

Report of External Peer Review Group for the Programmatic Review of:

Programme	Code	Level	ECTS	Duration	Award Type	Embedded Awards
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary	GA_HFILG_H08	8	180	3	Major	N/A
Certificate in Media Practice	GA_DDESG_B07	8	30	1	SPA	N/A
Certificate in Arts in Introduction to Digital Media for the Creative Arts	GA_DTVCG_S07	6	15	1	SPA	N/A

Date of Panel: 24th February 2022

External Peer Review Group:

Panel	
Dr. Joe McGarry, Educational Consultant	Dr. Joe McGarry, Educational Consultant
IoT/University Representative	Ms. Marina Hughes, Lecturer, School of Media, TU Dublin
IoT/University Representative	Mr. Daniel O'Connell, Lecturer, Film and Screen Media, UCC
Industry Representative	Ms. Sarah Dillon Development Manager, WRAP Fund
Graduate Representative	Mr. Luke Morgan Graduate of Film and Documentary
Secretary	Ms. Carmel Brennan, Assistant Registrar (Quality) GMIT

1 Introduction to Programmatic Review

Programmatic review involves a periodic, formal, systematic, comprehensive and reflective review and evaluation of each programme and award offered by the Institute for purposes of programme development, quality enhancement and revalidation. It is an important means of ensuring and assuring, *inter alia*:

- that required academic standards are being attained;
- that programmes and awards remain relevant and viable;
- that student needs, including academic and labour-market needs, are addressed;
- that the quality of programmes and awards is enhanced and improved;
- public confidence in the quality of GMIT's programmes and awards.

GMIT last conducted Programmatic Review in 2014 and was due to undertake it again in 2019/20. The process was delayed until this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The objective of a programmatic review is to review the development of the programme over the previous five to seven years, with particular emphasis on the achievement and improvement of educational quality. The focus is principally on the evaluation of quality and the flexibility of the programmes' responses to changing needs in light of the validation criteria and relevant awards standards. In particular, a programmatic review seeks to confirm that the promise evidenced at the original validation (or since the last programmatic review) in terms of academic quality, relevance and viability has been realised, and that the programme is adapting appropriately to evolving circumstances.

The specific objectives of a programmatic review are, *inter alia*, to:

- analyse and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, including details of student numbers, retention rates and success rates;
- review the development of the programme in the context of the requirements of employers, industry, professional bodies, the Irish economy and international developments;
- evaluate the response of the programme to regional and societal requirements and to educational developments;
- evaluate the feedback mechanisms for students and the processes for acting on this feedback;
- review the feedback from students relating to the student experience of the programme
- evaluate stakeholder engagement including links and collaboration with industry, business and the wider community;
- review feedback from employers and graduates;
- evaluate the physical facilities and resources provided for the provision of the programme;
- review any research activities in the field of learning in the disciplinary areas and their impact on teaching and learning;
- consider likely future developments in the disciplinary areas;
- make proposals in relation to updating programmes and modules, and to discontinuing programmes or parts of programmes.
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Academic Council identified three themes to be specifically addressed during the 2021/22 Programmatic Review namely:

- Assessment – ensure the assessment strategy and methodology are appropriate and aligned with learning outcomes and that students are not over-assessed.
- Employability – ensure that students develop career skills necessary to prepare them for employment. Embed professional practice (e.g., work placement, work-based projects in the programme, ensuring that there is an appropriate plan for their management)
- Sustainability – review modules and learning outcomes to ensure that the sustainability agenda is addressed, debated, and applied within student learning and assessment, as appropriate.

2 Methodology

The programmatic review process involves a self-evaluation by each programme board followed by an external peer review. The Programme board engaged in a process of the collection and review of data related to the programme and feedback from stakeholders including students, graduates and industry. The overall programme and each individual module have been reviewed and recommendation(s) for updates made as required.

The External Peer Review Group (EPRG) received a copy of the Self Evaluation Review documentation and the programme documentation including any proposed changes. The EPRG then met the Programme Board (Appendix A) to discuss the programme and the documentation provided, as well as meeting a representative sample of students (Appendix B). The schedule for the review visit is contained in Appendix C.

