REPORT ON PROGRAMME VALIDATION   Q 3 report

Part 1   Programme details

Proposed title	BA in CGI Technical Art
Mode and duration of programme	Part-time, two years
ECTS	120 ECTS
TU Dublin award(s) sought	Bachelor of Arts in Computer Generated Imagery Technical Art
Classifications of award(s)	First Class Honours; Second Class, First Division; Second Class, Second Division; Pass
School responsible	Media
Professional body accreditation and relevant dates (where applicable)	NA
External provider type (where applicable)	NA
Delivery location	TU Dublin – City Campus (Aungier Street)

Part 2   Programme approval information

Date of initial approval (of Q1A) by ORC's Academic and Research Committee	23rd April 2019
Date of validation event	31st May 2019
Date of approval by Academic Council and Governing Body	
Proposed date of commencement	September 2019

Part 3   Programme background/structure

Background

The development of this programme is a direct response to the Apprenticeship Council call for proposals on the 4th May 2017. The School of Media attended the event on the 4th May 2017 and immediately began networking with Screen Skills Ireland and Animation Skillnet. A consortium was formed and a proposal was submitted to the Apprenticeship Council on the 1st September. On 8th December 2017 Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Education and Skills announced the approval of 26 new apprenticeship programmes, including the proposed CGI Technical Artist Apprenticeship, to progress to the development stage.

The proposed Apprenticeship is an undergraduate apprenticeship programme at level 8 on the QQI National Framework of Qualifications. The TU Dublin offering aims to meet the growing demand for animation personnel and is targeting three market segments;

- Graduates with a level 7 award in either animation, special effects or a related design discipline
- Existing employees in the animation industry who may not have a formal qualification.
- Graduates with a level 6 award in either animation, special effects or a related design discipline with relevant industry experience

Stated aims and learning outcomes of the programme

Occupation Title	The Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) Technical Artist
Typical tasks/responsibilities	●operate within a computer graphics pipeline using existing software and tools to aid the production of high quality computer graphics for both entertainment and commercial purposes. ●design, plan & implement tools and techniques to further aid production. ●form a key role in project teams giving feedback on effectiveness of tools to provide production with accurate estimates of work completion; ●raise and develop time saving techniques to aid speed of production and to contribute insight to close any knowledge gaps within teams. ●promote efficient pipeline inter department communication and to aid new staff in adopting communicative habits and procedures. ●perform the tasks which produce the high quality images expected by the employer and/or client. ●developing proxy models for production integration, modelling and texturing for environment and for characters, polishing assets using surfacing, designing new or implementing existing character rigs. ●create animations - both character and environmental, blocking out scenes of general movement for cameras/characters, character cloth production and fur/hair grooming. ●Produce FX simulation rigs, implement lighting setups and scrutinise test renders of character & environment design plus provide basic composites to clarify output quality and approach.
Upon completion of the programme the student will be able to:	
Knowledge	●Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the concepts, theories and models pertaining to the role of the CGI Technical Artist. ●Employ the skills & competencies required to create and design appropriate solutions in the domains of Animation Production, Visual FX generation, Games development and VR/AR /Production. ●Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of the scope and competencies of CGI Technical Artist. ●Critically appraise and interpret cutting edge advances to provide new insights which can then be employed to solve common or recurrent problems.

Skills	●Demonstrate an ability to critically analyse and determine the appropriate approach to the creation of CGI assets. ●Confidently compare, contrast and interpret the various roles of the CGI Technical Artist. ●Determine how to choose and implement correct lighting techniques ●Demonstrate confidence in both the technical and aesthetic considerations of production. ●Oversee and guide levels of detail employed in rigging, provide feedback on texturing detail and appearance. ●Interpret and select the appropriate level of coding to support production and planning. ●Recognise and employ the necessary skills required to develop technical expansion and pipeline bandwidth. ●Communicate effectively within a team environment across the breadth of roles involved in producing CGI Technical Artistic content.
Competencies	●Work with confidence in a CGI environment using adaptable, resilient, self-confident and intellectual capabilities. ●Maintain currency with emerging developments and trends in the CGI Technical Artist field and wider industry. ●Critically appraise the blend of skills needed to coordinate disparate duties both in the artistic and technical sense. ●Compare, contrast and select the appropriate approaches and strategies for managing CGI pipeline, processes and activities ●Employ technical knowledge, imagination, creativity and integrity in support of the decision-making capabilities of an organisation. ●Demonstrate the ability to comprehend multiple perspectives within the situated context of CGI Technical Artist. ●Select the best approaches to solving CGI problems and achieve coherence in the approach chosen by different departments.

