



TUS

Technological University of the Shannon:

Midlands Midwest

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:

Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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**Limerick School of Art and Design
Department of Midlands Media & Design**

Report of External Validation Panel

External Validation Panel 20th February 2025

for the

**Master of Arts in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)**

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings and findings of the external validation visit for the proposed:

- Master of Arts in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)

and the findings and conclusions of the Panel held on 20th February 2025. The external validation visit was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Regulations for the development of taught programmes. An external validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on a programme proposal.

2.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

2.2 Higher Education Provider

Institute: Technological University of the Shannon
Faculty: Limerick School of Art and Design
Department: Midlands Media and Design
Date of Visit: 20th February 2025

2.3 Programmes Evaluated

Programme	Master of Arts in Applied Music & Sound Technologies
Award Title	Master of Arts
NFQ Level	Level 9
ECTS Credits	90
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2025
Duration	1 year

Programme	Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Music & Sound Technologies
Award Title	Postgraduate Diploma
NFQ Level	Level 9
ECTS Credits	60
Delivery Mode	Fulltime
Proposed Start Date	2025
Duration	1 year

Programme	Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Music & Sound Technologies
Award Title	Postgraduate Certificate
NFQ Level	Level 9
ECTS Credits	30
Delivery Mode	Fulltime
Proposed Start Date	2025
Duration	1 year

2.4 External Validation Panel of Expert Assessors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
John Vickery (Chair)	Former Registrar, Institute of Technology, Tallaght
Dr Gordon Delap	Professor of Music, National University of Ireland Maynooth
Louise Glynn	Associate Lecturer for Creative Computing, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology
Bryan Robson	Freelance Location Sound Recordist
Sorca McGrath	Professional Musician and Accredited Creative Psychotherapist, Programme Leader - MSc in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy at PCI college

Secretary to Panel
Quality Officer

Dr Sarah O'Toole
Amanda Ryan

2.4 Institute Staff

Dean of Faculty Limerick School of Art and Design
Head of Department of Midlands Media & Design

Mike Fitzpatrick
Mike O'Dowd

Programme Team:

Dr Shane Byrne, Niall O'Connor, Simon Cullen

3.1 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION PANEL

3.2 Main Findings

The External Validation Panel of Assessors recommends approval of the following programmes:

- Master of Arts in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)
- Post Graduate Certificate in Applied Music & Sound Technologies (Level 9)

3.3 Conditions

1. Review the programme descriptions for the Postgraduate Certificate to document clearly that potential students can select any three modules from either semester 1 or semester 2.
2. Review the documentation to ensure that the timelines for the repeat assessments are clearly outlined where there is a flexible structure for repeat assessments.

3.4 Recommendations

1. Consider how best TUS can support programme teams in relation to market research for programme development.
2. Ensure that the assessment schedule is staggered throughout the semester to support students and this is reflected in the schedule in the programme handbook.
3. Review the programme documentation to explicitly reference the use of AI tools where applicable and where students are allowed or not to use AI tools in assessments.
4. Review the learning outcomes across the modules to ensure they are more explicit to the content and aligned to a Level 9 programme standard.
5. Review the references and reading lists across all modules to ensure the most recent and relevant references are in use.
6. Consider how key topics such as Ethics, EDI, Accessibility, Sustainability, Management, Entrepreneurship, Data Acquisition skills that were mentioned in the Overview document or the Intro to the Programme document could be more explicitly allocated to relevant Learning Outcomes to ensure that they are taught and

assessed, they might fit well in the Research Skills and Capstone modules and anywhere else where there are projects.

7. *Sound Art and Sonic Culture.*

- Review the references and reading materials to specifically relate to field recording within the module and to include case studies.
- Recommend that LO2 is amended to be written as: Create innovative works by using field recording etc.

8. *Audio Recording Practices*

- Review the module learning outcomes within the module to ensure they are more aligned and reflective of the module description. Amend the wording in LO1 and LO5.
- Review the module context to specifically include reference to, Basic Understanding of the Ear, Introduction to working with sound in a digital environment i.e. sample rate, bit rate within different audio disciplines, looking at portable recording devices and recording in the field (wind protection, handling noise).
- Review basic post-production to be included e.g. equalisation, compression.

9. *Creative Coding for Musical Applications.*

- Review LO2 reword to, for example, Evaluate the effectiveness of communication protocols through experimentation, etc.
- Review LO3 on the module Creative Coding for Musical Applications so that it is more aligned with level 9 standard.
- Consider the use of a reflective piece, learning journal or presentation to support academic integrity in the assessments in the module.

10. *Practical Research Skills*

- Consider how EDI can be incorporated throughout the module and explicitly linked to the module learning outcomes.
- Review the descriptions in the assessment strategy for the module, to be clear that the major project is based on a case study.
- Amend LO4, remove Demonstrate an ability to begin with, Conduct...

11. ***Electroacoustic Composition***

- Determine whether the change of title of the module ***Electroacoustic Composition*** to ***Sound Art Composition*** should be incorporated.

12. ***Instrument Design***

- Rephrase the module introduction/description and learning outcomes to be more aligned to a level and emphasise the design element.

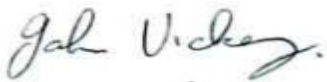
13. ***Capstone Project***

- Consider the role of an internal examiner panel to jointly contribute to the grading of the Capstone Project module and the use of a student presentation.

3.5 Commendations and Observations

The panel commend:

1. The programme team have developed innovative postgraduate programmes that equip students with applied music expertise, advanced sound technology skills and client facilitation abilities, preparing them to meet evolving industry demands and deliver creative professional solutions.
2. The panel thank the programme team for the comprehensive documentation including the rationale for the programme changes, comparative mapping and revised programme document.
3. The panel thanks the management and programme team for the engaging discussion of the programme and acknowledge how well they defended the submission in a professional manner.
4. The panel supports the decision to allow students to choose any modules for the Cert and that they can potentially do the course over a longer period of time. This supports students with many commitments to engage in lifelong learning.



Signature of Chairperson

Date: 4/03/2025