

Validation Report



BA Honours in New Media Studies

Programme Code: TBC

Banner Code: TBC

Validation Date: 7th October 2016

Panel members**Chairperson**

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Dr Andrew Power, Registrar, IADT
Dr Josephine Browne, Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities
Dr Therese Moylan, Head of Department of Entrepreneurship
Dr Kevin Wallace, Acting Head of Department of Humanities and Arts
Management
Programme Team

Panel meeting with President, Head of Faculty and Head of Department

The President, Dr Annie Doona outlined the Institute's strategy in the context of recent changes in higher education and how the proposal fits into the objectives going forward. IADT's suite of programmes integrates the key domains of the arts, design, film, digital media, entrepreneurship, technology and applied psychology. These cross disciplinary activities in the creative and cultural sector represent the unique vision and mission of IADT.

The Institute takes in a high percentage of mature students each year and students with specific learning needs. Good support is available to 1st year entrants with the First Year Matters project running for several weeks at the commencement of the academic year, facilitated by staff and current students.

Progression pathways have been built into IADT programmes and this year memorandums of understanding with three FETAC colleges have been signed, with plans in train to sign agreements with another three colleges in the near future.

The Institute has robust recognition of prior learning procedures, outlined in a policy document that is available on the IADT website.

The programme proposal was developed in response to demands from the creative and cultural industries.

Panel meeting with Programme Team – BA in New Media Studies

Rationale for programme

Current offerings in the rest of the sector are based mainly around technology, business or marketing, but this proposal will provide synchronisation for students across all social media skills. This space is gaining ground and being developed in other countries. IADT also has the advantage of the National Film School situated on campus.

Content of programme

The programme focus is to provide students with visual and literacy skills to function in the world of terrestrial and virtual media. Students will develop transferable skills in problem solving, critical thinking and content creation for the student, essential to the twenty-first century workplace. The Panel noted the impressive, broad range of content, possibly spread a little thinly, which may require some re-balancing. Media innovation and news gathering for example, are skills not covered in the content.

The programme has three strands – practice, theory and context. It is an Arts programme, providing students with hard skills against an intellectual background.

Student Cohort

The programme aims to appeal to the YouTube generation, young people who have grown up with digital media. The aim is to give students a broader, theoretical training within the context of contemporary society. Applicants will be mainly via the CAO, but a diverse section of students is anticipated.

Title of Programme

The title of a programme should reflect the content. The team had lengthy discussions on the title of the programme, and were keen to include the word 'media'. The team acknowledged the marketing for the programme will be crucial.

Learning Outcomes

The language of programme and module learning outcomes needs to be focused, using active verbs, to reflect measurable outcomes. Some learning outcomes appear to be more about methods rather than actual learning outcomes. Words such as 'recognise' and 'understand' are not appropriate outcome descriptors at Level 8. The NFQ template lists the appropriate descriptors for this level.

Assessment

The Panel noted some over assessment, with an over reliance on CA work. For example, in year 3, assessment is 100% CA work. It was noted that in the programme document a 5 credit module and a 10 credit module appeared to have the same contact hours indicating the information should be presented in a different manner. The team are of the opinion that a longitudinal approach is best, as the programme is heavily practice based. CA modes of assessment tend to be preferable where demonstration skills are required. Group assessment work has different strategies in place for monitoring and each student is responsible for one element of the work, writing up their contribution in a reflective journal. For example, in the Production and TV Drama module, a lot of the work is done in class, with individual work completed outside class.

Module Content discussed

- The language for learning outcomes in Media Law and Media Production 2 need to be more focused.
- Media Law 1 could focus on an over principles rather than specific Media law. The broader principles could be reflected in title of module – e.g. Media Law and Guidelines and Ethics.

