

A.2.3. & A.2.4.

Programme Identification & Redesign Report

**Knights College
& Technological
University
Dublin
2025**

Summary

1. Context	3
2. Process undertaken	3
2.1 Knights College	3
2.2 Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)	4
3. Programmes Identified	5
3.1 Knights College	5
3.1.1 MBA in Finance – Award in Strategic Financial Management	6
3.1.2 Master of Business Administration (MBA) – Award in Strategic Marketing	6
3.1.3 MBA in Finance – Award in Coaching and Mentoring.	6
3.2 Programmes Identified TU Dublin	7
3.2.1 Bachelor of Business Studies BBS (Hons) TU901	8
3.2.2 Bachelor of Business in International Business INTB (Hons) TU915	8
3.2.3 Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management & Coaching SMCO (Hons) TU935	8
3.3 Conclusion	8
4. WBL Interventions & Programme Redesign	9
4.1 Knights College	9
4.1.1 WBL Interventions Knights College	9
4.1.2 Programme Redesign Knights College	10
4.2 TU Dublin	11
4.2.1 WBL Interventions TU Dublin	11
4.2.2 Programme Re-Design TU Dublin	12
5. Key Performance Indicators	12
5.1 KPIs for Programme Identification A.2.3 & Programme Redesign A.2.4.	12
5.2 Feedback from the Surveys of Partners on Programme Identification	14
6. Conclusion	14
7. References	15

1.Context

As part of WP2, Knights College and Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) identified six academic programmes (courses) which were redesigned, to include appropriate WBL interventions. This document, is the output for A.2.3 and A.2.4 and provides information on the redesign programmes and the WBL interventions introduced, describes the process undertaken, and provides the status of the associated key performance indicators (KPIs).

2.Process undertaken

KNIGHTS College and Technological University Dublin undertook the preparatory and analytical work required to identify the six higher education courses that will undergo redesign to integrate Work-Based Learning (WBL) elements. TU Dublin agreed to look at the Undergraduate Business portfolio in the School of Global Business while KNIGHTS College agreed to look at their Postgraduate portfolio ensuring the output of this redesign work would across the full qualification range within a university.

2.1 Knights College

The identification process commenced with a comprehensive internal curriculum mapping exercise, where all accredited postgraduate programmes were benchmarked against national and European-level WBL priorities emerging from the Overall Country Report (A.2.2). This ensured that selection decisions were not only internally consistent with Knights' academic strategy but also aligned with broader skills agendas at both national and EU level.

Following this initial mapping, consultations were held with academic staff, programme directors, and quality assurance officers. These discussions evaluated the pedagogical suitability of each course, their structural flexibility for adaptation, and their relevance to stakeholder expectations. Particular attention was paid to courses where embedding applied, workplace-oriented learning could meaningfully strengthen graduate employability.

2.2 Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin)

Programme teams in the School of Global Business at TU Dublin carried out reviews of programmes in the school to identify specific programmes that should be re-designed to integrate WBL interventions. Programme reviews ensure academic programmes remain relevant, aligned with student, industry, and societal needs, aligned to the University strategic intent and also aligned with national skills development and EU skills agenda. Such review allows for reflection, improvement, and integration of new developments in programmes.

Using the process of programme reviews, input included:

- Engagement through a multiple stakeholder approach which involved engagement with graduates, industry stakeholders, societal stakeholders, current students, staff and potential students
- Benchmarking against TU Dublin strategic intent and TU Dublin University Education model
- National and International research including input from the national report (A.2.2).

This approach ensured that programmes identified would benefit from the integration of WBL interventions, meeting the requirements of students, graduates, employers, society and staff, support the University strategic intent and support national and EU policy. As can be seen, the review was consultative in its nature. As advised the programmes identified are undergraduate programme, all delivered at level 8 on National Framework of Qualification (NFQ) in Ireland, which is equivalent to level 6 on the European Framework of Qualifications (EFQ). These programmes currently integrate an applied approach throughout the delivery of the programme, currently with industry engagement embedded through guest lectures, live projects, and applied assessments.