3 Background to Programme(s) Being Reviewed

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary and embedded Awards

The guiding rationale of the BA (Honours) in Film and Documentary is to produce graduates with a portfolio of skills sufficient to multi skill effectively within established roles across the film and documentary sector (as either freelancers or employees), or who wish to diversify and sustain careers using these same skill sets within more recent media and cultural arenas involving streaming and online media. The course 'footprint' therefore locates it firmly within Pillar 4 of the Creative Ireland 2017-22 program, which states: 'the key focus will be on Ireland's potential to be a global leader in film production, TV drama, documentary'. The current course originated back in 1998 as a National Diploma in Film & Television offered by Galway RTC, before being subsequently translated into a three-year honours degree as part of what was then the Cluain Mhuire campus of GMIT. Today it forms part of a thriving array of media, art, and design courses within the School of Design and Creative Arts (SDCA) at the Centre of Creative Arts & Media (CCAM) that constitute a major creative hub within the new Atlantic Technological University (ATU). Students are actively supported and encouraged to develop their creative potential within this broader industry context, finding that Galway provides an accessible terminus connecting them to the wider sphere of work in film and documentary production.

Certificate in Media Practice (SPA)

This programme is a 30-credit course for delivery within a work-based environment. The overall aims and objective are the provision of a conversion programme for the audio-visual industry through masterclasses and seminars. The applied practice approach seeks to develop the student's knowledge and understanding of the audio-visual sector. This programme has been developed in support of the recent significant reformation in TG4's commissioning process i.e., the introduction of significant output deals to a limited number of companies which highlighted a skills and knowledge shortfall in the talent pool for the Irish language production companies. A unique consortium including GMIT, TG4, Galway Film Centre and Greasan na Meán have come together to address the education and training needs of these students. The programme is run subject to industry demands.

Certificate in Arts in Introduction to Digital Media for the Creative Arts (SPA)

This course addresses the need for developing Digital Media skills for people in the Creative sector. There are many people from different backgrounds operating in this sector, many with basic formal education. This course is offering two modules at Level 6, taken from the 1st and 2nd year of the BA in Contemporary Art. They are designed for people with little or no previous experience with Digital Media and will bring them to a foundation level in using digital media.

4 General Findings of the External Peer Review Group

Having considered the documentation provided and discussed it with the Programme Board, the External Peer Review Group recommends the following for each of the programmes reviewed:

Accredited until the next programmatic review	
Accredited until the next programmatic review subject to conditions and/or recommendations ¹	X
Re-design and re-submit to the same External Peer Review Group after additional developmental work	
Not Accredited	

5 Programme-Level Findings – Bachelor of Arts (Hons)in Film and Documentary

Consideration for the panel	Overall finding: Yes/No/Partially
Is there an ongoing need for the programme and has evidence been provided to support it?	Yes
Is the level and type of the award appropriate?	Yes
Are the entry requirements for the proposed programme clear and appropriate?	Yes
Is there a relationship between this programme and further education?	Yes
Are the access, transfer and progression procedures appropriate?	Yes
Does the programme comply with the Institute norms for retention, both in first year and subsequent years? Where not, does the Programme Board proactively take appropriate measures to optimise student engagement and retention?	Yes
Does the programme meet the required standards for programmes at its NFQ level (i.e., conform to GMIT Award Standards ²)? For Parent Award? For Embedded Award(s) (if applicable)? For Exit Award (if applicable)? For Minor Award (if applicable)?	Yes
Is the programme structure logical, well designed, and can the stated programme intended learning outcomes, in terms of employment skills and career opportunities, be met by this programme?	Yes
Have appropriate learning and teaching strategies been provided for the programme that supports Student Centered Learning (SCL)?	Yes
Have appropriate programme assessment strategies been provided for the programme taking account of the student workload?	Yes
Is there evidence that learning, and teaching is informed by research?	Yes

¹ **Note:**

Approval is conditional on the submission of a revised programme document that takes account of the conditions and recommendations outlined in the report and a response document describing the actions to address the conditions and recommendations made by the External Peer Review Group (EPRG). In this report, the term ‘condition’ is used to indicate an action or amendment which in the view of the EPRG must be undertaken prior to the commencement of the next delivery 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.

² GMIT has adopted QQI’s award standards which are available [HERE](#).

