cross)

The Programme Specification is appropriate for the FdEng degree in Civil Engineering.

On 20th January 2016 NWRC had a Joint Board of Moderators Professional Accreditation visit. Subsequently the FdEng degree was accredited for intakes 2015, 2016 and 2017.

There was no mention of an upcoming visit for intakes 2018 and beyond!

The FdEng has a strong emphasis on engineering principles and their practical application which is reflected in assignments and examination papers.

The FD Civil Engineering programme initially had JBM Accreditation, which lapsed in 2017, and the college is not going to seek reaccreditation. Lapse of JBM Accreditation does not affect any current or future students

STANDARDS AND QUALITY:

(Please confirm that quality is high and there are no concerns. Provide evidence of this through external examiner reports and annual monitoring datasets and reports)

Extract from EE report - 19th June 2018 (IG Cross)

Marking Standards

Assignments and examinations had been internally moderated with clear feedback to the assessors.

Assignments had constructive feedback to students on the Task Sheets and within the assignment. This is good practice.

Examination papers showed correct answers and identified where mistakes had been made for feedback to students if appropriate. This is good practice.

Each module had an Internal Verification Form with detailed comments. This is good practice.

Extract from EE report - 19th June 2018 (IG Cross)

General Quality of Candidates' Work

I was able to inspect all the output from the 6 Year 2 students. This was satisfactory for FHEQ level 5.

The assignments and examinations cover the Learning Outcomes as set out in the FdEng Course Document.

Comparability with programmes of study at other institutions

Extract from EE report - 19th June 2018 (IG Cross)

The standard of the FdEng degree is comparable with the other institutions where I am EE notably South West College and Belfast Metropolitan College and also at institutions which I have visited as part of JBM visiting teams where a Foundation Degree has been part of the overall provision.

The current degree is accredited by the JBM up to the 2017 intake.

PSRB (if applicable):

(Please confirm that any deferral will be accommodated by the PSRB and that accreditation will be ongoing for the full duration of the deferral)

Not applicable: see above in relation to JBM accreditation.

DEMAND:

Although numbers are currently small, Civil Engineering has been identified as a priority skills area (Skills Barometer), and a key enabler for economic growth. There is potential to grow PT/HLA Civil Engineering to be delivered jointly with FT students and increase viability.

Curriculum meeting PfG strategic objectives:

NI Skills Barometer 2017:

There will be growth opportunities for all skills levels across a range of sectors, the focus will be predominantly on higher level skills. Construction is within the top 10 growth sectors between 2016-2026. Subjects in demand include Civil Engineering with opportunities for construction e.g. skills gaps for Civil Engineering at Level 4 and 5 and Degree Level

The Industrial Strategy for NI is supported by the construction industry. Construction is a sector where the UK has a strong competitive edge in architecture, sustainable construction, design and engineering. The global construction market is forecast to grow by 70% by 2025- Construction 2025 sets out Government strategy www.gov.uk/bis

Appointment of staff with new skills, experience and ideas for development will strengthen the college's ability to deliver PfG objectives.

There are key projects which require civil engineers locally:

A5 Dualling Londonderry to Aughnacloy ("Western Transport Corridor" or A5WTC) To upgrade the entire A5 to dual-carriageway from the Irish border near Aughnacloy, via Omagh and Strabane, to Derry. 93.6 km / 58.2 miles. Project value £1098 million

A6 Dualling Dungiven to Londonderry

New high-quality dual-carriageway to replace the existing single-carriageway A6 from Dungiven to Drumahoe, including a bypass around the south side of Dungiven (Phase 1) and then from Drumahoe to the A2 at Gransha, and an upgrade of the existing A2 dual-carriageway from Caw to Maydown (Phase 2). 30km/18.8 miles 390-420m (as of Nov 2014) for whole scheme

Other projects include Braidwater (significant housing), Altnagelvin, Creagh Concrete (significant precast concrete manufacturer), and FPMcCann for precast concrete and roads

Northern Ireland's construction industry grew by 11.6% in 2017, with continued growth expected.

FACULTY PARTNERSHIP MANAGER'S ASSESSMENT (for partner institutions only):

The course has had challenges recruiting students, with no intake in 17/18 but with 6 full-time and 6 part-time students recruited to year 1 in 18/19. This is a clear sign that the market is recovering. There is also potential for greater part-time recruitment based on HLAs but the challenge for the college is that many of the contractors on local projects are based in Belfast, who recruit Belfast apprentices who study in Belfast Met and travel to the area daily. However, to go from zero to 12 students in a year is a marked improvement. Early indications are that recruitment will strengthen in 19/20. The Faculty would wish to encourage this continued growth given the number of local infrastructure projects.

News of the departure of the current course director was only confirmed in May, and he will have to be replaced, but there are the inevitable delays with recruitment, and the remaining team is small, and in no position to present a course for revalidation in September 2019. The course director is also the curriculum manager so he provides leadership in the area and there is no obvious replacement at this stage.

The course team are not ready to proceed to revalidation as a consequence of this late development, the metrics and EE judgements are reasonably sound, and there is evidence of growing demand for the subject area after a period of decline. For these reasons, the Faculty would support an extension leading to the revalidation of the course at the earliest opportunity in September 2020.

FACULTY CONFIRMATION:



SIGNED: _____
Executive Dean

DATE: 05-06-19 _____

The completed form should be returned to the Academic Office, Room J410, Tower Building, Coleraine.

SECTION B: ACADEMIC OFFICE COMMENTS:

The FdEng Civil Engineering at NWRC (Strand Road campus) was evaluated in 2015 and was due for revalidation in 2019/20 (event scheduled for September 2019). The College has asked that the course be granted an extension of period of approval to 2020/21 and the Faculty Partnership Manager advises that the Course Director/curriculum manager is leaving, a replacement is to be recruited (recruitment process under way) and that the College is in no position to present a course for revision in September 2019. The College has proposed a September 2020 event.

The external examiner's 2017/18 report was his final report and he comments that the Course Team has been responsive to his views. He confirms that the course standards are comparable to other similar courses in the sector however he advises that further consideration be given to marking criteria in level 5 modules (infers that the marking may be generous). Overall the external was content with the quality and standards (also confirmed by a Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) accreditation of the course up to 2017) and, despite room for improvement, that there is no fundamental risk to quality and standards.

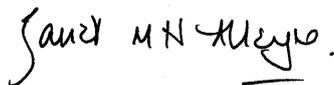
The Academic Office endorses the proposed extension to the period of approval to 2020/21 whilst noting an expectation that the fast-track p/t version of the course will be withdrawn and that staffing issues will be resolved so that course delivery in 2019/20 is not adversely impacted.



SIGNED: _____ DATE: ___6 June 2019_____

Academic Policy and Standards Manager

SECTION C: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT ASSESSMENT (reflecting annual monitoring data)



SIGNED: _____ DATE: ___6 June 2019_____

Head of Quality Enhancement

**SECTION D: ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
(delegated authority from Senate)**

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING:

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

Late requests (in-year and no imminent Committee meeting) (actioned by Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) on behalf of ASQEC)

DECISION: Approve (Yes/No)

SIGNED: _____
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)

DATE: _____

DATE REPORTED TO ASQEC:

Academic Office
July 2018