Programme structure

The programme is offered on a day-release basis over two years. The apprentice will attend one day in college and four days in the workplace. This programme is at undergraduate NQAI Level Eight, and carries 120 ECTS credits. Apprentices will be expected to undertake extensive self-directed learning, including individual assignments, reading, reflection, preparing for in-class activities, group work, and online activities.

Entry Requirements (See Recommendations of the Panel)
• Qualification at Level 7/Level 8/Level 9 (in a related area) or at Level 6 (in a related area) with significant industry experience through a thorough APL process.
• Evidence of basic work using relevant software (commercial or as hobbyist).
• Awareness of basic elements of Computer Graphics Technology.
• Solid grounding in mathematics and basic coding/scripting knowledge.

Student assessment
In accordance with TU Dublin's General Assessment Regulations (City Campus)

Derogations from the General Assessment Regulations
The work-based learning modules (Production Studio 1 and 2) are assessed on a pass/fail basis.

Part 4   Validation Details and Membership of Panel

Schedule of meetings
Venue: Room 3005, DIT Aungier Street (Telematics Room)

09.00 am   Introductory meeting between Panel and relevant staff from the College of Arts and Tourism, School of Media and Consortium representatives.

09.15 am   Private meeting of Panel to discuss agenda.

10.15 am   Meeting of Panel with Head of School, Chairperson, appropriate members of the Programme Committee and Consortium representatives to discuss specific issues raised by the Panel.

11.30 am   Meeting of Panel with staff teaching on the programme to discuss such matters as syllabi, teaching methods and assessment issues.

12.30 pm   Panel visits facilities available to the programme at DIT Aungier Street.

1.00 pm   Lunch

1.30 pm   Private meeting of Panel to consider draft report.

3.30 pm   Final meeting of Panel with Head of School and Chairperson, other appropriate members of Programme Committee and Consortium representatives.

External Panel Members

Richard Gavin   Lecturer in Media Production, Limerick Institute of Technology

David McDermott   Lead Animator, Immersive VR Education, Waterford

Internal Panel Members

Dr Claire McDonnell (Chair)   Assistant Head of School of Chemical & Pharmaceutical Sciences, TU Dublin – City Campus (Kevin Street)

Dr Helen O'Brien-Gately   School of Accounting & Finance, TU Dublin – City Campus (Aungier Street)

Dr Ruth Craggs   School of Hospitality Management & Tourism, TU Dublin – City Campus (Cathal Brugha Street)

Quality Assurance Officer

Jan Cairns   Quality Assurance Officer, TU Dublin – City Campus (Park House, Grangegorman)

Documentation submitted

The Panel received the programme documentation including programme background and overview and Student Handbook. Teaching staff CVs were made available to the Panel at the event.

Part 5   Summary of Panel findings against key questions

Note: the Panel's findings (ie yes/no) and any additional comments against each of the key questions should be recorded below. Where a 'no' is recorded, an associated condition or recommendation should be included in Part 6, Findings of the Panel.

