Programme Review Report

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Game Design

TU984

Version of Report	*Author*	*Date*
Draft 1	AQA – Michael Keane	29th May 2025
Final	AQA – Michael Keane	24th June 2025

Approval	*Date*
Documentation for Review approved by Faculty Board	6th March 2025
Report of Programme Review Panel approved by AQAEC	Click or tap to enter a date.
New Programme Title approved by University Programmes Board (if applicable)	N/A

Section A Programme Details	
Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Game Design
NFQ Level	8
ECTS Credits	240
Mode of delivery	Part-time ☐ Full-time ✓
Duration	Part-time: Full-time: 4 Yrs
Modalities of delivery	In-person, On-campus ✓ Blended ☐
	Online ☐ Hyflex ☐
Classification of award	1st Class Honours; 2nd Class Honours, Upper Division; 2nd Class Honours, Lower Division; Pass
Discipline Programmes Board	N/A
Faculty Board	Faculty of Arts & Humanities
Schools involved in delivery	Media
Delivery location	Grangegorman
Collaborative Partner (where applicable)	N/A
Date of Commencement of revised programme	Sept 2025

Section B Awards

Award Title	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Game Design
NFQ Level	8
Award Class	Major
ECTS Credits	240
Classification of award	1st Class Honours; 2nd Class Honours, Upper Division; 2nd Class Honours, Lower Division; Pass
Exit Award Title	Bachelor of Arts in Game Design
Exit/Embedded	Exit ☒ Embedded ☐
NFQ Level	7
Award Class	Major
ECTS Credits	180
Classification of award	Distinction; Merit Grade 1; Merit Grade 2; Pass
Embedded Award Title	Higher Certificate in Arts in Game Design
Exit/Embedded	Exit ☒ Embedded ☐
NFQ Level	6
Award Class	Major
ECTS Credits	120
Classification of award	Distinction; Merit Grade 1; Merit Grade 2; Pass

Section C - Programme Derogations (if required)

Derogations from Assessment Regulations/Marks and Standards, requiring approval by University Programmes Board	
No derogations were sought in advance of this programme validation however, during the module discussions at the review panel meeting it became apparent that certain modules cannot be compensated. A list of same was requested, see condition of validation #2.	
University Programmes Board Approval	Date

Section D	Review Process

Date of Programme Review	9th May 2025

Context for Programme Review
How was the programme review process instigated, by whom/via which process?
The review was requested by the School of Media in order to undertake a full review and update of the programme to incorporate new elective opportunities for students in Work Placement, Semester Abroad and align with the University's Education Model, Graduate Attributes and Strategic Intent.

Please tick the type of programme review undertaken:

Full Programme Review ✓	Focused Programme Review ☐
If a focused programme review, what is/are the area(s) of focus? N/A	

Transitional arrangements
How will changes to revised programme be implemented, i.e. to be implemented with immediate effect in the next academic year of delivery, or phased in on a year-by-year basis.
The School of Media wishes for the revised programme to be implemented with immediate effect for the next academic year of delivery i.e. 2025/26

Panel Members

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr. Finbarr Feeney	Chair	Head of School School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation TU Dublin
Rose McGrath	External assessor	Crawford College of Art, and Design Munster Technological University
Brian Coyle	External assessor	Ulster University
Elaine Reynolds	External assessor	Black Shamrock - a Virtuos Studio
Shaun Ferns	Internal assessor	University Education Model Lead TU Dublin
Michael Keane	Academic Quality Advisor & Secretary to the Panel	Academic Affairs TU Dublin

Documentation Reviewed by the Programme Review Panel
▪ Overview of the approach taken by the School of Media in Programme Review ▪ Programme Self Evaluation Report (PSER) ▪ Programme Descriptor (Extracted from the Programme and Module Catalogue - PMC) ▪ Book of Modules (Extracted from the Programme and Module Catalogue - PMC) ▪ Annual Programme Enhancement Reports (2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23) ▪ External Examiner Reports (2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23) ▪ Exemplar Assessment Materials ▪ Legacy Programme Descriptor and Book of Modules ▪ TU Dublin Strategic Plan 2024-2028 ▪ Overview of the University Education Model