Have appropriate quality management procedures been implemented in line with GMIT's Quality Assurance Framework? (e.g. Induction, Programme Handbook, Programme Board, Student Feedback, External Examiners)	Yes
Does the proposed programme demonstrate an international dimension? (e.g. content, mobility, collaboration)	Yes
Does the programme encompass sustainable development principles and ethos?	Yes
Does the programme embed employability through the inclusion of work placements, employment preparatory module(s) and/or work-based projects?	Yes
Is there evidence of strategies to promote diversity and inclusion?	Yes
Is entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation embedded in the programme?	Yes
Has the efficiency of the programme design been considered? For example, does the programme meet the Institute norms on staff:student ratios for programmes of this type?	Yes
Is the programme externally facing? (e.g. Stakeholder engagement, guest speakers, fieldtrips, applied projects)	Yes

There has been a slight dip in student numbers which may be influenced in part by the increase in programmes in this discipline. However, there is no issue filling the places available and there are early indications that the programme may be beginning an upward trajectory again as the industry experiences growth.

Both the new electives - Industry Project and Industry Engagement: Irish for Media – are grounded in industry, with the former providing opportunity for site visits and service learning. The rationale for the movement of Visual and Critical Studies to second year was student feedback stating that this module provided 'big picture' thinking which would aid arrival at a research question for the dissertation. Modules appear on the Approved Programme Schedule as yearlong but will be delivered in blocks with due consideration of student workload.

The programme has been updated in line with changes in the industry. There is increased emphasis on online content and digital storytelling, with students encouraged to think beyond the traditional focus on movies given the changing platforms and way in which content is consumed. Complementary programmes with a focus on new modes of creating and sharing content are being developed within the School.

The Programme Board maintain strong relationships with alumni, with graduates communicating job and training opportunities, and providing guest lectures. The alumni Facebook group aims to foster a community spirit beyond the duration of the programme.

The programme has strong links with local Further Education colleges, annually attracting several graduates of relevant FET programmes into stage one.

Staff on the programme are well informed by industry in relation to changes e.g., technology. This for example has led to VR being included in the programme. The means of engagement and means of production are changing rapidly, and staff engage in informal research to ensure they stay up to date with industry demands. This results in a need to continuously invest in this programme as new technologies emerge.

The three-year duration of the programme does not easily facilitate Erasmus mobility. However, the programme attracts a few international students annually who complete the entire programme. This diversity adds to the programme. Film is an international language and art form, and this influences the

programme syllabus and module resources. Field trips abroad were organised annually prior to the pandemic.

Irish film is embedded in the programme – in syllabi, practical course examples etc. However, this is not always explicit in the module descriptors.

Efforts are being made to embed sustainability in the content and delivery of the programme. Examples include teaching green film making, the use of sustainable materials in sets and the move to LED lighting.

Assessments are used on a continuous basis as a vehicle to provide feedback to students and improve learning. The staged approach to submissions of work is reflective of industry. There are linkages between a number of modules e.g., in editing students edit the work they have filmed in another class. Students also engage in self-reflection as a key element of their work.

The students the panel met were very positive about their experience. They appreciated the opportunity to try a range of subjects in stage one prior to making elective choices in subsequent years. This evidently had an impact on reinforcing or changing their minds about the direction they wished to take in the course. All would like to get further practical experience and engage more with industry events and companies in the region. Students would like the opportunity to engage in more short film productions rather than on a few big projects throughout their programme. The workload in year 3 was deemed challenging. The grouping of electives meant that students couldn't always choose the combination of electives desired, but it was appreciated that there may be timetabling issues which drove this structure. More content on dealing with actors, the art of directing and audience trends were suggested. The need for all graduates to have a knowledge of production practice was acknowledged. However, it was suggested that some of the more specialised content was only relevant for those who wished to work in this area. There was demand for more industry focussed content and more groupwork such as that in the proposed Industry Project module.

The primary changes proposed for the programme involved the introduction of new electives, module name changes, some sequencing changes and updates to module content. Modules were changed to yearlong as a student centric move to allow for student transition and retention. All changes as outlined in Appendix D were approved and the programme was accredited until the next programmatic review subject to the condition and recommendations below:

Commendation(s):

1. The introduction of an industry project which replicates employment will provide students with enhanced opportunities to learn valuable skills such as writing real briefs, working as part of a multi-disciplinary team, negotiating and working with clients. The engagement with community groups using service learning in this module will enhance student's civic engagement.
2. The use of VR demonstrates a level of research and advancing of the medium which is going through a transitional period.
3. The inclusion of Producing as a core subject area and the provision of craft skills as an option is positive and reflective of the needs of industry.
4. The inclusion of Production Design as a core element of the programme is unique and welcome.
5. The inclusion of 'Industry Engagement: Irish for Media' is a unique aspect of this programme and will both enhance opportunities for graduates and facilitate Production Companies delivering appropriate programmes for Irish Language Broadcasters.
6. Staff's enthusiasm and engagement with the industry was recognised as was the benefits this will bring to students.

