

Programme Validation Report

iadt
DUN LAOGHAIRE



Programme Validation: BA (Hons)
Interaction + User Experience (IUXD)
Date of Report: 3rd March 2020

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Part 1 Introduction

1 Overall Recommendations

Provider Name	Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology
Date of Site Visit	3 rd March 2020
Date of Report	

Principal Programme	Title	BA (Hons) Interaction + User Experience (IUXD)
	Award	NFQ Level 8
	Credit	240 ECTS
	Recommendation Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Embedded Award		Consistent with IADT's access and progression policies, the programme incorporates an exit award Students who have successfully completed the first 180 credits of the programme (Stages 1 -3) may exit the BA (Hons) programme and apply for a Level 7, BA in Interaction Design and User Experience.

2 Evaluators

Name	Role	Affiliation
Jane Burns	Chair	Athlone Institute of Technology
Brenda Duggan	Academic expert	TU Dublin
Anita Heavy	Industry expert	BBC Creative London

3 Principal Programme

Names of Centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum Number of Learners (per centre)	Minimum Number of Learners
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Technology	30	15

Enrolment Interval (normally 5 years)	Date of First Intake	2020
	Date of Last Intake	2025
Maximum number of annual intakes	20 (Year 1); 30 (Years 2 -4)	
Maximum total number of learners per intake	30	
Programme duration (months from start to completion)	4 Years (8 x 15 week terms)	
Target learner groups	<p><i>This programme is for learners who</i> are curious about objects, places, technologies and spaces that people use and interact with, how they work, what problems exist, and how to devise new ideas and solutions that can improve the experience of our everyday lives. Learners will typically have an interest in art, design, media, architecture, technology or related areas and have developed a portfolio of creative work that demonstrates their interests in pursuing further study in art, design, and/or technology.</p> <p>Learners who do not have a portfolio may undertake the Practical Project Day assessment at IADT in February. This programme is intended for learners: who have successfully completed their secondary education and who are applying via the Central Office of Applications (CAO) with a:</p> <p>Combination of Leaving Certificate/FETAC and Portfolio assessment points Or Combination of Leaving Certificate/FETAC and Practical Project</p> <p>Day assessment points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum Leaving Certificate Entry Requirements – 2 H5 + 4 O6 / H7, English: O6 / H7 & Maths O6 / H7 • LCVP is accepted as a sixth Leaving Certificate subject and is counted for points purposes. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum FETAC Entry Requirements – Applicants with FETAC Level 5 or Level 6 Awards require distinctions in 3 (of 8) modules. • Applicants require at least a pass (D3) in Ordinary Level Maths in the Leaving Certificate or a pass in a mathematical methods module as part of the FETAC Award. Mature candidates who want to retrain or upskill in order to start a career the field of interaction and UX design may also apply through the CAO
Approved countries of provision	Ireland
Delivery mode – Full-time/Part-time	Full-time
The teaching and learning modalities	<p>Studio, classroom and lab-based learning with additional online supports.</p> <p>Practical studio demonstration, workshops, fieldwork, industry visits and independent learning.</p> <p>Blended and online learning.</p>
Brief synopsis of the programme (eg who is it for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to)	<p>The Bachelor of Arts Interaction & User Experience Design is a practical taught programme offered by the Institute of Art, Design & Technology (IADT), delivered over 4 Years.</p> <p>The programme will develop the learners’ creative, critical and technical skills in relation to interaction and user experience design and prepare them for employment, research or further study in this growing field.</p> <p>The programme presents comprehensive coverage of the knowledge, skills and competencies required by interaction and UX designers. These include the fundamentals of design thinking methodologies for problem solving and definition, user research methods, visual and interaction design and prototyping skills, psychology and usability, UX testing and evaluation.</p> <p>Graduates will be equipped with vital critical thinking, ideation, analysis, and presentation skills that are informed by a thorough contextual knowledge of current theories, debates, future trends and emerging technologies in the field. Throughout the programme, learners will apply these skills and knowledge practically at each stage of the design process from problem definition through to iterative design, prototyping and testing.</p> <p>The studio learning environment of the programme is built around the practical application of theory and skills introduced in lectures, demonstrated in computer laboratories, and applied in studio project work. This is supported by regular formative assessment and feedback enabling learners to engage in iterative</p>

