



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 18th February 2025

for the

**Higher Certificate in Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 6)
Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, ab-initio)
Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, add-on)
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8 ab-initio)
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8, add-on)**

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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:

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 6)
- Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, ab-initio)
- Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, add-on)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8 ab-initio)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8, add-on)

and the findings and conclusions of the Panel held on 18th 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: 18^h February 2025

2.3 Programmes Evaluated

Programme	Higher Certificate in Arts in Professional Musicianship
Award Title	Higher Certificate
NFQ Level	Level 6
ECTS Credits	120
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2026
Duration	2 years

Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, ab-initio)
Award Title	Bachelor of Arts
NFQ Level	Level 7
ECTS Credits	180
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2028
Duration	3 years

Programme	Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, add-on)
Award Title	Bachelor of Arts
NFQ Level	Level 7
ECTS Credits	60
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2028
Duration	1 year

Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8 ab-initio)
Award Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
NFQ Level	Level 8
ECTS Credits	240
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2029
Duration	4 years

Programme	Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8, add-on)
Award Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
NFQ Level	Level 8

ECTS Credits	60
Delivery Mode	Full time
Proposed Start Date	2028
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
Liam Molloy	Academic from Sound Training College (Delivering for ETBs, IADT and DBS)
Dr Linda Adams	Academic for the Centre for Jazz Performance, Dublin City University
Ben Parker	Professional Musician, freelance Sound Engineer and Music Generation Tutor
Emma Killian	Director, Bentley Productions - Event & Wedding Industry Expert, Speaker, and Consultant
Secretary to Panel	Dr Sarah O'Toole
Quality Officer	Amanda Ryan

2.4 Institute Staff

VP Academic Affairs & Registrar	Dr Terry Twomey
Dean of Faculty Limerick School of Art and Design	Mike Fitzpatrick
Head of Department of Midlands Media & Design	Mike O'Dowd

Programme Team:

Paul Hensey, Duncan Moore, Dr.Shane Byrne, Michael Gavin

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:

- Higher Certificate in Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 6)
- Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, ab-initio)
- Bachelor of Arts in Professional Musicianship (Level 7, add-on)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8 ab-initio)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Professional Musicianship (Level 8, add-on)

3.3 Conditions

1. Consider renaming the title of the programme to ensure it is reflective of the skills and knowledge acquired in the programme and to ensure it does not discourage potential students from applying to the programme.
2. Ensure that the gap in music theory instruction between Music and Instrument Appreciation in Year 1 and Stage Craft 3.1 in Year 3 is covered so that students without formal musical training or knowledge are not disadvantaged.
3. Review the entry requirements across all programmes to ensure there is consistency in the terminology when specifying the requirements for all entry routes.
4. Consider how best to communicate to applicants the expectation of knowledge and experience of playing music.

3.4 Recommendations

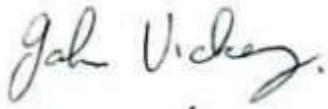
1. Ensure that key criteria are identified for each stage of work placement to ensure that students develop additional progressive skills through each stage of work placement.
2. Review the descriptions in the modules to ensure that specific criteria in relation to work placement or assessments demonstrate the progressive learning which is occurring and to ensure that students are provided with adequate information.
3. Review the references and ensure the most recent and relevant references are in use.
4. Review and update the individual teaching and learning strategy across each of the modules to ensure it reflects what is being covered.

5. Ensure the repeat assessment strategy timelines are suitable across the semesters and clearly specify for each of the assessment elements when it can be undertaken.
6. Expand on the indicative syllabus on existing approved modules in conjunction with the programme board on the Music and Sound Engineering programme.
7. Consider approaches to look at addressing potential gender and other balance issues – think about sending relevant representatives out to secondary schools (when promoting the programme).
8. Ensure that assessment details with respect to academic writing, referencing and research methodologies are outlined within the relevant module assessment strategy.
9. Review learning outcome 2 within the module Finance for Professional Musicianship 2.
10. Review the learning outcomes for the module Management for Professional Musicianship 3 to be more specific. Consider how project management could be further incorporated into this module.

3.5 Commendations and Observations

The panel commend:

1. The panel commends the team for the development of this unique programme to address the need in industry and promotes progression opportunities for graduates taking the programme.
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 commends the programme team on its meaningful partnerships, work placement and real-world projects through which students gain hands on experience and vital professional connections.



Signature of Chairperson

Date: 4/03/2025