

Validation Report



**Postgraduate Diploma
in User Experience Design
and
Certificate in Fundamentals of
User Experience Design
(Special Purpose Award)**

Programme Code: TBC

Banner Code: TBC

Validation Date: 15th September 2016

Panel members

Chairperson

Dr Joseph Ryan
Registrar
Athlone Institute of Technology
Co Westmeath

Panel member 1 (Academic)

Dr Benjamin R Cowan
Co-Director of the Creative Technologies Network
School of Information & Communication Studies
University College Dublin

Panel member 2 (Industry)

Mr Laurence Veale
Each and Other
Dublin

IADT

Dr Annie Doona, President, IADT
Mr David Smith, Head of Faculty of Film, Art & Creative Technologies
Dr Hilary Kenna, Head of Department of Technology and Psychology
Programme Team
Dr Andrew Errity
Mr Stefan Paz Barrios
Mr John Dempsey
Ms Susan Reardon
Ms Myra Hunt (Irish Software Association)

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 portfolio 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 proposal were developed in response to industry demands for specific sets of skills and will also serve as a progression route onto the Masters of Science in User Experience Design. The faculty has solid experience of teaching at level 9, with four taught masters and 16 research masters currently registered. 40% of faculty staff have level 10 qualifications.

The Institute has built up a good relationship with the Irish Software Association, the largest recipient of skills net funding in the country. The ISA had flagged a need for such programmes as the proposal being considered by the panel. IADT also has a relationship with IBM, to address the needs of deficits in the industry. When the Masters programme was proposed, a survey was carried out to ascertain demand and this has fed into the content of the Postgraduate Diploma and the Special Purpose Award. The Institute is now engaged via IBEC with employers.

The programme will be owned and validated by IADT. The Masters programme is currently oversubscribed, so it is anticipated there will be a good take-up of the proposed Postgraduate Diploma and the Special Purpose Award.

Panel meeting with Programme Team

Outline of programme

The panel noted the high calibre of the document content, with good current focus. The team plan to start with IXTA and HC and build a relationship with IXD/UCD etc. The team would welcome relationships with different streams and would welcome a crossover with design and technology. The strategic importance of such a programme for IADT was noted, when planning a long term strategy. In 2012 IADT hosted the IXDA conference on campus - the first IT to host such an international conference. The integration of computing, strong statistical analysis and hardcore data will help students to understand the contextual aspect of the programme.

Student Cohort

Based on ISA research, the programme is tailored towards those in the industry who wish to upskill, for example. ISA works with its members to articulate what is needed and identify any gaps. This proposal will provide the academic rigour and qualifications which is demanded from industry qualifications.

Governance

A memorandum of understanding was discussed with a view to protection of learners. The panel felt the structure of the programme should be set out carefully in the document – assessment lies with IADT. IADT has periodic mechanisms for reviewing programmes, such as programme boards three times a year and an overall programmatic review every five years. Via the relationship with ISA the team also receive consistent feedback. The ISA/IADT working group meet twice a year to review student feedback and active monitoring of individual modules is carried out.

Synthesis of research and analysis

The panel noted the challenge for students to go from collating research to analysis of the data. Students needed to develop soft skills to be able to defend their designs. The team keep students engaged all the time, pulling in information and acting on this. Opportunities to develop research skills are provided across the modules and the last module gives students a chance to test out their data and evaluate it. An indicative project helps students to interview, capture and analyse data. Articulating how to solve a problem is one of the learning outcomes and helps students to understand how the solution will inform the design.

Assessment

The programme will be very practice based in modes of assessment. It was noted there is a lot of group work on the programme. The team are confident of managing group assessment, with consistency across the postgraduate diploma, the Masters and the Special Purpose Award.

Access

Page 13 of document is at odds with information further on in document – ensure the same metric in all references.

Modules

Some modules are similar in content in the document – this could be better differentiated.