Schedule of Meetings

14.00 – 14.45	Private meeting of panel to discuss/provide initial feedback on the submission documentation and draw up an agenda of matters to be raised at subsequent meetings.	
14.45 – 17.00	Meeting of Panel with Head of School, Head of Discipline and staff teaching on the programme to discuss the PSER, revised programme, module syllabi (existing, revised and new), teaching, learning and assessment methods.	
	In attendance:	
	Dr. Caroline O'Sullivan (Head of School)	Dr. Daniel McSweeney (Head of Discipline)
	Bryan Duggan	John Healy
	Brian Vaughan	Keith Gardiner
	Donal Beecher	Peter Lynch
	Hugh McAtamney	Yekta Kalantar Hormozi
	James Carswell	Dylan Schouten
17.00 – 17.30	Meeting of Panel with current students and graduates.	
	In attendance:	
	Current Students	*Graduates*
	Amy Madden	Kate McNamara
	Daniele Uzpoleviciute	Ryan O'Connor
	Rachel Appleyard	
	Jacob Mc Connell	
	Thomas Grumley	
17.30 – 18.00	Private meeting of Panel to discuss its findings.	
18.00	Oral Presentation of panel summary findings to Head of School of Media, Head of Discipline and Programme Coordinator.	

Section E Programme Evaluation

Programme Review Process		
Was the programme review conducted in accordance with the Programme Review Process, i.e. were current students, graduates, employers, other appropriate stakeholders involved in the review process?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Research informing the programme review included:

Environmental Scanning
The environmental audit, researched and completed by the programme team focused on:

- Irish Market Context and Labour Market Trends
- European and Global Market Contexts

Competitive Analysis
A competitive analysis was conducted through a comprehensive desktop review, focusing on a diverse range of programmes available both nationally and internationally. This review utilised a purposeful sampling approach to select academic programs comparable to our current offering. Additionally, a selection of specialist game and design and development programmes were examined to gain a deeper understanding of the approaches being taken. The process of analysis made use of the thematic grouping of modules and areas of specialisation, allowing the programme team to benchmark our emergent designs while identifying trends and potential areas for expansion and growth.

Perspectives of Current Students
Students were invited to anonymously complete surveys during class time with feedback sought on the following:

- The driving factors behind course application and alternative CAO choices.
- Considerations that may affect course engagement for example commute, employment, attendance, personal challenges and supportive learning needs.
- Cultural, social, and civic perspectives, awareness and avenues for exploring improvement in the structuring of the programme.
- Areas of the programme that present challenges or difficulties to students.
- Areas of the programme that students find positive or rewarding.
- Students' future career aspirations.

Perspectives of Graduates
A comprehensive survey was developed to collect data on the current roles of our graduates, their professional experiences, and their feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. This survey aimed to gather detailed insights into graduates' career trajectories and their opinions on the curriculum, thereby providing a robust basis for enhancing the programme.

Additionally, the survey included specific questions designed to capture quantitative and qualitative data on:

- Employment Status: Information on whether graduates are employed, self-employed, pursuing further education, or engaged in other activities.

- Industry Sectors: The various industry sectors where graduates are working, to understand the relevance and applicability of the programme across different fields.
- Job Roles and Responsibilities: Details on the specific job roles and
- responsibilities that graduates have taken on, to assess how well the programme prepares students for the demands of the job market.
- Programme Feedback: Graduates' evaluations of the course content, teaching quality, practical assignments, and overall curriculum structure, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement.
- Professional Development: Information on any additional training or certifications that graduates have pursued post-graduation, to identify potential gaps in the programme.