- It was noted the News Writing module geared mainly towards visuals for television, but requirements for tweeting, blogging are different. The team teach dramatic writing in year 1, build on skills in year 2 with students writing more factual material, in year 3 the emphasis is on online technology, culminating in year 4 with students writing for different platforms.
- Introduction to Media Studies module in year 1 introduces students to the concept of distribution and fragmentation of audience.
- In year 1 students are introduced to Ethics around Media, for example a solicitor from RTE will visit IADT to address students. In year 4, students come to grips with the actual regulations around Ethics. It was suggested copy clearance and VAI would be useful to incorporate into the guidelines.
- Students are introduced to the use of Design thinking, to look at a problem and research solutions with end users in mind. The capstone project will be the students' calling card for industry.
- The Reality TV module introduces content that is current and deals with wider modern narratives. This could benefit from broadening out to other genres. It was suggested this module could be merged with the Popular Culture module. Reading lists for Popular Culture could be updated.
- Year 3 sees students on a Placement. Students are briefed initially and then liaise with Placement supervisor during process. Students are given a guideline booklet on Placements.
- The Digital Storytelling module should include a description of the learning outcomes around writing a short 8-10 minute script.
- Gaming and Media – this module would benefit from an elaboration of the outcomes, how students learn to critically analyse and talk about their conclusions, for example.
- Work Employment – it was suggested some reference to training for freelancers be included.
- Digital PR – this module could be broadened out to include Digital Communications
- Media Law 2 could introduce students to more specific media
- Social Media – it was suggested this could sit with Digital Communications
- Capstone project – the inclusion of action modalities be included – **action** research, action learning etc., and Research Methods 1 and 2 be integrated.

Decision of the panel

The panel recommended the validation of the programme.

The Panel made a list of recommendations for the programme, for consideration by the programme team.

Code		Description	Credits
DLXXX		Bachelor of Arts Honours in New Media Studies	240
Validation Date		Friday 7 th October 2016	

BA Honours in New Media Studies**Conditions**

No conditions

Recommendations

The panel made the following series of recommendations for the consideration of the programme team:

1. Clarify the entry requirements for advanced entry, indicating FE level 6 in a cognate area is an entry route.
2. Clearly articulate and show evidence for demand for the programme, from both students and industry.
3. Review the language of the programme and module learning outcomes, to ensure they reflect the level of the programme and include more focused and measurable language, using active verbs.
4. Consider the inclusion of a choice of electives for students on the programme.
5. Consider the use of an appropriate software package, to monitor the placement module, for example, the Student Diary application. Also develop formal contracts between students and the placement providers in industry.
6. Review the approach to assessment, to ensure balance between continuous assessment and exams, and to ensure that students are not over-assessed. Cross modular integrated assessment could also be considered.

7. Ensure reading lists are up to date for modules and are relevant to module learning outcomes.
8. Review the titles for modules, eg. Media Production 1, 2 and 3 and 4, to ensure the content is accurately reflected.
9. Review the programme title to ensure it accurately reflects the programme content and has resonance for prospective students and their expectations on graduation. Consider including terms such as social media or digital. Further research would be beneficial, to help identify the expectations of the potential student cohort.
10. Review the overall programme content to ensure the following areas are fully addressed (both in existing modules and in any new modules) – mobile journalism, VR/ER, entrepreneurship and media guidelines.
11. Review the necessity for a specific module on Reality TV, as opposed to other genres. Consider a re-structured module on popular/social culture for example, as being less constrained than Reality TV.
12. Review the delivery of Law over the course of the programme, with an emphasis on principles of Law in the earlier part and Media Law in the later stages. Include guidelines and best practice and ethics.

In summing up, the Panel thanked the programme teams for their input to the validation process and wished the proposal well for the future.

The Panel recommend the programme to the Academic Council of IADT, taking into consideration the recommendations outlined above.

Panel signatures

Chairperson

Mr Billy Bennett _____ Date _____

Registrar

Dr Andrew Power _____ Date _____



Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities

Response

to

Panel Validation Report

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BA Honours in New Media Studies**Conditions**

No conditions

Recommendations

The panel made the following series of recommendations for the consideration of the programme team:

13. Clarify the entry requirements for advanced entry, indicating FE level 6 in a cognate area is an entry route.

Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Response

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation and has clarified the entry requirements for advanced entry referencing FE Level 6 in a cognate area as an entry route. The wording on page 24 of the document has been updated to reflect this. To further assist in this clarification IADT has signed a number of Memorandum of Understanding with local Further Education Colleges which articulate the cognate discipline areas as an entry route, in addition to the standard Level 6 advanced entry route.

