

**Panel Validation Report  
and team response to report**



**Master of Arts  
in Creative Production and Finance  
Level 9**

**Programme Code: DL\_XXX**

**Date of Panel: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

## Panel members

**Chairperson**

Mr Billy Bennett  
Registrar  
Letterkenny Institute of Technology

**Academic**

Mr Alan Bernstein  
Former Head of Studies  
London Film School

**Industry**

Ms Rebecca O'Flanagan  
Treasure Entertainment  
Dublin

**IADT**

Dr Annie Doona, President  
Dr Andrew Power, Registrar  
Mr David Smith, Head Faculty Film, Art & Creative Technologies  
Mr Donald Taylor Black, Head of National Film School

Programme Team:

Mr Ronan O'Muirthile  
Ms Jean Rice  
Dr Helen Doherty

Ms Laura Devlin, Panel Administration

## **Overview of Programme**

The Masters programme is a 12 month, 90 credits, project based Master of Arts in Screen Finance and Creative Production. A cohort of 12 is anticipated on the programme.

## **Private panel meeting**

Issues noted for discussion with programme team included:

- Rationale for the programme
- Irish/international demand for programme
- Student cohort/entry requirements
- Title of programme
- Learning outcomes
- Modules

## **Meeting of panel/President/Registrar/head of faculty**

The President gave a brief presentation outlining the Institute strategy. Part of the institute strategy is to grow international student numbers, which has the potential to bring in sizable income. A recently appointed Head of the Directorate of Creativity, Innovation and Research at IADT and a newly appointed Marketing Manager will be to the forefront in driving the Institute's 2014-2018 strategy. The panel were informed that IADT Masters programmes are self-funding. The business plan for the programme has been approved by the executive. The team have backing from industry partners (e.g. KPMG, Gleeson and Thornton), who will provide benefits in kind (students will have access to a presentation on Section 481 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997) and some funding support. One of the aims is to attract North American applicants onto the programme.

## **Meeting of panel/head of department/programme team**

Rationale for the programme:

The Head of National Film School, Mr Donald Taylor Black, outlined the rationale for the programme. The Masters is a response to a growing industry demand for producers who are entrepreneurial and inspirational in their approach to projects. While all the practical elements of production are covered, the aim is to help students to develop as more than traditional line producers. The mechanical aspects are secondary to the key philosophical component of the programme – students must have a passion for the work. Students will be encouraged from the outset to reflect on what drives them and to apply an entrepreneurial and inspirational approach in their desire to tell a story, produce quality work and to take creative risks. IADT staff have the academic and industry expertise and resources on-site to deliver the programme.

**Demand for the programme:**

The panel noted there is a very considerable demand for such a programme both in Ireland and abroad. Such a skill base delivered in the English language is under supplied across Europe, so this is a particular advantage for IADT, allowing access to larger markets. Few courses are focused specifically on producing, and the offering would be most attractive to an international cohort.

**Student cohort/entry requirements:**

Applicants will come from diverse industry backgrounds. No discipline background is precluded, if an applicant shows an entrepreneurial and creative spark.

RPL Applicants - the Institute also has a tried and tested Recognition of Prior Learning policy in place. Applicants complete a Euro-pass CV, and write a small piece. A matching exercise of the student's application is completed against the learning outcomes of the programme.

All applicants will be interviewed and their initial ideas assessed. The development process over a year will help to ease students into the work. An important aspect is to instil in students how to position their idea in the market place. Students learn, by watching and exposure to diverse ideas, how to develop their own voice.

**Title of programme:**

The panel queried whether the finance aspect of the offering was enough to merit a mention in the title of the programme. The team explained that to finance a film, a student will need access to certain business information relevant to the film industry and understand the working environment, but without the need to become corporate financial experts. The team want the programme title to capture the idea of a market ready package, from a financial and creative point of view. The term *finance* is the vernacular in the industry, with an understanding that taxation, funding incentives, supports etc. around the film industry are included in the term.

**Learning outcomes:**

Descriptors such as *know, understand, recognise and appreciate* should be deleted as these are not appropriate for level 9 programme or module learning outcomes.

The panel noted some similarity and overlap in some of the learning outcomes:

1. Originate market ready projects using critical and analytic skills (change word 'originate' as this implies ready to go.
2. Lead and motivate a creative team from project initiation through to final delivery.
3. Design and construct the development of a script, story or idea, with a creative team.
4. Work independently and exhibit the skills required to generate viable creative projects.

**Modules:**

The panel suggested a review of the language used to describe module learning outcomes.

***Creative Development Module – 15 credits***

The team acknowledge the development process is never perfect and will consider script reports, a reflective journal and a statement of critical reflection for students – the latter which works very well on the current MA in Broadcast Production at IADT. Students will be encouraged to articulate ideas around a final platform for distribution of their work, e.g. Youtube, poster, festivals. For students struggling to come up with an idea, they can invite a producer in to participate, and in such a case the team acknowledged a level of protection was needed to avoid any plagiarism issues, and with this in mind aspiring producers will be taught how to handle material.

***Practice Research/Case Studies – 10 credits***

Reference to pre-requisite to be removed, modules should be described as electives in document and not mandatory. The team should consider splitting the module or re-naming it. Reading list should be reviewed.

***Producers as Entrepreneurs: Financing, Law and Company Development – 25 credits***

Consider re-titling or splitting into two modules, focusing on a) tax/finance and b) business/marketing, as the indicative content and learning outcomes show a split.