1. Fundamentals of UX Design

Grades for group work are apportioned via a reflective piece, outlining how the team worked together. Each student documents their contribution to the group work. An advantage is students work outside their discipline area and they are presented with a challenge which expands their learning

2. User Research and Interactive Design

The same process for group work applies here. The content descriptors are similar to the first module – these could be differentiated more. One of the aims of this module is to get students to decide what methods are appropriate for research, and what techniques are used to gather data. From a design point of view, the students are encouraged to look at how the application flows.

3. Psychology, Usability and Visual Design

This is important in the cognitive area of the work, as it touches upon wider aspects, keeping abreast of foraging, for example. The taxonomy of learning outcomes could be reviewed.

4. UX Design Engineering and Strategy

This helps to articulate the line between research and strategy. The importance of keeping abreast of emerging technologies and not limiting students is important. There is a focus on business goals and how to solve issues.

Special Purpose Award

The certificate is delivered as a discrete offering, and can also be used as an exit award. This programme could be viewed as a taster for the longer programmes, the Postgraduate Diploma and the Masters.

Decision of the panel

The panel recommended the validation of the Postgraduate Diploma in User Design Experience and Certificate in Fundamentals of User Experience Design

Code		Description	Credits
DLXXX		Postgraduate Diploma in User Experience Design	60
DLXXX		Certificate in the Fundamentals of User Experience Design (Special Purpose Award)	10
Validation Date		Tuesday 15 th September 2016	

Conditions

No conditions

Recommendations

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

1. The panel recommend the inclusion of a workload map, and to keep this under advisement, as the 2nd semester becomes more demanding.
2. For the purpose of good governance, the Panel suggested an enhancement overview group could put together a strategic structure for clarity and include this in the document.
3. Include better descriptions of modules 1 and 2, to highlight the difference between the two.
4. Review the taxonomy of the learning outcomes, particularly in relation to modules 1 and 3.
5. Assessment – clearly document the contribution of individual work as opposed to group work
6. Access – review the information in the document, so that there is clarity and consistency in the entry requirements.
7. Review book references.

Commendations

The panel were very enthusiastic about the proposals, noting they were a timely and innovative response to the demands of industry. The dynamo of IADT was reflected in the quality of the documents.

In summing up, on behalf of the panel the Chair thanked the President of IADT and the programme team for the quality of engagement during the process, and wished the team well with the programmes in the future.

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

Panel signatures

Chairperson

Dr Joseph Ryan _____ Date _____

President

Dr Annie Doona _____ Date _____

Postgraduate Diploma in User Experience Design

Response to Panel Comments

15/11/2016

Dr. Andrew Errity

Panel Recommendation	Change
1. The panel recommend the inclusion of a workload map, and to keep this under advisement, as the 2 nd semester becomes more demanding.	This has not been added to the document. However, a bespoke schedule of interim assessment deadlines/workload will be provided to students each year (corresponding to the specific projects and deadline dates each year). This may vary from year to year and has thus been omitted from the programme doc.
2. For the purpose of good governance, the Panel suggested an enhancement overview group could put together a strategic structure for clarity and include this in the document.	Section A4 added to provide some clarity on this. Additional work, beyond the scope of the programme document, may be required to convene/formalise the suggested 'enhancement overview group'.
3. Include better descriptions of modules 1 and 2, to highlight the difference between the two.	Modified the descriptors in an effort to differentiate the two more clearly. M1: scratches the surface. M2: deep-dive into user research and digital IxD.
4. Review the taxonomy of the learning outcomes, particularly in relation to modules 1 and 3.	LOs modified where necessary.
5. Assessment – clearly document the contribution of individual work as opposed to group work	Module descriptors modified to indicate where group/individual assessments may take place. Specific note on 'Assessing Groupwork' added to PgDip p. 59.
6. Access – review the information in the document, so that there is clarity and consistency in the entry requirements.	Entry requirements on PgDip p. 13 and 19 have been refined. Entry requirements for the SPA have been changed to match the above.
7. Review book references.	Reviewed and updated were appropriate.
Other	SPA added as exit award. This was noted as missing by the panel.