

Programme Validation Report

Certificate in Design Thinking

(Level 9 – 10 Credits)

Programme Code: TBC

Banner Code: TBC

Validation Date: 17 October 2017

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1 Panel Members

Chairperson	Dr Kenneth Carroll Registrar Institute of Technology Tallaght Tallaght Dublin 24
Panel Member 1 Academic	Ms Brenda Dermody Lecturer in Design Dublin Institute of Technology Dublin School of Creative Arts Grangegorman Dublin 7
Panel Member 2 Industry	Mr James Nevin Salesforce.com The Atrium Level 1, Block A Sandyford Business Park Dublin 18
IADT	Dr Andrew Power, Registrar
	David Smith, Head of Faculty of Film, Art & Creative Technologies
	Dr Hilary Kenna, Head of Department of Technology and Psychology

2 Panel Meeting with Registrar, Head of Faculty and Head of Department

The Registrar, Dr Andrew Power, gave a short presentation about IADT. As one of 13 Institutes of Technology in Ireland, IADT has a student population of 2,500+ students and provides a portfolio of programmes in the area of arts, design, film, entrepreneurship, technology and applied psychology. These cross-disciplinary activities focus on the creative, cultural and technological sectors that represent the unique vision and mission of IADT.

The Institute is comprised of two Faculties, the Faculty of Film, Art & Creative Technologies (from which this programme is proposed) and the Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities. At present, 12% of our total student population studies at Level 7 and 83% at Level 8. From next year, the Institute will be running only one Level 7 programme, with the majority of students studying at Level 8. At this time, the Institute does not offer programmes at Level 10 and the focus, for the time being, is to consolidate and develop our Level 9 offering.

Less than 50% of our student body come directly to us from the Leaving Certificate, with the rest having undertaken a PLC programme, or work/study elsewhere, prior to attending IADT. Due to this, our average Year 1 student is approximately 20 years old.

The strategic objectives for the Institute include, but are not limited to:

- Creativity, innovation, engagement and entrepreneurship amongst our students and staff
- A commitment to excellence in all our programmes and activities
- National and international partnerships and collaboration between technology, academic, business and creative and cultural industries sector
- A commitment to progression, quality improvement and high standards

Design thinking is a technique used for the generation of ideas and problem solving, and can assist organisations develop products, services, processes and strategy. The methodologies involved help to overcome key business challenges and present an innovative approach to how businesses work today.

The Faculty of Film, Art & Creative Technologies has proposed to offer the Certificate in Design Thinking, a 10-credit module, as a stand-alone short course as interest in design thinking techniques and approaches become more popular across many differing areas.

The programme will reside within the Department of Technology and Psychology as IADT recognised that, through its experience of other related programmes such as User Experience Design, the techniques and skills applied to common design practices could also be applied in the technology sector. Design Thinking is a well-established practice in other programmes in the Design Department, which can be applied to other sectors of business, including technology, entrepreneurship and the cultural and creative industries. The

Certificate in Design Thinking teaches techniques and practices used daily in design to understand, define, create and refine processes, products and strategies and applies these to other sectors. The proposed Level 9 programme is designed as a bedrock module for Masters programmes, both current and newly developed. The Institute will be undertaking a review of all Level 9 programmes this year and the Certificate in Design Thinking is being considered to as an element of new programmes.

3 Panel Meeting with Programme Team

3.1 Resources & Staffing

The panel noted the high level of practical work involved in this Level 9 programme. It queried how the work would be managed, in such a short course, in order to meet the module's learning outcomes. The Team noted that the programme design is similar to other Certificate programmes currently running in the Faculty, with a main project leader and another lecturer managing the supervision for all students. Supervision will be carried out through a blend of face-to-face supervision and the use of online supports such as Blackboard and Slack. With online supports, students and lecturing staff be able to communicate even when they are off campus.

The maximum number of students for the programme is 16, and the minimum is 10 with three people per group. The Faculty is recruiting 12 students for the first programme run.

The Panel queried if there was a dedicated space for students as they believed that the programme needed a very immersive space within which to work. The Team noted that there was a tailored space already planned out for the programme that was a dedicated break out space with whiteboards.

3.2 Programme Structure & Aims

The Panel noted that two delivery modes were offered: Mode A is offered over 4 days, 2 days in Term 1 and 2 days in Term 2, and Mode B, is offered over 14 weeks for 2 hours a week. The Panel queried if, given the Level 9 status of the programme, learners would have sufficient opportunity to immerse themselves in the methodology over 4 days and would they have sufficient time to accrue mastery in the area. The Team noted that, from the experience gained from running similar programmes, they believed a 4-day delivery mode is the optimum design for this type of course which also allowed students to plan their commitments around work and family.

The Panel noted that students would be dealing with real-life companies, which may involve interrogation of companies, asking difficult questions and, possibly, providing difficult answers. They asked how this would be managed. The Team noted that the students will be taught how to deal with client companies and will be taking on real-life situations. This same process is undertaken on similar programmes and has been done very effectively.

The Panel asked how would the programme source live clients. The Team noted that there are several sources:

- The prospective students come from companies who are sponsoring them, with the view to them incorporating their own real-life experiences into the programme

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- The Directorate of Creativity, Innovation + Research has a number of clients gained through the use of Innovation Vouchers as well as a through partnerships with external companies
 - The Media Cube also houses 20+ start-up companies who could partner with students
 - The Faculty has partnered with many companies, ie IBM, Bank of Ireland, HSE etc, in the past and has built up excellent working relationships

3.3 Assessment

The Panel queried if there is a clear delineation between the client and lecturers in terms of the assessment. The Team noted that education of the student is the priority; the solving of the problem is not. The student will be taken through the design thinking process, reframe the brief from the company through that process and find the solution to the issue at hand; they then learn to negotiate with, and feedback to, the client and the Programme Team. They also learn to develop metrics to gauge the success, or not, of the project.

