



## Response to the Report of the Programme Validation Panel

**Date: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

<b>Named Award:</b>	Higher Diploma
<b>Programme Title(s):</b>	<i>Higher Diploma in Science in 3D Computer Animation</i>
<b>Exit Award(s):</b>	n/a
<b>Award Class:</b>	Major
<b>Delivery Mode:</b>	Part-time/Blended
<b>NFQ Level:</b>	8
<b>ECTS / ACCS Credits:</b>	75
<b>First Intake:</b>	January 2017

### Panel Members

Dr Kenneth Carroll	Chair	Registrar, Institute of Technology Tallaght
Ms Nollaig Crombie	External Academic	Head of Department of Design and Creative Media, Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Mr David Quin	External Academic	Lecturer in Animation, National Film School, Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies, IADT Dun Laoghaire
Mr Joe Kilbride	Industry Expert	Director, Emberlight
Dr Breda Brennan	Secretary to the Panel	Assistant Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology

### Programme Development Team

Dr Brendan Ryder, Head of Department of Visual and Human Centred Computing		
Dr Gerard (Bob) McKiernan, Head of School of Informatics and Creative Arts		
Mr Michael Connolly (Programme Director)		
Dr Bride Mallon	Dr Ronan Lynch	Mr JJ Quinlan
Dr Derek Flood	Mr Lorcan Dunne	Dr John Loane
Mr Eamonn Crudden	Mr Niall Mc Guinness	Mr Gerry Gallagher
Mr Fiachra O Cuinneagain	Mr Peter Morris	

## 1 Introduction

The following report to Academic Council is a validation panel report from an expert panel of assessors on a proposal from the School of Informatics and Creative Arts at Dundalk Institute of Technology to design the following programme:

- *Higher Diploma in Science in 3D Computer Animation*

The evaluators would like to thank the members of the development team for engaging generously and openly with the review process.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Background to Proposed Programme
- General Findings of the Validation Panel
- Programme-Level Findings
- Module-Level Findings

## 2 Background to Proposed Programme

See programme submission for more detailed information.

## 3 General Findings of the Validation Panel

The panel congratulate the programme development team on their team spirit, level of engagement and the quality of their disciplinary and pedagogical experience. The panel also commend the student centred approach evident in the management of students and provision of optimum opportunities to succeed. The lifelong learning aspect of the programme is also to be commended, whereby opportunities are being created for a cohort of people to change career direction. The quality assurance is well described and robust with ample policies and procedures in place, with student input. There is considerable cross-modular learning within the programme which could be more evident in the document but was very apparent in the discussions.

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the programme development team, the validation panel recommends the following:

### Higher Diploma in Science in 3D Computer Animation

Accredited for the next five academic years or until the next programmatic review, whichever occurs sooner	
Accredited for 5 years subject to conditions and/or recommendations	<b>X</b>
Re-designed and re-submitted to the same validation panel after additional developmental work	
Not Accredited	

Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined below and a response document describing the actions of the Department to address the conditions and recommendations made by the programme validation panel. In this report, the term Condition is used to indicate

an action or amendment which in the view of the validation panel must be undertaken prior to the commencement of the programme. Conditions are mandatory if the programme is to be approved. The term Recommendation indicates an item to which the Programme Board should give serious consideration for implementation at an early stage and which should be the subject of on-going monitoring.

## 4 Programme-Level Findings

This section of the report addresses the following programme level considerations:

- Demand
- Award
- Institute strategy alignment
- Entry requirements
- Access, transfer and progression
- Standards and Outcomes
- Programme structure
- Teaching and Learning Strategies
- Assessment Strategy
- Resource requirements
- Quality Assurance.

### 4.1 Demand

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is there a convincing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- None.

### 4.2 Award

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the level and type of the award appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- In the first review of the programme, reconsider the title and consider improving the focus of the programme (possibly through elective modules or enlargement of the programme

to overlap with other programme modules to create efficient elective choices) which is quite broad. It is recommended that the team re-focus on the technical aspects and reflect this in the title. Graduates should have 'expertise' in some area as befits a level 8 graduate, which might derive from the subject matter of the project.

### School Response

- The programme development team (and teaching team) will review the programme after its first iteration and will give due consideration to the recommendations made by the panel.

### 4.3 Institute Strategy Alignment

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the proposed programme aligned to the Institute's strategy and are the strategic themes of entrepreneurship, sustainability and internationalisation embedded in the proposed programme as appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- None.