14. **Clearly articulate and show evidence for demand for the programme, from both students and industry.**

Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Response

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The methodology establishing the demand for the programme comprised two concurrent strands of activity. First, prior to developing the programme the Faculty carried out extensive consultations with key external stakeholders to determine the level of demand for the programme. Stakeholder consultation included: employers in the new media and traditional media sector, new media training providers, career guidance teachers, new media academics, IADT graduates. Second, in addition to stakeholder consultation, extensive desk research was undertaken including an analysis of historical and recent, national and regional labour market trends, with particular reference to the cultural and creative industries sector, ICT sector and Media sector. The work of the Expert Skills group provided valuable information and skills projections for the analysis.

The results of projections of skill requirements for the CCI sector and the feedback from key external stakeholders provide sound evidence of the skills deficit in the CCI sector and the emerging area of new media studies. There were many positives to be taken from the consultation with stakeholders regarding new media skills demand.

It should be noted that a degree of caution is always prudent when assessing projections. Developing quantified projections of skills deficits for a sector nationally is fraught with difficulty due to the complex, nonlinear interplay between supply and demand both within, and between, economic sectors, as well as demographic factors. Furthermore any number of plausible contingencies (global energy price shock, sharp decline in the value of the dollar, technological developments, new distribution models, developments in intellectual property law, EU case law and directives etc.) could serve to undermine these projections.

There is a significant gap between the ICT skills and media skills delivered in a traditional media studies course and those required to take up job opportunities in the new media sector. This programme is aimed at addressing this skills deficit.

Employer external stakeholder feedback pointed to Ireland's strong international reputation as a hub for the technology industry, with one of the highest concentrations of ICT activity and employment in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Employers referred to some of the international IT and new media leaders, from Google and Facebook to Intel who have chosen Ireland as a base for activities. Indigenous Irish technology companies, were also cited as making their mark on the world stage. In total, the ICT industry in Ireland currently employs 74,000 people directly and some 200,000 people indirectly. A point made by several employers was that one of the key reasons for the strength of the ICT sector in Ireland is the workforce, which is seen as high-skilled and innovative. The Expert Group on Future Skills highlights the skills deficits in ICT skills in Ireland and the need to produce graduates with a range of skills for the new economy.

In addition Irish research suggests that the emergence of next generation internet, mobile ICT, location based services and the exponential growth of social networking have driven innovation and new revenue streams for firms of all sizes, this presents an impressive opportunity but also a challenge for new media companies. While the Irish workforce needs the key ICT skills, it also needs graduates with skills in new media, for example blogging, ejournalism, ezine production, video production, YouTube content etc. According to the ICT Action Plan, Ireland needs to double the number of graduates with key ICT skill not only for software developers but across the whole spectrum of industry.

The EGFSN-Forfás report entitled ‘Addressing High-Level ICT Skills Recruitment Needs: Research Findings (2012)’ looked at the needs of the ICT sector regarding the available capacity in the Irish workforce. The Smart Schools=Smart Economy Report marked the beginning of the third phase of ICT in education: the creative use of ICT in schools. The report put forward the proposal that it was no longer sufficient for students to be familiar with ICT. They need to be engaging in the creative, productive use of ICT facilities.

Feedback obtained from the key external stakeholders in conjunction with the established skills deficits and skills projections formulated by the Expert Skills Group provided sound evidence on demand for the a degree in New Media Studies.

Important insights were gleaned from the stakeholder feedback on key developments impacting on the emerging new media industries and the future skills requirements, including;