Condition(s):

1. Revise the Programme Learning Outcomes to ensure that they more specifically reflect this programme.

Recommendation(s):

1. Develop a chart to show the sequencing and delivery of modules, showing that there is a balanced workload for students throughout the programme.
2. Clarify in the special regulations that students' elective choice in stage 3 is restricted based on the elective completed in stage 2.
3. Develop a formal programme of visiting lecturers whereby industry practitioners engage with students on this programme.
4. Staff are encouraged to actively engage in research and industry practice to inform their teaching. Student collaboration on such endeavours should be facilitated where appropriate.
5. Explicitly include second wave, third wave and contemporary Irish film making talent in module content.
6. Require students to track their carbon footprint and utilise green film making practices in relevant practical assignments.
7. Modules should be labelled to better identify their content e.g., world cinema, contemporary theory.
8. Provide more opportunities for outreach to other relevant programmes e.g., acting, theatre. This will have multiple benefits for students including the development of transferable skills.
9. Consider facilitating students in establishing a Film Society to promote students' independent engagement with film production.
10. Review all modules to ensure that they contain a comprehensive teaching and learning strategy.
11. Formalise linkages between modules and assessments where feasible, to allow students build on work completed in other modules.

For office use only (To be completed by Head of Department)	
Changes due to be implemented in:	
Changes to be implemented on phased or simultaneous basis:	
NB: If the programme changes are to be implemented simultaneously (all stages at once) then the Academic Information Systems Office must be notified immediately in instances that modules have moved stages and an interim APS is required.	

6 Programme-Level Findings – Certificate in Media Practice

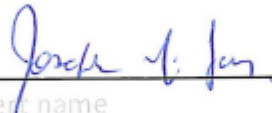
This programme is industry focussed and runs on demand. The industry mentor is a key part of the programme and is involved with the Programme Board. Staff conduct off-site visits with the industry mentor to ensure appropriate learning for the student. No changes were proposed for this programme. The panel approved the programme until the next Programmatic Review with no conditions or recommendations.

7 Programme-Level Findings – Certificate in Arts in Introduction to Digital Media for the Creative Arts

This programme targets the large number of creative artists who are not in the digital space. It aims to expand the creative arts in terms of output and to stimulate other market opportunities for the monetisation of output. It was delivered under the July Stimulus funding and had a positive response. No changes were proposed for this programme. The panel approved the programme until the next Programmatic Review with no conditions or recommendations.

Panel Report Approved By:

Signed:



Insert name
Chairperson

Date:

24/06/2022

Appendix A Programme Board Members

The panel met with the following staff:

Dr. Patrick Tobin	Ms. Jill Beardsworth	Mr. Paul Roland
Ms. Celine Curtin	Mr. Felim McDermott	Ms. Eimear O Tuathaigh
Ms. Madeline O'Donnell	Ms. Heather Mills	Mr. Jim Vaughan
Mr. Tony Patrickson	Mr. Manuela Corbari	Dr. Treasa O Brien

Appendix B Student Representatives

The panel met with the following student representatives:

Student Name	Programme	Stage
Noemi Grief	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary	3
Joseph Cloonan	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary	3
Grace Kiely	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary	2
Deirdra Joyce	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Film and Documentary	3

Appendix C Schedule of Meetings

Agenda	
Date:	24th February
1.30pm	Private Panel Meeting
2pm	Meeting with Programme Boards*
4.15pm	Meeting with Students
4.45pm	Panel - Private Deliberations
5.15pm	Initial Feedback

Appendix D: Changes Proposed to BA of Arts (Hons) Film and Documentary

Topic	Proposed Change	Rationale
Programme Learning Outcomes		
Overall Contact Hours	slight reduction	
Structure or Sequencing of Modules	See below	
Addition of New Module(s)	Industry Project Y1 Addition of New Module To be offered as an elective beside Industry Engagement: Irish for Media in Y2, Instead of German language and culture	In response to demand from previous students and suggestions from stakeholders, it is greatly beneficial that the programme includes the formal inclusion of a professional practice. The module will be designed to include group projects created in conjunction with clients/ organisations and give students the opportunity to work within a professional capacity.

