



Date of Meeting: 9 December 2010

Named Award: Master of Arts
Programme Title: Master of Arts in Art and Process
Award Type: Masters Degree
Award Class: Major
NFQ Level: 9
Intakes Commencing: February 2011
ECTS/ACCS Credits: 90

PANEL MEMBERS

Name
Mr Liam Doona, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art Design & Technology - CHAIR
Dr Martha Blassnigg, University of Plymouth
Professor Philip Napier, The National College of Art and Design
Mr Alistair Wilson, School of Art and Design, University of Ulster
Mr Ed Riordan, Deputy Registrar and Head of Academic Quality, CIT

PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name
Ms Trish Brennan, Department of Fine Art & Design, CCAD
Ms Lucy Dawe-Lane, Department of Fine Art & Design, CCAD
Ms Orla Flynn, Head of College, CCAD
Ms Sarah Foster, Department of Fine Art & Design, CCAD
Mr Kevin Gill, Department of Fine Art & Design, CCAD
Dr Ailbhe Ni Bhriain, Department of Fine Art & Design, CCAD

BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

This 12-month taught masters programme is proposed by the Department of Fine Art & Design in Crawford College of Art & Design. Currently, there is no Fine Art taught masters programme available in the Cork region. While opportunities to pursue masters degrees by research have been available in CCAD the programme team is confident that there is a further demand for a taught Masters with a structured approach.

FINDINGS OF THE PANEL

1. General Findings

*NOTE: In this report, the term “Requirement” is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the Panel **must** be undertaken prior to commencement of the Programme. The term “Recommendation” indicates an item to which the Institute/Academic Council/Course Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of ongoing monitoring.*

The Panel commends the programme team on the documentation provided and for the lively discussion during the validation meeting.

2. Validation Criteria

The Panel has considered the documentation provided and has discussed the programme with the proposers. The panel has concluded that the programme meets the required standards in the Arts field of study at Level 9 of the National Framework.

The proposed Programme Outcomes as presented to the Panel are attached as Appendix 1.

The Semester Schedules as proposed are in Appendix 2.

The Panel notes that this course aims to break down the barrier between academic studies and studio practice by harnessing the excellent skills base that exists in CCAD, while engaging with contemporary practice. The panel acknowledges that certain topics appear across two/three modules to emphasise the synergies between theory and practice.

Requirement: A document should be prepared (in effect an updated submission) which will reflect the approach to teaching, learning and assessment as outlined by the programme team in discussions. This will incorporate and develop the overview of the programme structure and the assessment regime documents as circulated at the meeting.

The description of the bridging between theory and practice could be strengthened in the document, whilst also describing how this bridging contributes to and is appropriate learning for a Level 9 masters programme.

In parallel with the above document, the Student Handbook and the promotional description of the MA should be developed.

With regard to the CIT Validation Criteria:

2.1 Is there a convincing need for the programme with a viable level of applications?

YES. The panel is of the view that the programme needs to be documented in a format that is attractive and accurate. This will assist the course team and also incoming potential students. The uniqueness of CCAD, its external partnerships, and its inter-disciplinary links within CIT should all be highlighted. As regards prospective students, the programme team confirms that there is a list of CCAD graduates and interested parties on file who have made enquiries regarding this new programme. It is noted that portfolios will be required for all applicants.

2.2 Are the level and type of the proposed award appropriate?

YES.

2.3 Is the learning experience of an appropriate level, standard and quality?

YES. The programme consists of a mix of 5-credit modules and three larger-credit modules. The Panel noted the general CIT policy in regard to 5-credit modules, and also noted that derogations are permissible by exception. The Panel accepts the rationale that in a Level 9 Masters programme with a studio/practice focus the student needs space and time to explore concepts and develop a personal vision and body of work. Accordingly the credits allocated to the studio modules are recommended for approval. Indeed, it could be argued that the 5-credit modules within this programme tend to “atomise” material and themes that might be

better distributed into larger 10-credit modules. The panel is aware that this could be a bridge too far in the context of current CIT policy.

Requirement: The terminology used in the programme outcomes should be strengthened where appropriate to reflect the challenges of a Level 9 programme.

Recommendation: The CIT Review of Modularisation and Semesterisation is asked to consider the situation of studio/practice programmes such as this one which have a personal and creative focus. The programme team is recommended to engage with the forthcoming M&S review.

2.4 Is the programme structure logical and well designed (including procedures for access, transfer and progression)?

YES. The attractiveness of the programme, once established, will have to be sustained into the future if long-term viability is to be assured. The maximum initial student intake will be limited to 15. The number of admissions will depend on the quality of the applicants. The option of running the programme every two years may be explored.

Requirement: Criteria for assessment of the applicant's portfolio and written statement should be clearly outlined in the revised document. It was noted that procedures for determining eligibility on the basis of RPL are well established under a general CIT Policy.

Recommendation: Setting strict entry requirements should be avoided so as to attract the correct cohort of students.

2.5 Are the programme management structures adequate?

YES. A Course Board will operate for this new programme, in line with the Institute's QA system.

The role of external advisors is established throughout CIT, across the disciplines. Formal external advisory links are currently being developed by CCAD. The college already has very good relationships with practitioners in the community.

2.6 Are the resource requirements reasonable?

The Panel was assured on behalf of the President and Head of College that appropriate resources in terms of staffing and facilities will be put in place when the programme is validated.

Newly acquired studio space which will be shared among undergraduate and postgraduate students will further assist in the continued collaboration and sharing of ideas amongst the CCAD community.