- The emergence of new hosted and aggregated distribution models for news. These initiatives by a number of big tech companies will impact publishers for many years to come.
- Significant global developments impacting at local level highlighting the shift from traditional media to new media included: **Snapchat Discover** (1) led the charge in January by inviting publishers to create ‘native’ and mobile experiences on their platform. Facebook followed with **Instant Articles** (2) designed to create a faster and slicker experience– and promised publishers greater reach along with up to 100% of advertising revenues. The re-launched **Apple News** (3) also required media companies to publish content directly into their platform while **Twitter Moments** (4) is also about creating native experiences but interestingly involves reverse publishing that content within news sites to attract more people to Twitter.
- The extent of changes in the media industry and the associated content delivery model and its migration to a new media content delivery model can be seen from recent global news items, including: video footage, *Le Monde* journalist Daniel Psenny captured the graphic scenes as crowds fled the Bataclan concert hall in Paris on his iPhone (1).
- Twitter user Stephane Hannache was one of many using live streaming app **Periscope** hosting more than 10,000 viewers (2). A Vine video from the Stade de France – with clearly audible explosions – was one of the first verified accounts of the attacks (3). BBC correspondent Matthew Price filmed an immersive 360 video at the Place de la République (4) using a cheap simple consumer mobile device

- These trends will increasingly put pressure on 24-hour broadcast channels and will drive the need for new media skills to develop and deliver content.

Finally, consultations with career guidance teachers welcomed this initiative in developing a degree in New Media Studies and expressed the view that the new degree would have significant appeal of Leaving Certificate students interested in a career in on line journalism and blogging; careers in international relations; travel and tourism etc.

15. Review the language of the programme and module learning outcomes, to ensure they reflect the level of the programme and include more focused and measurable language, using active verbs.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. All Programme and Module learning outcomes have been revised to reflect more active verbs appropriate to Level 8 QQI framework and PLOs.

16. Consider the inclusion of a choice of electives for students on the programme.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The inclusion of a choice of electives is being considered and costed.

17. Consider the use of an appropriate software package, to monitor the placement module, for example, the Student Diary application. Also develop formal contracts between students and the placement providers in industry.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty has investigated the availability and use of placement software and may invest in a software package following consultations with users of different placement software packages.

18. Review the approach to assessment, to ensure balance between continuous assessment and exams, and to ensure that students are not over-assessed. Cross modular integrated assessment could also be considered.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The Faculty is reviewing the Assessment schedule to ensure the avoidance of over assessment. The Faculty is reviewing the introduction of cross module integrated assessment.

19. Ensure reading lists are up to date for modules and are relevant to module learning outcomes.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation and all reading lists relevant to the PLO and Module learning outcomes.

20. Review the titles for modules, eg. Media Production 1, 2 and 3 and 4, to ensure the content is accurately reflected.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation and is reviewing module titles in the context of Banner requirements and protocols.

21. Review the programme title to ensure it accurately reflects the programme content and has resonance for prospective students and their expectations on graduation. Consider including terms such as social media or digital. Further research would be beneficial, to help identify the expectations of the potential student cohort.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. In developing the programme, the programme team spent significant time researching different possibilities for a suitable programme title. External stakeholder feedback was sought also on the title for this programme and New Media Studies was the most popular title emerging from the feedback.

22. Review the overall programme content to ensure the following areas are fully addressed (both in existing modules and in any new modules) – mobile journalism, VR/ER, entrepreneurship and media guidelines.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The programme team is confident these suggested areas are fully covered in the module content in the following modules:

Area	Modules and years			
Mobile Journalism	Writing for Multiple Media Platforms (year 2)	Social Media Theory (year 4)		
VR/ER	Gaming and Media (year 2)	Technology and Culture (year 4)		
Entrepreneurship	Work Employment and Society (year 3)	Design Thinking & Communications (year 3)	Placement (year 3)	
Media guidelines	Media Law 1 & 2 (year 1 & year 4)	Global Media Industries (year 2)	Media Newswriting (year 2)	Media Analysis & Critique (year 4)

23. Review the necessity for a specific module on Reality TV, as opposed to other genres. Consider a re-structured module on popular/social culture for example, as being less constrained than Reality TV.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The Programme Team is of the view that a module on Reality TV is appropriate. However, it is the intention of the programme team to develop a suite of modules for PVC validation to ensure a good balance in the overall programme structure and genres.

24. Review the delivery of Law over the course of the programme, with an emphasis on principles of Law in the earlier part and Media Law in the later stages. Include guidelines and best practice and ethics.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities welcomes this recommendation. The law module will be further enhanced with the inclusion of guidelines and best practice and ethics.