The findings from the review specific to work-based learning are stated below:

- Industry partners consistently emphasised the value of formal work placements, not only in skill development but also in improving graduate employability.
- Students expressed a strong desire for placement opportunities, noting that the absence of practical experience limited their competitiveness in the job market.

- Graduate feedback echoed these concerns, with many indicating that placement would have significantly enhanced their employment prospects.
- Focus group discussions underscored the importance of placement duration and structure, with a preference for longer, immersive experiences.
- All stakeholders recognised that preparation for work placement was key and that a module to support pre-placement would be very valuable.
- All stakeholders also recognised that many students are working part-time through their programme of study, and enabling students to gain insights on their work practices from their programme of study could be an opportunity.
- All stakeholders also recognised that many students are working part-time through their programme of study, and enabling students to gain insights on their work practices from their programme of study could be an opportunity.

3. Programmes Identified

3.1 Knights College

As a result of the review, Knights identified three MBA pathways as priority areas for redesign, each incorporating a specific award at MQF/EQF Level 7 with newly embedded WBL modules:

- MBA in Educational Leadership – Award in Fundamentals of Accounting and Finance
- Master of Business Administration (General MBA) – Award in Strategic Marketing
- MBA in Finance – Award in Coaching and Mentoring.

This selection reflects a deliberate cross-section of Knights' portfolio, spanning education, business management, finance, and leadership. The integration of WBL into these awards ensures that the redesign reaches diverse learner profiles, addressing both technical competences (finance, marketing) and transversal competences (leadership, mentoring, strategic decision-making).

The identification process was further reinforced by stakeholder focus groups held in July 2025 with students and tutors. Students strongly endorsed more consistent integration

of hands-on learning across modules, while tutors highlighted the need for stronger links between academic theory and professional practice. These insights validated the selection of the MBA programmes as the most strategic vehicles for WBL embedding.

3.1.1 MBA in Finance – Award in Strategic Financial Management

The MQF Level 7 Award in Strategic Financial Management develops advanced competence in budgeting, costing and variance analysis, and the application of financial management to organisational decision-making. Designed to align with current industry needs, the award focuses on skills employers prioritise, including transparent budget formulation, evidence-based cost control, and the translation of financial analysis into practical choices that improve performance and support business objectives. This programme equips professionals to operate strategically in financial management and to make informed, accountable decisions linked to real operational and profitability outcomes.

3.1.2 Master of Business Administration (MBA) – Award in Strategic Marketing

The MQF Level 7 Award in Strategic Marketing equips practising and aspiring managers to navigate the complexity of modern markets and translate analysis into decisions that create customer and organisational value. Grounded in current industry priorities, the programme develops competence in market and competitor analysis, customer insight, segmentation and positioning, and the alignment of tactics with long-term strategy. Delivery is work-based, integrating theory with real organisational contexts so learners apply frameworks to existing challenges and measure impact. Assessment follows a mixed-method approach to test both analytical rigour and practical execution. Graduates are prepared to plan and evaluate marketing interventions that are evidence-based, commercially relevant, and accountable to measurable outcomes.

3.1.3 MBA in Finance – Award in Coaching and Mentoring.

The MQF Level 7 Award in Coaching and Mentoring develops the foundational knowledge, skills, and tools needed to coach individuals and teams in real organisational settings. Aligned with workplace needs, the programme covers evidence-based models of coaching and mentoring, performance management, conflict resolution, communication, and interpersonal effectiveness, ensuring a linking of each topic to measurable outcomes such as productivity, confidence, and team cohesion. Learning is

delivered through work-based application, and assessment is a single, practice-focused project that demonstrates impact in the learner's own context. Intended for adults 21+ who are new to, or already working in, coaching or mentoring roles, the award equips participants to support capability development and translate people performance into organisational results.