Recommendation: The panel recommends that CCAD would have full access to JSTOR as current access is restricted to Irish editions of journals.

2.7 Will the impact of the programme on the Institute be positive?

YES. There is a good fit with the CIT and CCAD mission and strategy.

3. Programme Structure

The Panel notes that the programme structure had already been the subject of external peer evaluation at an earlier QA stage.

It is noted that this is a very intensive programme with quite a heavy workload. The timing of delivery of material is important in terms of balancing theoretical and practical content.

The summer period (semester 3) can be a time when student supports may dissipate somewhat. Precedence exists elsewhere in the Institute as regards other 12-month taught masters programmes. Students will have full engagement with their supervisors right up to the end of June and from the start of September.

Recommendation: The panel notes that students' critiquing skills need to be well established if they are to be left to their own devices for a significant period of time. The learning outcomes to be achieved in semesters 1 and 2 need to reflect these skills.

Requirement: The Institute needs to satisfy itself that the baseline student will be able to cope over the summer period, not just the high achieving student. Close monitoring of these arrangements should be undertaken in the first cohort.

Requirement: The provision of small working groups within the cohort should be explored especially in terms of the summer months and the mutual support that small groups can offer.

4. Specific Modules

The Panel was informed that the new draft modules have been the subject of internal and external scrutiny by the CIT Module Moderator and external reviewers.

In exercising its brief to consider the overall standard and appropriateness of modules, the Panel wishes to add the following observations.

Module: Research Practice

Requirement: In week 5 students are required to submit a 3-4k word essay. This is quite an onerous task so early in the semester. The assessment timing or the workload should be re-examined for this module.

Module: Situation

Recommendation: The context of this module clearly shows the integrative nature of the programme. This module should be further developed and amended as the programme progresses. The layout and wording of the module content should be amended as appropriate.

5. Conclusions

Learning outcomes, for all modules, should be re-examined and amended as appropriate to ensure that they challenge the student to reach Level 9 standards. It was noted that in some cases the terminology used in the module descriptions is clearer than that in the module learning outcomes.

The Panel recommends that the Programme be validated for five years, or until the next programmatic review, whichever is sooner, subject to implementation of the Requirements above, and with due regard to the Recommendations made.

APPENDIX 1 –

Programme Outcomes

On successful completion of this programme the learner will be able to :

PO1	Knowledge - Breadth	A clear understanding of the range, complexity and history of contemporary fine art practice, a systematic understanding of how philosophical, theoretical and critical writing has contributed to the understanding and production of art, and an awareness and understanding of material and media processes related to the making of contemporary fine art and employ this knowledge in the production of a professional quality body of work.
PO2	Knowledge - Kind	An advanced knowledge of how the contemporary art world's institutional structures, practices and discourses function both nationally and internationally, a critical and thorough awareness of current fine art practice and debates, informed through active research and a comprehensive awareness of the range of professional activities within the world of contemporary fine art.
PO3	Skill - Range	A range of research tools and techniques of enquiry to chosen ideas, concepts and areas of research, a critical comprehension of the methodologies and the range of divergent approaches that constitute contemporary art practice and an ability to develop, implement and evaluate specific fine art works/events/projects ensuring practical realisation and delivery of appropriate outcomes. Utilise and extend the range of skills appropriate to an advanced level in the realisation of art-works.
PO4	Skill - Selectivity	An ability to undertake systematic analysis and clearly present complex ideas and concepts related to the field of contemporary fine art practice and discourse, an advanced and appropriate use of materials, processes and environments relevant to practice, and an ability to conduct informed independent research appropriate to chosen concepts and/or areas of enquiry.
PO5	Competence - Context	An ability and willingness to test the possibilities and boundaries of current practice, demonstrating the confidence to work in areas of uncertainty and unfamiliarity. An awareness of (and the confidence to access) professional art institutions/networks through the initiation and realisation of collaborative events, and an understanding and ability to plan and present personal research contributing to the development of a research culture within the institution and the national art scene.
PO6	Competence - Role	An ability to initiate and lead activity, thereby contributing to individual and peer learning and an ability to interact professionally with relevant experts and institutions.
PO7	Competence - Learning to Learn	The establishment of a learning pattern for continued research and professional practice. Devise, exploit and evaluate a strategy to continuously expand, progress and improve academic and professional development within a fine art context.
PO8	Competence - Insight	The construction of a personal perspective in relation to historicism, current theoretical debates, cultural contextualisation, critical thinking and application of insights, and clearly communicate these insights through oral, written and visual means within a broader societal framework.

Appendix 2 – Semester Schedules

Semester 1

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	MA Research Practices 501 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	2.00	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Fine Art Studio 501 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	15.0	3.85	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA: Institutions and practices (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	3.00	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Situations 501 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	2.00	0.00	100.0%	0%

Semester 2

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	MA Fine Art Studio 502 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	15.0	2.80	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Fine Art Placing Practice (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	2.00	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Contextual Research 502 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	10.0	0.50	0.00	100.0%	0%

Semester 3

Mandatory								
Mod Code	Module Title	Co-ordinator	Level	Credits	FT Hours Contact Hours	PT Hours Contact Hours	Course Work	Final Exam
No Code Yet	MA Fine Art Studio 503 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	20.0	7.00	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Fine Art - Productions (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	2.00	0.00	100.0%	0%
No Code Yet	MA Interactions 503 (Draft)	KEVIN GILL	Expert	5.0	2.00	0.00	100.0%	0%