New APS Regulations		
Minimum Entry Requirements		
Changed transfer or progression routes	High numbers from FE	
Teaching & Learning Strategy		
Assessment Strategy		
Module Changes		
Year 1		
LIS	Name change – Academic and Professional Skills	Institute wide
Film Practice 1: Documentary (10 Credits)	Name change Documentary 1 -> Film Practice 1: Documentary	To accurately reflect the content of the module and provide clarity on the progression from year one to three (see other stages)
VFX 1 (5 credits)	Name change - content updated 4D design ->VFX1	Change in name to more accurately reflect range of studio roles covered. Content refreshed
Year 2		
Visual and Critical Studies (5 credits)	Sequencing of Modules - Name change - content updated Film Studies 3 -> Visual and Critical Studies move from year 3 to year 2	Students will benefit from an introduction to critical analysis sooner in the programme. This will improve students' abilities with academic (critical, analytical) writing before the Research Project commences in Stage 3. Name change (to Visual and Critical Studies) also to reflect a broader focus on all forms of screen media including animation, games, web content etc. NB: This is intended to be a common module with the proposed Animation and Games Design and Creative Media and Storytelling BA (Hons) programmes.
Industry Engagement: Irish for Media (10 credits)	Name change - content updated Gaeilge na Cumarsáide -> Industry engagement: Irish for the Media	The stand-alone module Gaeilge na Cumarsáide has been offered as an elective to second year students of Film and Documentary since 2013/14. Prior to this Irish was taught as an elective at all stages of the program. The module was set at lower intermediate level and aimed to equip learners to work and communicate effectively in Irish within a media workplace environment. This would allow them to develop the language skills to gain access to the wealth of experience available to them on Irish language projects in the locality. While this remains its main objective, the new module 'Industry Engagement: Irish for Media' has been adapted to include engagement with industry across aspects of Irish language media within the region with a firm experiential focus.
Small screen studies (5 credits)	Name change - content updated TV Drama -> Small Screen Studies	The updated module will reflect the increasing popularity of on-demand programming and streaming content, and the increasing popularity of consuming content via digital and hand-held devices. This directly impacts the design and development of shows for the "small screen", most especially in terms of formatting and delivery. Other additions to the syllabus include the topics of globalisation and accessibility. The historical and social impact of drama is retained.

VFX 2 (10 credits)	Name change - content updated 4D design 2 ->VFX 2	Change in name to more accurately reflect range of studio roles covered. Pipeline updated to use Nuke software.
Film Practice 2: Fiction (10 credits)	Name change Film Fiction 1 -> Film Practice 2: Fiction	To accurately reflect the content of the module and provide clarity on the progression from year one to three (see other stages).
Documentary Studies (5 credits)	Name change - content updated Broadcasting Theory 2 -> Documentary Studies	The title of Documentary Studies more accurately reflects the content of this module, which is designed to provide students with the theoretical and historical context of documentary film.
Year 3		
Production Practice: Entrepreneur's hip (5 credits) Production Practice: Project Management (5 credits)	Splitting of module Production Practice 3 (10 creds) split into two modules -> Entrepreneurship (5 cred) Production Management (5 cred) Module focus switched in stages 2 and 3.	This is to facilitate a sharing of just 5 of 10 credits (Entrepreneurship) of the module with the proposed Creative Media and Storytelling BA (Hons) programme. NB: Both modules (collectively 10 credits) are to be shared with the proposed Animation and Game Design BA (Hons) programme) Switch of module focus: Previously second year focussed on professional, entrepreneurial, and industrial pursuits. This is better suited to Stage 3 nearer to when students graduate.
	Sequencing of Modules - Name change - content updated Film Studies 3 -> Visual and Critical Studies moved from year 3 to year 2	See above
VFX 3 (10 credits)	Name change - content updated 4D design 3 ->VFX 3	Change in name to more accurately reflect range of studio roles covered. Pipeline updated to use Nuke software.
Film Practice 3: Documentary (elective) (10 credits)	Name change Documentary 2 -> Film Practice 3: Documentary (elective)	Change in name to accurately reflect the stage of film practice in year 3 and provide clarity on the progression from year one to three (see other stages).
Film Practice 3: Fiction (elective) (10 credits)	Name change Fiction 2 -> Film Practice 3: Fiction (elective)	Change in name to accurately reflect the stage of film practice in year 3 and provide clarity on the progression from year one to three (see other stages).