

Business school's final year degree programme gets the seal of approval

THE International Business School is celebrating having the final year of its business studies degree programme passed with flying colours by Liverpool John Moores University.

The Nunnery-based school delivers the degree through John Moores and in September its first ever recruits, who started their degree in September 2001, will embark on their final year after completing a year's work placement.

Each level of a degree programme has to be validated. Work started in September to gain the validation and culminated in a visit last month by an assessment team from John Moores and an external assessor from the University of Bangor.

Business school director Professor Roger Carey said staff were delighted when the report came back with no 'action points' or recommendations highlighted.

Colin Gundry, the programme leader for the business studies degree, said: 'When the business school was first set up we were validated for undergraduate courses for the first two years and for our placement programme, which most of our undergraduates take in the third year.

'But the final year is the most important in terms of academic study — 75 per cent of the weighting for the final degree comes from that.'

Professor Carey said the day-long validation was tough going, with the assessors looking for evidence that the school could deliver the programme in the final year — that it had the right skills, resources and facilities to support an honours degree.

He explained: 'They made us jump through the hoops. They were very happy with us as an institution but they wanted to see if we could deliver an acceptable standard.'

'What we did was stake our reputation on



COLIN GUNDRY: Programme leader

how we performed in the first two years. If we had a strong track record, that would set us up well to go through the validation for the final year.

'It's not something they do with all their partners, so we were already in a select group before our evaluation began.'

Professor Carey said he's been 'knocking around academic life for a long time' but had rarely seen assessments which didn't raise any recommendations or action points.

He added: 'What is more important is that it is a peer group which is doing this review — our fellow academics are saying that this place is okay, and for a new institution that is a great thing for them to say.'

'The school is small by design but a high-quality institution and I think this reflects the Isle of Man and reflects our desire to be playing a part in the development of the Island and our aim to give the Island a unique place within offshore jurisdictions.'

Around 20 students are expected to be the first to graduate from the business school in May 2005 and Professor Carey said the indications are 'they will do very well'.

He added the validation would be reviewed on a regular basis.

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