	<p>development.</p> <p>Full time teaching staff and tutors will supervise, direct and mentor students through each stage of this programme. Core teaching will be positively enhanced through a programme of visiting industry-based lecturers, and experienced professionals who will supplement and complement the teaching supported by academic staff lecturers.</p> <p>Professional pathways leading from the BA (Hons) in Interaction and User Experience Design (IUXD) programme exist in the broader creative, cultural and technical sectors.</p> <p>Graduates may find employment in many design related jobs including: UX designer, interaction designer, service designer, design researcher, UI designer/developer, UX analyst, UX researcher, in-house designer, visual designer, product designer, product owner/developer, project manager, QA & usability engineer, web & app designer, game designer etc.</p> <p>These roles occur across a broad range of sectors (both public and private) including: technology, finance, health, food, business, education and training, etc.; and are usually on interdisciplinary teams that may include design, marketing, sales, engineering, product development, customer insights, research and development, new business development and innovation etc.</p>	
<p>Summary of specifications for teaching staff</p>	<p>WTE3</p>	<p>Qualifications and Experience</p>
	<p>2</p>	<p>Qualified to at least MA/MSc level with specialist Interaction and User Experience Design knowledge and experience, and related fields including advanced research supervision experience at Level 8.</p>
	<p>3</p>	<p>Qualified to at least Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Interaction Design or a cognate discipline and/or with at least 5 years' practical experience of the Interaction Design industries in a professional capacity.</p>

	0.5	Tutor demonstrator: Experienced graduate with Interaction Design studio and or professional experience
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching staff	Staff to learner ratio	Learning activity type
	1:30	Lecture
	1:5	Seminars/workshops/Demonstrations
	1:1	Major Research & Studio Project supervision
	1:30	Interaction Design Studio Practices & Skills Workshops

Programme being replaced (applicable to applications for revalidation)		
Code	Title	Late Enrolment Date
	n/a	

4 Embedded Programme

It is IADT's desire and intention to see all students complete their programme of study. However, during the course of their studies, we acknowledge that some students may need to defer a year of study or exit their programmes due to personal, financial or other reasons.

In these exceptional circumstances, a student may request to formally exit from a programme prior to its completion. Provided such an award has been validated under the Institute's validation processes and provided the student has attained the requisite minimum number of credits, this can be considered. Students seeking to apply for an exit award are advised to first discuss their options with their Programme Chair/Co-ordinator or Head of Department.

A student must formally apply for an exit award. They may do so at any time up to one month before an Examination Board meeting. The decision to award an exit award is an Examination Board decision.

Students who have successfully completed the first 180 credits of the programme (Stages 1 -3) may exit the BA (Hons) programme and apply for a Level 7, BA in Interaction Design and User Experience. For further information and conditions of eligibility for embedded Exit Awards, please refer to IADT's Exit Awards Policy.

5 Programmes being replaced

n/a

Part 2 Evaluation against the Validation Criteria

2.1 Criterion 1

The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel made a site visit to IADT on 3rd March 2020 and met with the Registrar, Head of the Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies, the Head of Technology and Psychology and with the programme team to discuss how the programme fits into the overall Institute strategy.</p> <p>Prior to submission for validation, the programme document underwent internal review by the IADT Programme Validation Committee (a sub-committee of Academic Council) in accordance with procedures laid out in the Institute Development & Approval of New Programmes policy; the latter is guided by quality assurance criteria set out in <i>Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training</i>.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that the provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programmes and is in alignment with the Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation by QQI of Programmes of Education and Training (2016).</p> <p>The panel recommended that the programme be validated for a period of 5 years.</p> <p>The Panel commended the team on a well-developed Industry and education based programme. They also commented that this was a timely launch for society and the educational market where inter-disciplinary design programmes such as this BA in Interaction and User Experience can address complex system design approaches for citizen and industry purpose.</p>