### 4.4 Entry Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- None.

### 4.5 Access, Transfer and Progression

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the proposed programme incorporate the procedures for access, transfer and progression that have been established by the NQAI and does it accommodate a variety of access and entry requirements?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- None.

**4.6 Standards and Outcomes**

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the proposed programme meet the required award standards for programmes at the proposed NFQ level (i.e. conform to QQI Award Standards)?  For parent award? For exit award (if applicable)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

The awards standards requirements for programmes on the NFQ Framework can be found at <http://www.nfq-qqi.com/index.html>

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- None.

**4.7 Programme Structure**

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Is the programme structure logical and well designed and can the stated proposed programme outcomes in terms of employment skills and career opportunities be met by this programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- None.

**4.8 Teaching and Learning Strategies**

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate teaching and learning strategies been provided for the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- None.

**4.9 Assessment Strategies**

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the proposed programme (as outlined in the QQI/HETAC Assessment and Guidelines, 2009)?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

Assessment strategies are required in line with QQI's Assessment and Standards and should form a substantial part of the documentation to be considered by the programme validation panel. (See: <http://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Quality%20Assuring%20Assessment%20-%20Guidelines%20for%20Providers,%20Revised%202013.pdf>)

- Description and Rationale for the choice of assessment tasks, criteria and procedures. This should address fairness and consistency, specifically their validity, reliability and authenticity;
- Describe any special regulations;
- Regulate, build upon and integrate the module assessment strategies;
- Provide contingent strategy for cases where learners claim exemption from modules, including recognition of prior learning;
- Ensure the programme's continuous assessment workload is appropriately balanced;
- Relate to the teaching and learning strategy;
- Demonstrate how grading criteria will be developed to relate to the Institutional grading system.

The Institute resource entitled Assessment and Learning: A Policy for Dundalk Institute of Technology (Nov 2010) (<https://www.dkit.ie/celt/documents-and-policies/assessment-and-learning-guidelines-dundalk-institute-technology>) should also be consulted.

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- The integration of learning apparent in the discussion should be better reflected and more explicit within the programme documentation. The assessment workload should be reviewed with an appropriate student workload management strategy put in place to avoid over-burdening of students, and allowing more time for reflection by learners.
- Ensure that students are aware of continuous assessment policies and of the implications of fully continually assessed modules. It was noted that DkIT is in the process of developing a formal policy on the management of 100% CA based modules.

## School Response

- The programme assessment strategy will be updated to incorporate integrated authentic learning which will form the basis of the student workload management strategy.
- Students will be made aware of all policies and procedures relating to fully continually assessed modules. This will be included in the programme induction and ongoing as required as the programme is being delivered both face-to-face and online.

### 4.10 Resource Requirements

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the Institute possess the resources and facilities necessary to deliver the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- None.

### 4.11 Quality Assurance

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Does the proposed programme demonstrate how the Institute's quality assurance procedures have been applied and that satisfactory procedures exist for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

The Institute's Quality Assurance Procedures are published in the Academic Quality Assurance Manual available at: <https://www.dkit.ie/registrar/policies/academic-quality-manual> and include approved procedures for the on-going monitoring and periodic review of Programmes.

#### Condition(s):

- None.

#### Recommendation(s):

- None.

### 4.12 Module-Level Findings

#### Condition(s):

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- Consider enlarging the Project module and giving it more importance on the programme. Assign more credits as appropriate (at least 20% of the programme credits).
- Deepen the technical focus in each of the specialised areas, which will make the programme more sustainable going forward.

**School Response**

- The programme development team (and teaching team) will review the programme after its first iteration and will give due consideration to both recommendations made by the panel.

**4.13 Assessment Strategies**

<i>Validation Criterion:</i>	Have appropriate module assessment strategies been included in the proposed programme?
<i>Overall Finding:</i>	Yes

**Condition(s):**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- None.

**4.14 Other Findings****Condition(s)**

- None.

**Recommendation(s):**

- Ensure that in the public information provided, candidates are made aware of the intensive nature of the programme.

**School Response**

- The expectations of the programme, which will include its intensive nature, will be included in the programme induction and also in the programme documentation provided on the Institute's public website and also in the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle VLE) which will be used for programme delivery.



**Signed on behalf of the School:**

**Signed:**



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Dr Gerard (Bob) McKiernan,  
Head of School of Informatics and Creative Arts.

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

**Validation Panel Report & School Response Approved By:**

**Signed:**



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Dr Kenneth Carroll, Chairperson.

**Date:** 05-December-2016