3.2 Programmes Identified TU Dublin

The three programme teams undertook programme reviews through recent research and stakeholder feedback. The teams sought to answer three guiding questions relating to market demand, distinctiveness and alignment in the review through carrying out desk research and engaging with stakeholders for feedback on the existing three programmes. Adopting a multiple stakeholder approach which included over 50 professors (academic staff), the team engaged with a multiplicity of groups for each programme, including potential students, current students, staff, graduates, industry and societal stakeholders, as well as carrying out desk research for each programme.

Based on the findings from the review, the following programmes were identified for redesign with inclusion of specific WBL interventions:

- Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons): BBS (Hons) TU901
- Bachelor of Business in International Business (Hons): INTB (Hons) TU915
- Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management and Coaching (Hons): SMCO (Hons) TU935

All of these programmes are delivered at level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) in Ireland, which is equivalent to level 6 on the European Framework of Qualifications (EFQ)¹. The programs also have an award at level 7 on NFQ.

These programmes integrate an applied approach throughout the delivery of the programme, currently with industry engagement embedded through guest lectures, live projects, and applied assessments.

¹ [qqiglobalfan_2024 with spherev2](#)

3.2.1 Bachelor of Business Studies BBS (Hons) TU901

The Bachelor of Business Studies BBS (Hons) programme at TU Dublin has consistently delivered graduates who meet the evolving needs of industry across a variety of sectors in Ireland and internationally. The programme develops graduates across business disciplines, including and not limited to management, marketing, human resource management, operations management, accounting and finance, business and IT, among other areas.

3.2.2 Bachelor of Business in International Business INTB (Hons) TU915

The Bachelor of Business in International Business (INTB) (Hons) develops graduates for a global economy, developing graduates' linguistic skills while developing their skills to work in a variety of sectors across disciplines, including, but not limited to, management, marketing, accounting and finance, among other areas. Language development in French, German, and/or Spanish, along with the development of cultural awareness, is a key differentiator in this programme from the BBS programme listed above.

3.2.3 Bachelor of Arts in Sports Management & Coaching SMCO (Hons) TU935

The Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Sports Management and Coaching (SMCO) offers students a unique combination of business, coaching, and sports science, enabling graduates to work in the sports industry and merge the need to make sport matter in a business environment. The Sports industry is often identified as the bridge between business and society. The programme attracts students with interests in business, sport and fitness from both an enterprise perspective and also for societal benefits. Students develop skills in coaching, sports science, event management, and business, supported by state-of-the-art facilities that include a gym, video performance lab, and high-performance training areas. This course is accredited on the [Register of Exercise Professionals \(REPS\) Ireland](#) as a REPS-accredited course, providing students with a Personal Trainer accreditation that is highly regarded throughout the fitness industry.

3.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, Knights College and TU Dublin have successfully completed the course identification stage, providing a clear and evidence-based foundation for the upcoming curriculum redesign and pilot testing phase. The chosen programmes will now move into

structured WBL integration, with dedicated modules designed to deliver authentic, industry-linked learning experiences that respond directly to student needs, employer expectations, and national WBL policy objectives.

4. WBL Interventions & Programme Redesign

4.1 Knights College

Knights College identified modules in post-graduate programmes, specifically in MBA (Masters of Business Administration) programmes, which they enhanced by redesign through a WBL lens. The redesigned modules are listed in section 4.1.1. and Section 4.1.2 shows which specific programmes the modules were included in.

4.1.1 WBL Interventions Knights College

Award in Fundamentals of Accounting & Finance (MQF Level 7)

This module was redesigned through a WBL lens, using scenario-based projects grounded in real educational leadership contexts. Students explore innovative solutions, evaluate risk and financial implications, and critically assess the strategic impact of financial decisions on their institutions. Assessment follows a mixed method approach to ensure both theoretical understanding and practical application. Through this targeted WBL intervention, learners develop a balanced mindset that combines visionary leadership with sound financial management, a skillset that is increasingly vital in the governance of schools, colleges, and educational systems.