2.2 Criterion 2

The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QI awards sought

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel formed the view that the aims and learning outcomes of the programme were clear and were consistent with the award level sought.</p> <p>The Panel remarked that the programme objectives and outcomes were of a very high quality and exceeded expectations and possibly exceeded requirements.</p>

2.3 Criterion 3

The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel was satisfied that the implementation strategy and interpretation of awards standards are well informed and based on sound supporting evidence from industry and other external stakeholders.</p> <p>The strong focus on ethical and accessibility features was commended by the Panel who agreed that the programme concept is nuanced and quite critical. The Panel commended the focus on speculative experiences as opposed to speculative technologies & felt this supported the future proofing of the content.</p> <p>The strong links the Programme Team have forged with industry will benefit students.</p>

2.4 Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel explored this issue and were satisfied all requirements were met.</p> <p>The Institute provides a range of services to support students through the Student Experience team who provide Access Services, Disability Support, Careers Services, Student Counselling and a Learning Support Service. The Student experience team engage closely with classes to provide information about these services. Class sizes are small & this leads to good engagement with students and there is an open and friendly environment and a culture of working with students.</p> <p>Staff can engage on an individual basis with the students and internal transfers can be available for students where appropriate. There is a deferral procedure available to students plus supporting procedures for the other options available to them.</p> <p>The progression from this new undergraduate programme to the existing Masters programme is not perceived by the team as a natural progression and the Panel felt that the rationale for this was sound. The panel was reassured this would be communicated with all current and future students.</p> <p>This is a restricted entry programme and recently IADT introduced Project Days as an alternative entry pathway. This is part of a commitment to broaden access and also to attract a different type of candidate to the creative arts disciplines, that may not have studied Art as a subject for the Leaving Cert. Students have the option to attend a Project Day or/and submit a portfolio. The grading system is of equal weight for Portfolio submission and Project Days.</p> <p>The Panel recommended that a strong marketing campaign is developed. For parents and students leaving the second level system there is not a strong understanding of what design opportunities exist, let alone Interaction and User Experience Design. This is a sophisticated programme offering and the team should utilise their story-telling expertise, along with leveraging their strong industry, alumni and school linkages.</p>

2.5 Criterion 5

The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel reviewed the approved course schedules, credits and individual modules for the programme and were satisfied all requirements were met. They agreed that the curriculum was excellent & very well structured.</p> <p>There was some concern about the extent of the Essential Reading list and it was recommended that this was reviewed by the team with a view to reducing. The Panel also suggested that the team ensure that all the materials are available in the Library. It was advised that the team are working with the Library to make open access resources available for students.</p>

2.6 Criterion 6

There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>It was agreed that current staff are sufficiently qualified to deliver the programme. However, the Panel did suggest that as this is a dynamic subject area, staff resources and new training opportunities should be reviewed on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The Panel did note that there is a good mix of visiting lecturers that complement the skills of the Programme team.</p> <p>The Panel recommended that appropriate staff supports are in place and that these are continuously assessed. There is a perceived heavy workload for staff and while the new common curriculum structure does partially address this issue along with the experience of the team in balancing their workload, it was recommended that workloads remains a consideration for the management team.</p>

2.7 Criterion 7

There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel explored this issue and visited the proposed spaces for years 1+2. There are some constraints regarding space availability & the team have identified various solutions to address these.</p> <p>The panel were impressed with the proposed special use of the proposed room planned for students on this new programme. The mixture of collaborative wall, desk and lecture space envisioned in a studio environment would reflect the types of spaces the students will work in their future careers. It will be important to develop these as agile, dynamic spaces for meetings and collaborative studio projects. The proposed computing and collaborate workspaces will meet the demands for entry years 1-2 but additional space or access to existing space will be required after that period.</p>

