

### **Q3 MA Journalism Review 2021, School response to Conditions and Recommendations.**

**The Panel is pleased to recommend continuing approval of the Master of Arts in Journalism, at Level Nine on the National Framework of Qualifications, subject to two conditions and with three recommendations.**

The Panel is impressed with the work undertaken by the Programme Team since the last meeting of the Panel in 2019. It is evident that a significant review has taken place, both in the revised programme documentation and during the Panel's meeting with staff. The involvement of industry in this redesign is commended. The Panel considers that this revised programme, which will from September 2021 be delivered in the new space and facilities available in Grangegorm, will be very attractive to potential journalism students.

#### **Conditions**

- **Students' access to dissertation/project supervision up to the point of final submission should be clarified, and the School should consider how this will be supported.**

**School Response:** Students are assigned their supervisors from January until June with submission normally in early September. This allows for independent work by the students over the Summer break period. This has been clarified in the handbook, with students being given the cut-off point in June for meeting with/ consulting their supervision and the submission date has been extended by both module coordinators, to allow students liaise with their supervisor one final time prior to submission.

Pg102 Student Handbook: Module descriptor Landmark Journalism Project

*“Supervision is available throughout Semester Two, until June 15<sup>th</sup>, at which point the student should be in a position to complete the work on their own over the summer, with a final meeting possible in very early September. The final submitted project will be due on September 14<sup>th</sup>.”*

Pg99 Student handbook: Module descriptor Thesis

*“Please note that supervision ends at the end of Term 2, on June 15<sup>th</sup>, and after that the student works independently to submit their thesis by the September deadline, Wednesday September 14<sup>th</sup> for 2022.*

- **Reading lists should be updated to make sure that they include the most current texts. In relevant modules the Programme Team should consider some additional material relevant to diversity matters, reflective of diversity in all its aspects.**

**School Response:** This has been done, and relevant module descriptors have been updated. Please see module descriptors for Journalism Past and Future, Journalism Practice- The City, Digital Media Environment, Broadcast Journalism.

### **Recommendations**

- **The Programme Team should consider holding additional news days in semester one, recommending that they should be introduced in semester one at an early stage and they should replicate as much as possible the authentic news day experience.**

**School Response:** There will now be three Newsdays in semester one, two in Online Journalism and one in radio journalism, the Online Journalism Module Term 1 has been updated to reflect this.

- **Relevant handbooks and other programme materials should reflect more accurately how the Programme Team supports students in finding appropriate placements, while encouraging students to explore their own placement options. The Panel considered this a particular strength of the programme that should be highlighted.**

### **School Response:**

The handbooks have been updated, see below, and it will also be highlighted in marketing material :

### **Pg18 student handbook**

*“The Course Chair places the student in consultation with the student and the lecturing team. We have a wide list of employers who take our students on placement. If you have a preferred employer who is not on our current list, please let us know in advance. Given the wide range of experience now required in the media profession, an aim of the placement is to both allow students to see how media operates on a day-to-day basis and to allow students to build up their*

*portfolio. You will be learning on the job, and that requires both flexibility and the ability to take on constructive critiques and learn from them”.*

## **Pg2 Placement Handbook**

*“The team have a placements list and match students to employers from that list. In some cases employers also like to interview in advance. If students want a placement not on the list, again the team can help with this”.*

**The Programme Team ensure that there is adequate coverage of public affairs/institutions within appropriate modules and that this should be made explicit within relevant module descriptors in the indicative syllabus and reading lists.**

**School Response:** The module descriptor in Research and data now has **Political structures** as one of its elements, which includes national, local and European structures.

The module descriptor in Digital Media Environment now includes the following:

*At a practical level, the module offers theoretical and empirical analytical tools and information for reflection on how journalism as a practice is shaped by the media system, the politics of that media system and reflection on the digital society that is emerging as a changed object of journalism practice. **It provides insights into digital transformations of politics and the emergence of networked publics in public affairs and their implications for political communication and institutional change. The module critically evaluates the local, national and transnational dimensions of public policy towards the media system equipping students with the tools necessary for critical policy analysis.***

The module descriptor in Media Law now includes the following: **“The Irish legal system”** which is a primer on how the legal system operates.

*This will cover: the workings of the courts and alternatives to the courts, such as tribunals of enquiry and commissions of investigations. There is a focus on these bodies' status and role within the legal system, fact finding ability and also how the defences to an allegation of defamation apply in the coverage of these bodies and their reports*

Where relevant, reference texts have been added. Note that in Media law there are no new reference works available as new texts have not been published.

Kate Shanahan  
Head of Journalism and Communications