Award in Strategic Marketing (MQF/EQF Level 7)

This redesigned module requires students to engage with real-life marketing scenarios, conduct sector-specific market analyses, and develop marketing plans that respond to actual organisational challenges. Assessment captures both conceptual mastery and the ability to apply knowledge directly in the workplace. Through this module learners gain the knowledge, skills, and competences to implement advanced marketing analysis approaches and bridge strategic theory with practical application in real business settings.

Award in Coaching and Mentoring (MQF/EQF Level 7)

The module's WBL redesign involves practical, workplace-focused projects where students will engage in simulated and real mentoring sessions, apply contemporary coaching models, and reflect critically on their leadership style and capacity to influence others. Assessment is based on a work-based learning project to ensure genuine application in the learner's professional environment.

4.1.2 Programme Redesign Knights College

MBA in Educational Leadership

To enhance the MBA in Educational Leadership, the award in fundamentals of Accounting and Finance was redesigned within. This programme is specifically designed for educators, school administrators, and aspiring leaders who wish to strengthen their managerial, strategic, and innovation capabilities. In recent years, the education sector has placed increasing emphasis on agile leadership, leaders who are not only pedagogically sound but also entrepreneurial in their approach and able to adapt to rapidly changing learning environments. In its original form, the MBA in Educational Leadership delivers strong conceptual and strategic content but offers limited structured opportunities for learners to apply financial decision-making skills within the context of educational leadership. Recognising this gap, and in consultation with sector stakeholders, Knights has identified finance literacy and financial management as essential competencies for modern educational leaders.

Masters of Business Administration (MBA)

In reviewing the General MBA, KNIGHTS College identified an opportunity to strengthen the programme's applied strategic capability by integrating a WBL element focused on marketing decision-making. Although the programme already offers strong theoretical foundations, KNIGHTS recognises the potential to embed this module to directly link marketing strategy to real organisational challenges.

MBA in Finance

The MBA in Finance at KNIGHTS College is designed for mid-to-senior professionals working in banking, corporate finance, fintech, and regulatory environments. The programme's core strength lies in its rigorous development of advanced financial

management, investment analysis, and risk assessment skills. However, feedback from industry stakeholders revealed that technical expertise alone is not enough, financial leaders must also excel at developing talent, managing teams, and fostering a culture of performance.

4.2 TU Dublin

4.2.1 WBL Interventions TU Dublin

In response, the programme teams, which included 50 professors (academic staff), reflected on the following interventions and identified how suitable they would be for each of their programmes and which would provide the most significant enhancement to experiential learning opportunities for students in their programme curriculum.

Pre-Placement Module - "Professional Communications & Employment Preparation "

These 5 ECTS credits module supports students through the preparation and application processes, such as developing their CV and social media presence, preparing for interviews, applying for jobs, and undertaking job interviews. Students understand through the module the importance of skills such as self-management, workplace etiquette, and digital competencies that facilitate remote work and working with international teams.

Work Placement

A 30 ECTS credit work placement is made available to students on all programmes identified in all programmes. Students spend a minimum of 3 months in a placement or internship working with a company. The student is mentored by the company, ensuring the environment is provided to enable the learning outcomes to be met while the academic organisation is responsible provide the assessments to examine the learning outcomes.

Work-Based Project

This module allows students to reflect on their part-time employment through the lens of their programme of study and to integrate insights from their programme with their part-time employment. Thus, students would develop reflective practice skills to gain a

better insight into the real-world application of the programme. This is a 5 ECTS credit module made available as an elective module for students who are working part-time.

4.2.2 Programme Re-Design TU Dublin

Each programme team reflected on the interventions listed above and identified which interventions would create the greatest enhancement for their programme and where the intervention would best fit within the redesign. This is illustrated in Table 1 below.