	The Institute is currently engaged in the planning process for the development of a new media building, which when available will meet all long term resource requirements.
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2.8 Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme’s learners	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel explored this issue and were satisfied all requirements were met.</p> <p>IADT’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) supports and complements teaching and student learning at IADT. Lecturers use the VLE to provide course material online, while students can access course content, communicate with lecturers as well as participating in online assessments, discussions and evaluations. The VLE also functions as repository for lecture notes, presentations, briefing papers/assignments, project documentation, module resources, online resources, e-books, assessment criteria and work-plans / schedules.</p> <p>Lynda.com is a supplementary online learning resource provided to all registered IADT students. The platform’s feature set includes downloadable exercise files, which let users independently, progress their learning and practice using the projects example files, video tutorials and software tools training.</p> <p>The Programme team will liaise with ICT services and appropriate software vendors to provide licenses for specific UX planning, research, design & testing software to meet the needs of the programme on a year-by-year basis. In the past, IADT students have been provided with free access to tools such as InVision, Mura.ly and Loop11.</p> <p>Students on the programme will have access to the course specific equipment, including a digital video camera; an Edirol audio recorder & head mounted display units for virtual reality and the Tobi X3-120 eye tracker.</p> <p>The Panel recommended that management of the environment could be a challenge and this does need to continue to be closely managed and monitored.</p>

2.9 Criterion 9

There are sound teaching and learning strategies	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The programme adopts a multi-modal teaching and learning approach which ensures that learners are exposed to a variety of teaching methods and learning strategies.</p> <p>The Panel felt that there is the right balance between practise, theory & assessments and that the teaching and learning strategies were well considered by the team. Also the inclusion a work experience module greatly enriches this pedagogical experience.</p> <p>The Panel agreed the teaching and learning strategies were sound and fit for purpose.</p>

2.10 Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The programme assessment strategy includes a strong emphasis on continuous assessment. The Faculty has introduced a common module structure across the Faculty & this structure endeavours to balance the work and simultaneous assessment loads for the students across the entire programme.</p> <p>The Panel felt the assessment strategy was well structured including the assessment of the work placement module. In particular, the use of student blogs which are in essence online learning communities, during work experience was a good example of use of a range of resources.</p> <p>The Panel was satisfied that assessment strategies were sound for the programme.</p>

2.11 Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel was of the view that, overall, learners will be informed, guided and cared for.</p> <p>Good supports are in place for the students including the programme management structure which includes a co-ordinator for each stage, a module lead & a programme coordinator. This hierarchical structure was seen as very effective.</p> <p>Students also benefit from extensive technical support, industry input/engagements and the full complement of Student Support Services including professional services in the areas of Careers, Health and Student Counselling, Access to Education and Learning Support, Disability Services, Assistive Technology as well as coordination of the First Year Matters (FYM) programme for Undergraduate students.</p> <p>The Panel agreed that the Transitional Studies modules in the early stages of the programme was of benefit to students.</p>

2.12 Criterion 12

The programme is well managed	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel met with the Head of Faculty, the Head of Department and the Programme team who manage the programme.</p> <p>It was advised that IADT has a robust system in place to manage the ongoing quality of the programme and that programmes are reviewed annually through internal processes and will undergo Programmatic Review every 5 years.</p> <p>The Panel was satisfied that the programme is well managed & commended the team on their work and also for the development of a very well structured and informative programme document.</p>

Part 3 Overall Recommendation

3.1 Principal Programme

Select One	
*	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that IADT can be satisfied in the context of Unit 2.3 of Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training)
	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition); these may include proposed pre-validation conditions, i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria before QQI makes a determination
	Not satisfactory

3.1.1 Reasons for the Overall Recommendation

4 Commendations

The Panel commended the programme team for their enthusiasm and hard work to develop this programme, which the Panel felt will be of real benefit to students.