Is the market demand and need for the programme clear and articulated?	Yes
Are the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of the programme well-founded and clearly formulated?	Yes
Are the entry requirements clear and appropriate?	See Condition no.1
Are the arrangements for access, transfer and progression in accordance with University policy and NFQ?	Yes
Are the programme learning outcomes at the appropriate level as set out by the NFQ requirements?	Yes
Do the individual modules 'add up' to a coherent programme?	Yes
Are Graduate Attributes embedded within the programme?	Yes
Will the accumulation of the module learning outcomes result in the attainment of the programme learning outcomes?	See Recommendation no. 1
Is there appropriate use of student-centred learning, teaching and assessment strategies, including the First Year Framework for Success checklist, which recognise the needs of diverse student groups?	Yes, e.g.front-loaded induction week which focuses on key skills .
Do the curricula and teaching schemes in each module descriptor give realisable substance to the module's aims, objectives and learning outcomes?	Yes
Are the assessment methods and criteria aligned to the learning outcomes in each module?	See Condition no. 3 and Recommendation no. 3
Are facilities and resources, including staff, in place to support the delivery of the programme at the standard proposed?	See Observation of the Panel regarding the recruitment of a new member of staff.
Is there parity between off-campus/on-campus delivery (if applicable)?	Employers require approval from SOLAS appointed Authorised Officers.
Are the roles and responsibilities of each partner clearly specified (if applicable)?	There will be MoU between Consortium and employer.

The Panel is happy to recommend approval of the Bachelor of Arts in Computer Generated Imagery Technical Art, at Level Eight on the National Framework of Qualifications, subject to conditions, with recommendations and an observation.

The Panel is very clear that there is a strong demand for this programme. It notes that the programme has been developed in direct response both to industry needs and to government initiatives such as the Creative Ireland plan.

The Panel believes that the programme fulfils a need for the student in providing a practical route into the industry while supporting and recognising a student's academic development.

The Panel commends the Consortium on the level of industry involvement and consultation that has taken place.

Conditions

1. The entry requirements and the process whereby students are recruited as apprentices and accepted onto the programme and the respective roles of the employer and the University in this regard, must be clarified.
    The entry requirements for the programme have been clarified throughout the documentation as follows:
    Response
    Qualification at Level 7/Level 8/Level 9 (in a related area) or at Level 6 (in a related area) with significant industry experience through a thorough APL process, or significant industry experience through a thorough APL process.

    The employer is responsible for the recruitment process and a representative of the University must approve the shortlist of candidates for the post. This is noted on pg 21 of the self-study document.

2. It should be made clear within the Student Handbook that students must remain in employment with an Apprenticeship contract for the duration of the programme in order to be eligible for this award.

    A new section in the student handbook has been inserted section 1.11 Apprenticeship code of Practice on pg. 16

3. Assessment methods should be specified throughout, where continuous assessment/ongoing assessment is currently stated and weightings allocated (see the Computer Graphics Fundamentals module as a possible exemplar).

    Assessment for modules have been augmented with additional information where required throughout the module descriptors in student handbook.

4. It must be clearly stated within the Student Handbook and module descriptor where modules are assessed on pass/fail basis and how this impacts on the calculation of the award classification.

    Upon discussion with the programme team we have agreed that all modules will be graded, this includes on the job module's, Work based mentors will be given a workshop in assessment and the reflective diary marks will be agreed in conjunction with the academic leader.

Recommendations

1. The alignment of the module learning outcomes with the programme learning outcomes should be demonstrated through a mapping exercise.

    We will endeavour to have this exercise complete in time for the first intake.

2. The module learning outcomes for Computer Graphic Department Skills 1 and 2 should be revised to have fewer and broader outcomes, to allow flexibility of delivery.

    These modules have been updated.

3. Module learning outcomes should be reviewed throughout to ensure that the verbs used are appropriate to the level and are measurable. All module learning outcomes should be aligned to assessment methods.

    Module learning outcomes for all modules have been reviewed and amended if necessary.

4. The Programme Team should continue to monitor the student's overall assessment workload. The use of an online assessment calendar would facilitate this.

    All programmes in the School of Media meet to discuss and agree an assessment schedule at the beginning of each semester. A section on the assessment schedule has been inserted into the student handbook pg 18.

Observations
The Panel is of the view that the new academic staff appointment recently approved is vital to the success of the programme.