Table 1 WBL Interventions within the Programmes

Programme Intervention	BBS (Hons) TU901	INTB (Hons) TU915	SMCO (Hons) TU935
Pre-placement Module 5 ECTS Credits	Semester 5 (Year 3, Semester 1)	Semester 5 (Year 3, Semester 1)	Already being delivered in this programme
Work Placement 30 ECTS Credits	Semester 6 (Year 3, Semester 2)	Semester 6 (Year 3, Semester 2)	Semester 6 (Year 3, Semester 2)
Work-Based Project Module 5 ECTS Credits	Semester 4 (Year 2, Semester 2)	Semester 6 (Year 3, Semester 2)	

5. Key Performance Indicators

5.1 KPIs for Programme Identification A.2.3 & Programme Redesign A.2.4.

The KPIs submitted as part of the proposal for programme identification are shown in Table 2. As can be seen from the table all the KPIs were achieved. It is clear from this that stakeholders, including academic staff, industry partners and students were involved in the identification and in the redesign which ensures the validity of the redesign. The redesign was then further validated when 95% of students confirmed that the redesign of the programmes would benefit their career development and career path.

Table 2 KPIs for Programme Identification A.2.3 and Programme Redesign A.2.4.

KPI	Status	Comment
Feedback to be received from other partners on the programmes identified	Achieved	The other partners were surveyed and feedback was received and incorporated,
6 programmes to be identified for re-design to include WBL interventions: 3 programmes to be identified by each University (WP2)	Achieved	The two Universities involved in the project have identified 6 programmes (Knights College have identified 3 post degrees programmes and TU Dublin have identified 3 under degree programmes)
Over 50 academic staff (lecturers/ professors/ tutors) to be involved in the identification of the programmes (WP2)	Achieved	75 academics were involved across both universities in both the identification and the re-design of the programmes. Each University has maintained the list of academic staff involved.
30 academic staff (lecturers/ professors/ tutors) to be involved in the re-design of the programmes (WP2)	Achieved	75 academics were involved across both universities in both the identification and the re-design of the programmes. Each University has maintained the list of academic staff involved.
20 companies to provide input in the re-design	Achieved	Over 40 companies were consulted on the re-design of the programmes. Each University has maintained the list of contacts within the companies that were consulted.
Partners will validate the finalised courses with 160 users across the two universities represented in the project. Validation: At least 80% of the HE's students belonging to the two partner universities will find the A.2.4 Redesign of 6 courses, embedding WBL in their curricula proposed useful for their future career path	Achieved	169 students validated the re-designed courses, of which over 95% confirmed that the redesign of the programmes would benefit their career development and career path

5.2 Feedback from the Surveys of Partners on Programme Identification

When partners were asked to provide formal feedback on the redesigned courses, all institutions unanimously endorsed the proposed programmes and agreed with the survey questions presented, specifically:

1. That the programmes identified would benefit from the integration of Work-Based Learning (WBL) interventions.
2. That the proposed WBL interventions outlined in the accompanying report were appropriate for the programmes.
3. That no major revisions were required beyond those already incorporated, with minor suggestions noted for future refinement.

This strong alignment across all partners reflects a shared commitment to advancing high-quality, industry-relevant learning experiences and to ensuring that redesigned curricula respond directly to the evolving needs of students, employers, and society.

6. Conclusion

Having identified programmes that will benefit from the inclusion WBL interventions, both Universities, Knights College and TU Dublin, then redesigned programmes with particular WBL interventions. Industry, academics and students were involved in the identification and in the redesign phases. Finally, the redesign was validated by students with 95% of students confirming that the redesign of the programmes would benefit their career development and career path.

In addition, there was full consensus and endorsement of the redesigned programmes across all partner institutions. Each partner confirmed that the identified programmes would benefit from enhanced Work-Based Learning interventions and that the proposed solutions were appropriate and aligned with stakeholder expectations. This shared agreement provided a strong, collaborative foundation for the implementation of:

1. The micro-credentials that are being piloted among students and

2. The Continuous Professional Development modules (CPDs) to support academic coordinators, academic supervisors and industry tutors in implementing WBL interventions in academia and in the workplace. They are available on the [WBL Champion Learning Platform](#).

7. References

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