***Production Practice and Industry Internship – 10 credits***

Students do both aspects of the module. The team have industry contacts that can provide internship places and direct students to meaningful mentors. The Production Practice part of the module takes place on campus. Non EU students can be facilitated with an internship place, in the context of learning on a recognised programme of study.

***Major Project or Academic Thesis– 30 credits***

The panel advised splitting out the thesis on the approved course schedule, to delineate between the major project and the academic thesis, and change from mandatory to elective. Remove the word 'academic' from the title. The panel noted the brief read more like a business plan over a creative project. The team explained that the term *major project* is the title for capstone projects on all IADT programmes, and the term *business plan* has no significance in the broader film industry. Thesis guidelines are provided for students in the student handbook.

## Decision of the panel

The panel recommended the validation of the proposed programme, namely:

Banner Code	Description	Credits
DLXXX	Master of Arts in Creative Production and Finance	90
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2016		

## Conditions

This validation is subject to one condition:

1. The panel approved the proposed programme, on condition the team review the title to accurately reflect the programme content and learning outcomes. If the term '*screen finance*' is to be in the title, this aspect should be much more explicit in the content and module titles. Alternatively, *screen business/screen business and finance* could be included in the title. In addition, consider placing *Creative Production* up front in the title.

## Recommendations

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

1. Entry requirements - the Panel strongly recommend the entry requirements are revised, to specify that applicants have:
  - a. An honours degree:
    - in a film or creative discipline **or**
    - in any discipline, with a minimum of one year's relevant industry experience
  - or**
  - b. Be eligible for admission via the Recognition of Prior Learning policy **and**
  - c. A portfolio (incorporating a CV, a statement of intent and a proposed project)
2. Programme philosophy – the panel recommend the philosophy underpinning the programme is clearly articulated in the document, and is evident both in the module content and delivery of the programme.

3. Assessment strategy - the panel recommend the programme assessment strategy should clearly document the assessment of process and should better reflect the element of creative production as enhancing the quality of the materials worked with. For example, students could be required to compile a reflective journal or a statement of critical reflection.
4. Ireland/international balance - the panel recommend the team ensure an appropriate balance between Irish and international film environments on the programme.
5. Programme learning outcomes – the panel recommend a review of the language of the programme learning outcomes to ensure they are written concisely, using measurable active verbs and avoidance of repetition.
6. Module learning outcomes – the panel recommend the team review the language of the module learning outcomes, to ensure they are written using measurable active verbs, appropriate for a level 9 programme.
7. Individual Modules:
  - a. Creative Development module - the panel recommend that ideas about final platform and distribution mechanisms are articulated at an early stage. Clarify how external content (e.g., scripts) is used within IADT guidelines and put in place formal agreements to protect against potential plagiarism issues.
  - b. Major Project/Thesis module – the panel recommend a review of the Major Project/Thesis and show as electives in programme schedule. Remove word '*academic*' from title and reference to pre-requisite.
  - c. Practice Research/Case Studies module – the panel recommend the removal of '*Case Studies*' from the title.
  - d. Major Project module – the panel recommend the inclusion of '*Screen Business Development Plan*' in the title.

## Commendations

The panel commended the team on the well designed, comprehensive quality of the programme, noting it was a unique and timely response to industry demand. The panel were confident such an offering would provide IADT with opportunities to develop both Irish and international connections in the film industry.

## Panel signatures

### Chairperson

Mr Billy Bennett \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Secretary

Dr Andrew Power \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## Team Responses (in red) to Panel Report

### Conditions

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***The title was changed to MA in Creative Production and Screen Finance.***

### Recommendations

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

1. Entry requirements - the Panel strongly recommend the entry requirements are revised, to specify that applicants have:
  1. An honours degree:
    - in a film or creative discipline **or**
    - in any discipline, with a minimum of one year's relevant industry experience**or**
  1. Be eligible for admission via the Recognition of Prior Learning policy **and**  
A portfolio (incorporating a CV, a statement of intent and a proposed project)

***The entry requirements will be changed to reflect the panel's recommendations***

2. Programme philosophy – the panel recommend the philosophy underpinning the programme is clearly articulated in the document, and is evident both in the module content and delivery of the programme.

***The document will be revised in accordance with the panel's recommendation to articulate further the course philosophy.***

3. Assessment strategy - the panel recommend the programme assessment strategy should clearly document the assessment of process and should better reflect the element of creative production as enhancing the quality of the materials worked with. For example, students could be required to compile a reflective journal or a statement of critical reflection.

***The document will be amended accordingly.***

4. Ireland/international balance - the panel recommend the team ensure an appropriate balance between Irish and international film environments on the programme.

***The document will be amended accordingly.***

5. Programme learning outcomes – the panel recommend a review of the language of the programme learning outcomes to ensure they are written concisely, using measurable active verbs and avoidance of repetition.

***The document will be amended accordingly.***

6. Module learning outcomes – the panel recommend the team review the language of the module learning outcomes, to ensure they are written using measurable active verbs, appropriate for a level 9 programme.

***The document will be amended accordingly.***

7. Individual Modules:

- a. Creative Development module - the panel recommend that ideas about final platform and distribution mechanisms are articulated at an early stage. Clarify how external content (e.g., scripts) is used within IADT guidelines and put in place formal agreements to protect against potential plagiarism issues.
- b. Major Project/Thesis module – the panel recommend a review of the Major Project/Thesis and show as electives in programme schedule. Remove word '*academic*' from title and reference to pre-requisite.
3. Practice Research/Case Studies module – the panel recommend the removal of '*Case Studies*' from the title.
4. Major Project module – the panel recommend the inclusion of '*Screen Business Development Plan*' in the title.

***The document will be amended accordingly.***