

**Date of Meeting:** 14 March 2013

<b>Named Award:</b>	Master of Arts
<b>Programme Title:</b>	Documentary Film & Photography
<b>Award Type:</b>	Masters Degree
<b>Award Class:</b>	Major Award
<b>NFQ Level:</b>	Level 9
<b>Intakes Commencing:</b>	September 2013
<b>ECTS/ACCS Credits:</b>	90

#### PANEL MEMBERS

Name / Function / Institution
Dr Hugh McGlynn, Head, School of Science and Informatics, CIT (Chair)
Mr Niall Mahony, Cork Screen Commission
Mr Mick Hannigan, Director, Cork Film Festival
Ms Celine Curtin, Lecturer in Film, GMIT
Mr Roger Greene, Lecturer in Film, IADT
Ms Marese Bermingham, Registrars Office, CIT

#### PROPOSING TEAM MEMBERS

Name / Function / Department
Ms Orla Flynn, Head of School, CIT Crawford College of Art & Design
Ms Rose McGrath, Head, Department of Media Communications
Mr Philip Curtin, Lecturer, Department of Media Communications
Mr Padraig Trehy, Lecturer, Department of Media Communications
Mr Hugh McCarthy, Lecturer, CIT Cork School of Music

#### BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME

The proposal seeks validation for a one-year (3 semesters, 90 credits) Master of Arts in Documentary Film & Photography which has been developed by the the Department of Media Communications within CIT Crawford College of Art & Design. The proposers outlined the need for such a programme in the Munster area and described the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed programme intake and structure.

The Panel wishes to commend the proposers on their work and dedication in putting together this programme proposal, and to thank them for their constructive and informed engagement with the Validation Panel during the panel sessions. The panel support and encourage the further development of this programme in line with the requirements and recommendations made by panel. Panel members also clearly stated their belief that there is a market for such a post-graduate opportunity if reconstituted to take account of the various technical skills levels that potential applicants would have.

## FINDINGS OF THE PANEL

*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.*

### 1. Programme-Level Findings

#### 1.1 NEED FOR THE PROGRAMME

**Validation Criterion: Is there a convincing need for the programme with a viable level of applications?**

Overall Finding: The panel is concerned that, to achieve a viable number of applicants, students from a variety of backgrounds may be required for this programme and this may result in a mismatch between the incoming skills of the applicants and the skills required to succeed in the programme.

#### 1.2 AWARD

**Validation Criterion: Are the level and type of the proposed award appropriate?**

Overall Finding: Yes

#### 1.3 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

**Validation Criterion: Is the learning experience of an appropriate level, standard and quality overall?**

Overall Finding: The panel is concerned that some of the proposed intake of 20 students, drawn from a range of backgrounds within the creative disciplines, may have insufficient pre-requisite skills needed to undertake a MA project to an industry standard.

#### 1.4 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

**Validation Criterion: Is the programme structure logical and well designed (including procedures for access, transfer and progression)?**

Overall Finding: The panel is concerned about the content of the proposed programme and the proposed title. In particular, it was felt that Photography was not well catered for within the mix of modules offered. The proposers may wish to consider:

- a) Removing photography from the title.
- b) Reviewing the mix of modules and adding additional modules related to photography and the documentary photography profession.
- c) Given the highly disparate nature of the two professions, developing two separate but related programmes Masters in Documentary Film and Masters in Documentary Photography which would address the different needs of the two professions yet still share a number of core modules for sustainability purposes.



## 1.5 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

### **Validation Criterion: Are the programme management structures adequate?**

Overall Finding: Panel were concerned about an enunciated plan to rely on external experts/ guest lecturers to deliver significant elements of the programme. Panel felt strongly that an apparent heavy reliance on external experts was not accompanied by a clear protocol on who and when to bring them in. This could, it was felt, create programme management issues and should be addressed.

## 1.6 RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

### **Validation Criterion: Are the resource requirements reasonable?**

Overall Finding: Yes

## 1.7 IMPACT ON THE INSTITUTE

### **Validation Criterion: Will the impact of the programme on the Institute be positive?**

Overall Finding: With adjustments this programme could have a very positive impact on the Institute.

## 2. Module-Level Findings

The panel expressed concerns with respect to a number of modules within the programme, these include:

- 2.1 Music & Technology Module. This module was a prior approved module from another offering within CIT. The panel would recommend that the proposers consider developing a module to include post production specifically for this programme. This module to focus on capturing good live/multiple source location sound with studio sound recording included to a lesser extent.
- 2.2 Production Technology. The panel would recommend that this module be replaced with a module on either
  - a) Entrepreneurship in the Film Industry, or,
  - b) Technology Skills which may address some of the concerns regarding the skills profile of the incoming students and the requirements for the large credit capstone Documentary Project module.
- 2.3 Documentary Project. The panel had some serious concerns regarding how students with a mix of technical abilities and competencies would be enabled to deliver a completed documentary as the major assessment element of this module. Panel would like to see an explicit and detailed plan for technical support and supervision of students. The panel felt that more consideration of cost of production and cost of crew implications for students was needed. Clear parameters for project assessment are necessary to describe what/who is being assessed when a variety of crews are being used by students.

Furthermore, the panel believe that, to complete an industry standard project, students are required to have a suite of technical skills which are currently not addressed through the mix of modules on offer in this programme. Students, whose primary degree did not develop their technical skills, may struggle with certain aspects of the project. The panel therefore recommend

that additional training through a Technology Skills module or other mechanism be considered for inclusion in the programme.

### **3. Conclusion**

At this time, the panel are recommending that the Programme in its current form should not be approved.