There is clear delineation between the client and the Programme Team in terms of assessment and the client is not involved at this stage. The programme assessment strategy is developed, revised and managed by the Programme Team. An indicative assessment strategy is also detailed in the module descriptor, with a section for both continuous assessment projects.

3.4 Learner Profile & Entry Requirements

The Team noted that they had undertaken a lot of research in programme development and industry links in the technology sector and it was shown that there was a clear need for skills in the areas of interdisciplinarity, team working and collaboration. The proposed programme is designed for people who are learning these new skills on the job; research found that a large number of people wanted to gain more skills and gain a qualification in this area; some wanted to diversify their skills and add it to skills already gained on the job. The appetite for continuous professional development for people working in industry and for graduates is increasing.

The learner profile, based on those who have already applied for the programme, shows they are mid-career, 30+ years of age, already have a Level 8 and, in some cases, a Level 9 award and are at mid to senior levels of management. The sectors in which they work include Design, Marketing, Finance, Community Development, amongst others. They are generally Dublin centric but there are applicants from Galway, Waterford and Meath. The actual applicant list matches the planned student profile, as detailed in the programme document.

It was noted that IRDG (Industry Research & Development Group) is one of the leading providers of programmes in the area and they have recommended the proposed Certificate programme as having immense value.

3.5 Curriculum Content

The Panel noted that the programme was designed to mix theory and practice and asked how this would be delivered. The Team stated that the two 2 day sessions would start with a lecture on the theory of design thinking, with a step through of the process showcasing different methodologies; an exercise will then be carried out in class which works to embed the theory set out earlier in the day. Two continuous assessment deliverables were designed, one for each of the 2 day sessions. The classes were very structured to allow for the blend of theory and practice.

The methodology for the programme was described as:

- Understand – theory
- Define – applied theory
- Make – practice
- Reflect – review

For the first two-day session, the students will be given an overview of design thinking methods, then a practical application with rapid design sprints; they are then given their first assignment and it is discussed, in detail.

For the second two-day session, the students will give a presentation of their first continuous assessment assignment, with feedback; they then go through industry case studies and have tutorials in class, followed by rapid design sprints, through to the brief for the second project.

All taught work happens within the four days, with support given outside of these sessions on Blackboard and Slack. Lynda.com is also available for any technology support that may be required.

The Team noted that the proposed assessment rubric caters for a range of skill sets and will work across all areas of student backgrounds.

4 Decision of the Panel

The Panel recommended the validation of the Certificate in Design Thinking.

Code	Title	Level	Credits
DLXXX	Certificate in Design Thinking	9	10
Validation Date		Tuesday 17 October 2017	

5 Conditions

No conditions were applied

6 Recommendations

The Panel set out four recommendations for the consideration of the Programme Team, as follows:

- 1 The 4-day delivery Mode A was the preferred model as it allowed for more of an immersive, intensive workshop delivery
- 2 For student group project assignments, the Panel recommends that the proposed group size be increased to 4 or 5. The Panel were concerned that using the smaller group size, any student withdrawal might have a very negative impact for that group.
- 3 A document, possibly a programme handbook, should be given to each student which clearly explains the expectations and demands for students, gives information on weighting, module deadlines and a terminology glossary. A strong emphasis on meeting established timelines for coursework deliverables should be evident.

7 Commendations

The Panel were impressed with the programme and believed it be a good taster, stand-alone module that could allow for more general student recruitment into other Level 9 programmes. They were very satisfied with the hands-on approach and the balance between the theoretical and practical side of the discipline.

8 Panel Signatures

Chairperson Dr Kenneth Carroll		Date	
Registrar Dr Andrew Power		Date	

Programme Validation Panel

Certificate in Design Thinking (Level 9) 10 Credits

Response of Programme Team

Following the Programme Validation Panel visit on 17 October 2017, the programme team set out the follow-up actions in response to the recommendations in the Panel's report below.

The Panel set out **three** recommendations for the consideration of the Programme Team, as follows:

Panel Recommendation 1

The 4-day delivery Mode A was the preferred model as it allowed for more of an immersive, intensive workshop delivery

Programme Team Response

- The Programme will run in Delivery Mode A. This is the preferred model of delivery. However, IADT would like to reserve the right to run the programme in Delivery Mode B should the need arise. IADT has extensive experience running Level 9 Certificates in this mode and is confident this programme can be adapted to suit this mode of delivery if required. However, it is not currently the intention of IADT to deliver the programme in Mode B.

Panel Recommendation 2

For student group project assignments, the Panel recommends that the proposed group size be increased to 4 or 5. The Panel were concerned that using the smaller group size, any student withdrawal might have a very negative impact for that group.

Programme Team Response

- The Programme will run group projects with a minimum of 4 students in each team. If the intake exceeds 16 students, team sizes will be increased to 5 or more students.

Panel Recommendation 3

A document, possibly a programme handbook, should be given to each student which clearly explains the expectations and demands for students, gives information on weighting, module deadlines and a terminology glossary. A strong emphasis on meeting established timelines for coursework deliverables should be evident.

Programme Team Response

- The students will receive a handbook upon registration. All assessment dates and project deadlines will be published in the handbook and presented at the beginning of the programme to ensure students have the maximum time available to plan and complete their course work. Students will be able to communicate with the Programme Team via email and other forms of online communications, should any issue arise. Additionally, the programme will build in an interim check point for each assignment to ensure student are on track to deliver their course work.

If you have any further queries, please contact:

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