5. Summary of Recommended Special Conditions of Validation

None

6 Summary of Recommendations to the Provider

7 Declarations of Evaluators' Interests

7.1 I wish to declare the following interests and understand that this declaration will be included in the validation report.

n/a
None

7.2 I have read the above and confirm that I do not have any conflicts of interest in participating in the application for validation by IADT of the BA (Hons) Interaction + User Experience (IUXD) programme.

7.3 I understand that the validation application documentations and materials are confidential and must, along with any copies made, be returned to IADT or destroyed once the Independent Evaluation Report has been finalised. I understand that application materials are provided for evaluation purposes only and must not be distributed or used for other purposes. This applies equally to any copies made for evaluation or back-up purposes. I further understand that all communications concerning the validation process are confidential and that the publishable outcome of the process is the Independent Evaluation Report. I understand that IADT is subject to Freedom of Information legislation and IADT records are subject to requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

Panel Member Name (Print)	Brenda Duggan
Signed by Panel Member	
Date	09/03/2020

Panel Member Name (Print)	Anita Heavey
Signed by Panel Member	
Date	10/03/2020

7 Signature of Chairperson

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the Chairperson.

Panel Chairperson Name	Jane Burns
Panel Chairperson Signature	
Date	March 10, 2020

8 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While IADT has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will IADT be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Response to Programme Validation Report

BA (Hons) Interaction and User Experience Design

28th April 2020

The programme team would like to thank the chair, academic expert, and industry expert for their time and diligence in reviewing the proposed programme.

Response to recommendations

1. The Panel recommended that a strong marketing campaign is developed. For parents and students leaving the second level system there is not a strong understanding of what design opportunities exist, let alone Interaction and User Experience Design. This is a sophisticated programme offering and the team should utilise their story-telling expertise, along with leveraging their strong industry, alumni and school linkages.

Response: The Institute is committed to developing a comprehensive marketing campaign that will target both prospective students and key stakeholders, including parents and career guidance counsellors. The objective of this campaign will be to communicate what Interaction and User Experience Design is, as a field of study/work, and to showcase what this specific course has to offer. This will complement IADT's primary marketing activities such as Higher Options, open days, school visits and taster days.

2. The Essential Reading lists should be reviewed with a view to reducing the number of references.

Response: The reading lists will be reviewed to ensure there are a small number of references listed as Essential Reading and that this is consistent across all modules.

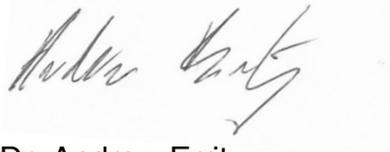
3. The Panel recommended that due to the perceived heavy workload, that appropriate staff supports should be in place and that these are continuously assessed.

Response: The Institute is bound by the Organisation of Working Time Act and nationally agreed academic contracts which specify the maximum number of hours a staff member can work in a given year/week. Management will allocate staff workload as per this act and these contracts. The overall workload of staff

will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure heavy periods of work (e.g. periods of assessment towards the end of modules) are suitably spaced out over the year and are manageable within a lecturer's working week. Additional supports, such as Tutor Demonstrators, will be made available where required and feasible.

4. Due to the dynamic nature of the content, the management of the learning environment could be a challenge, the Panel recommended that this is continuously monitored & appropriately managed.

Response: The suitability of the learning environment will be continuously monitored to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose. This will include ensuring suitable physical and digital resources are available to both staff and students. Furthermore, staff will be encouraged to engage in the professional development required to stay on top of a dynamic field. For example, staff will be supported to attend conferences, complete online training and participate in meet-ups/networking events.



Dr. Andrew Errity

Head of Department of Technology and Psychology
Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology