Panel Validation Report

Master of Arts
in Interdisciplinary Design Strategies
Level 9

Programme Code: DL_XXX

Date of Panel: Tuesday 22nd November 2016

Panel members

Chairperson	Dr Kenneth Carroll Registrar Tallaght Institute of Technology
Academic	Mr Liam McComish Senior Lecturer Graphic and Advertising Design Ulster University, Belfast
Academic	Mr Paul Kenny Lecturer School of Architecture UCD, Dublin
Industry	Mr John Wood Head of Practice Each and Other Dublin
Industry	Mr Donal O'Mahony Head of UX and Design Fleetmatics Dublin
IADT	Dr Annie Doona, President Dr Andrew Power, Registrar Mr David Smith, Head Faculty Film, Art & Creative Technologies Mr Liam Doona, Head of Department of Design and Visual Arts Ms Jessica Fuller, Head of Creative Engagement Programme Team: Dr Andrew Errity Ms Shirley Casey Mr Clyde Doyle Apologies: Dr Hilary Kenna Panel Administration: Ms Laura Devlin

Overview of Programme

The Masters programme is a 90 credit, full time programme of 13 month's duration. The programme is a partnership between IADT and George Brown College, Canada. For Canadian students, who complete the postgraduate diploma for 60 credits in Canada, the pathway for completing the Masters is in Ireland, with 30 credits allocated to the major project. George Brown College learning outcomes and credits mapped against IADT to achieve equivalency. The programme will provide transnational opportunities for both Irish and Canadian students.

Private panel meeting

Issues noted for discussion with programme team included:

- Demand for the programme
- Opportunities for part time students
- Industry partnerships
- Work based projects
- Career opportunities
- Student workload
- Assessment strategies
- Student cohort
- Module content

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.

Meeting of panel/head of department/programme team

Demand for the programme:

The proposal will build on the success of the MSc in User Experience Design, currently running at IADT. Both programmes are philosophically similar, and there will be some overlapping of content. However, the MSc focuses primarily on software, while the MA in Interdisciplinary Design focuses on strategic practices within the industry, thus it is anticipated the cohort for the latter programme will be more diverse. Industry research has indicated a growing demand for students who can demonstrate a skills and knowledge base across multi discipline work environments.

Part time offering:

The course over 13 months is split into three semesters and it is difficult to envisage how this tight, compact timeline would fit a part time mode of delivery.   However the team are open to reviewing delivery modes in the future.

Industry partnerships:

Although the initial partnership is with IBM the aim is to broaden out collaborations. Letters of support for the programme are strongly in favour, with companies endorsing the proposal, while others are keen to have their industry representatives as visiting lecturers on the programme.

Work based projects:

The industry projects are complex and multi-disciplinary and will reflect and enhance the kind of partnerships IADT will forge with companies. Companies will put out live projects for students to work on. All charrettes around the planning of such projects are collaborative, ensuring each student has an input.

Career opportunities:

Students will gain blended practices and experiences on the programme, thus ensuring a broad range of career opportunities in areas such as design leadership, technology design and product development, cultural institutions/architecture and consultancy work.

Student workload:

The panel noted the high number of modules on the programme. The workload is published at the beginning of the year. Students falling behind are identified.
While the load may look large, not all assessments are discrete.
Charettes are new on IADT programmes and now formally on the schedule.

Assessment strategies:

The programme has a mixture of project assessment and continuous assessment. The team monitor how students work in groups. Assessments are clearly and carefully mapped out for students. Feedback to students is an integral part of the process.

Student Cohort:

The initial intake is expected to be between 15 – 20 students, with a plan to grow numbers over time. It is anticipated most initial students will be older and coming onto the programme with work experience.
RPL Applicants - the Institute also has a tried and tested Recognition of Prior Learning policy in place.

Module content:
The team will consider the options of offering electives on the programme at a future date. All modules are new, co-authored with Canadian partners at George Brown College. The 100 hours of directed study may be high, but is a support for students with

1. Applied Design Development – 10 credits
    The module combines integrated basic skills in design, concept development and presentation. Students learn to write design briefs and business cases.

2. Design Issues: History and Theory – 5 credits
    This is a practical course. Students learn to plan a design strategy, carry out research, identify appropriate applications and communicate the concept. Ideally the work will be carried out with a real industry partner, is quite a large project and the research deliverable could be useful to the industry partner.
    Noted: The panel felt the purpose of this module could be made more clear in the document to contextualise the history element. For example, a new title of 'Theory in Context' would be helpful.

3. Design Strategy Research – 5 credits
    With this module, the student builds on skills from developed on modules Design Strategy/Application and Design Strategy/Communication.   The student learns to apply appropriate tools and methodologies for research, in preparation for the Major Project module.

4. National Charette – 5 credits
    The National Charette happens early on the programme. Industry leaders are invited in to talk to students, and strategic methods are outlined by previous IADT graduates, to help students understand the dynamics of how to explore design issues and develop solutions as part of a team.

5. Integrated Design Process – 10 credits
    Following on from the first semester, the student prepares to apply a design strategy for the Final Project as set out by the project team and industry partners.

6. Design Strategy: Application – 10 credits
    Students learn to apply the integrated strategy to a project, incorporating research, insights and scope, with reference to specific client requirements.

7. Design Strategy: Communication – 10 credits
    Students work to visualise and communicate the research and concepts conceived in the first semester, in constant communication with the project partner. This takes place in parallel with the Design Strategy/Application work.

8. <u>International Charette – 5 credits</u>
    With the International Charette, students learn to manage projects and make decisions. This is an intensive collaborative project that brings students with different discipline skills together.

9. <u>Final Project Proposal – 5 credits</u>
    Students at this stage are learning to manage their own design project with an end view of creating and developing an integrated design process for a real world client.

10. <u>Final Charette – 5 credits</u>
    Students learn how to liaise with clients to negotiate and develop a design brief.

11. <u>Final Project – 20 credits</u>
    Students are matched with the appropriate supervisor. Students will be required to travel to broad opportunities. Students learn how to manage an integrated design brief from start to finish.

Decision of the panel

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

Banner Code	Description	Credits
DLXXX	MA in Interdisciplinary Design Strategies	90
Wednesday 22nd November 2016		

Conditions

No conditions

Recommendations

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

1. Noting the high number of modules and assessments on the programme, the panel recommend the team develop a clear workload management strategy for students, to avoid a bottle neck effect on submission dates.

2. The panel recommend more explicit synthesis on the design of the programme.

3. The panel recommend developing a clear long term strategy, for the purpose of future proofing the programme.

4. Consider including an embedded/exit award in the programme.

5. Consider a part time delivery of the programme.

6. Review suite of modules with a view to providing a core number running alongside some electives, to provide choice for students.

7. Consider more emphasis on systems design; this is a core part of the programme.

8. The panel recommend more emphasis on business skills, to enable students to negotiate from the outset of a project to the end delivery.

9. The panel recommend a review of some modules with a view to simplifying and consolidating assessments. For example, the 3 Design Strategy modules (Research/Application/Communication) could be combined into a 25 credit module with combined assessments.

10. Consider the notion of holistic assessment, to enable better connections between modules. In this regard, the panel noted the Final Project does not capitalise on the interdisciplinary nature of the programme.

11. The panel noted the inclusion of a reflective journal/diary or blog would be a useful tool for students on the programme.

12. Include more emphasis on the important skills of decision making, business, leadership, managing budgets etc., which students (a lot of who will work for themselves) will find very useful.

13. The initial partnership with IBM should be expanded to include a wider diversity of links across industry. A larger choice will ensure IADT retains its independent profile without being linked to one specific partner.

Commendations

- The panel noted the strong, strategic focus and alignment of the proposal, targeted at a clear niche market, well differentiated from competitors.

- The panel urged to team to retain a strong sense of IADT's identity within any partnerships and collaborations, and not to let this uniqueness be subsumed by other, outside agendas.

- The panel commended the proposal's initial simple focus on addressing the needs of the market; opportunities and pathways can be expanded further as demand for the programme grows.

Panel signatures

Chairperson

Dr Kenneth Carroll   _____   Date _____

Secretary

Dr Andrew Power   _____   Date _____

MA Interdisciplinary Design Response to Panel, January 2017

1. Review of Course schedule and embedded Exit Awards

Semester 1 (30) embedded PG Cert			Semester 2 (30) embedded PG Dip			Semester 3 (30) MA		
Design Issues: Research (5c)			**Design Issues: Theory & Context (5c)**					
Applied Design Dev	Integrated Design Process	National Charrette	Design Strategy: Applications	Intnl. Charrette	Design Strategy: Comms	Final Project Proposal	Final Charrette	Final Project
10c	10c	5c	10c	5c	10c	5c	5c	20c

2. Response to Panel Recommendations

1	**Noting the high number of modules and assessments on the programme, the panel recommend the team develop a clear workload management strategy for students, to avoid a bottle neck effect on submission dates.**	The programme team have reviewed the course schedule and have proposed a more balanced distribution of modules and assessment. The Programme handbook will include an assessment schedule to ensure that there are few if any "bottlenecks". In addition the team will seek to vary the modes of assessment and feedback.
2	**The panel recommend more explicit synthesis on the design of the programme.**	Please see statement included in Programme aims on pp15 and note above and response to point 10 below on holistic assessment.
3	**The panel recommend developing a clear long term strategy, for the purpose of future proofing the programme.**	Programme team welcome the opportunity to establish an Industry Advisory Panel; whose input along with our external partners and visiting lecturers (from Industry) will ensure that the programme remains current and cognisant of the expectations and demands of all stakeholders.
4	**Consider including an embedded/exit award in the programme.**	Noted and implemented. Please see notes on p13 of document.
5	**Consider part-time delivery of the programme**	Subject to resources, full-time delivery is a pilot model with the aim to develop a part-time option in the medium term.
6	**Review suite of modules with a view to providing a core number running alongside some electives, to provide choice for students.**	There are medium to long-term aims at IADT to run postgrad elective modules pending validation of additional programmes in cognate disciplines.
7	**Consider more emphasis on systems design; this is a core part of the programme.**	In response there will an additional emphasis on systems design and systems thinking in the following modules: Design Issues: Research; Integrated Design Process.
8	**The panel recommend more emphasis on business skills, to enable students to negotiate from the outset of a project to the end delivery.**	As well as creating business cases for design projects using tools delivered in the Integrated design Process module, we will include a requirement for a business case to be an additional outcome of the final project submission and charrette presentations.
9	**The panel recommend a review of some modules with a view to simplifying and consolidating assessments. For example, the 3 Design Strategy modules (Research/Application/Communication) could be combined into a 25 credit module with combined assessments.**	As a result of a module review the programme team have, instead of consolidation – which would mitigate against embedded awards, have retitled some modules and redistributed them.

10	**Consider the notion of holistic assessment, to enable better connections between modules. In this regard, the panel noted the Final Project does not capitalise on the interdisciplinary nature of the programme.**	Although not clear the current document (to be resolved) some assessments will overlap across modules, and some modules will have indicative grades which can be revisited at the end of the semester.
11	**The panel noted the inclusion of a reflective journal/diary or blog would be a useful tool for students on the programme.**	There will be a requirement for a reflective journal to be maintained throughout all the practical modules to be assessed as part of the CA some of which will feed into collaborative blogs.
12	**Include more emphasis on the important skills of decision making, business, leadership, managing budgets etc., which students (a lot of who will work for themselves) will find very useful.**	The culture of the programme encourages the continual development of these skills throughout the student's practice.
13	**The initial partnership with IBM should be expanded to include a wider diversity of links across industry. A larger choice will ensure IADT retains its independent profile without being linked to one specific partner.**	There are already a number of additional partnerships in existence including Accenture, Bank of Ireland and Deloitte Digital. There are also a number in development across a variety of industries. We also anticipate that both DLRCoCo and Dublin City will be active and engaged partners (and stakeholders) in our Charettes and Live Projects.