Perspectives of Employers & Practitioners
Interviews and engagement with industry professionals were carried out at both the programme level (Game Design) and the broader discipline level (Creative Digital Media, Immersive Technology and Games). Interviews were conducted to discover key insights on graduate hiring policies, requirements and aspirations for ideal candidates both in technical/creative skills and soft skills, essential traits for career success, and an overview of where their industry is going in the next 5-10 years - with particular focus on the immediate and future impact of AI. The insights gleaned from these discussions formed an important part of the initial phase of redesign and restructuring of the degrees in the discipline area with a view to meeting the needs and standards of the industries its graduates would ultimately enter.

Governance & Management		
Does the programme align with the University's Strategic Plan and the principles of the University Education Model, and relevant policies?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Engagement with the University Education Model, revised Graduate Attributes, Sustainable Education, EDI policies, and the three pillars of People, Planet and Partnership of the University's Strategic Plan was evident throughout this programme review process. The panel noted however, that modalities as one of the UEM fundamentals was not considered as part of this process at this time. Recommendation #10. The panel acknowledged that the programme team has made meaningful progress in integrating sustainability at programme level. The next step should focus on embedding sustainability outcomes more consistently within individual modules, using GreenComp as a guiding framework where appropriate. Explicit integration across teaching, learning, and assessment would support a coherent and measurable approach to sustainability education. Recommendation #12.		
Do the Programme Management and Quality Assurance arrangements align to TU Dublin Quality Framework processes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Has the Annual Monitoring/Academic Quality Enhancement process been used to identify issues and actions that continually enhance the programme and student learning experience?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Student Data		
On consideration of student recruitment data, is there evidence that there continues to be a market demand for the programme and that the programme remains viable?	Yes ✓	No ☐
On consideration of student engagement, performance and progression data, are students engaging with their programme and performing as expected? If not, has this been acknowledged and addressed through the programme review process?	Yes ✓	No ☐
On consideration of graduate destination data, is there evidence that students are securing employment in the field or progressing to further study in the discipline?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Evidenced within the PSER and provided graduate profiles.		

Awards Standards		
Are the programme aims and learning outcomes clearly written using appropriate terminology?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are the programme aims and learning outcomes aligned to the proposed level of the award on the NFQ in accordance with applicable Award Standards?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Will the curricula, teaching, learning and assessment methods enable students to reach the appropriate standard to qualify for the award(s)?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Having reviewed the syllabi and assessment methods as proposed the panel was of the opinion that learners would be capable of attaining the standards of knowledge, skill or competence relevant for the awards.		
Is ongoing programme development appropriately informed by internal and external stakeholder input (including industry/practice, professional/regulatory bodies, and community organisations)?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Does ongoing programme development take account of relevant external discipline benchmarks and Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Programme Design		
Is the programme design informed by current development in the discipline and associated subject areas, having taken into consideration current trends, stakeholder feedback and market analysis?	Yes ✓	No ☐
However, the panel noted the current trend towards live gaming, analytics and player feedback and that many companies are actively hiring for game design roles that require Unreal Engine expertise. The panel recommended that the programme team consider incorporating same into the revised curriculum. Recommendation #3.		
Is there a mechanism to ensure the input of external stakeholders in the ongoing development of the programme?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is the programme curriculum well-structured with a logical progression of learning and development across the modules and stages?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Evident within the module syllabi and through discussion with the programme team, the panel was informed of the logical progression of learning and development as a student progresses through the programme however, the panel recommended that a mapping exercise be undertaken to show how career development is supported for each of the design roles. It was also clear to the panel how the standards of knowledge, skill and competence evolve throughout each of the individual modules within the revised programme. However, the panel recommended that content in relation to employability skills necessary for the various design roles (level, UI (User Interface), UX (User Experience) and system) be increased to further support graduate employability. Recommendation #9. Also, the panel recommended that the programme team carry out a mapping exercise to show how career development is supported for each of the design roles as a student progresses through the programme. Recommendation #2.		
Are there appropriate opportunities for students to undertake work-based learning, through work placements or work-based projects or assignments?	Yes ✓	No ☐
The panel recommended that the programme team reflect on how they can further assist students in identifying and acquiring work placement opportunities. Recommendation #5.		
Are work/practice placements appropriate and fit for purpose, having regard to the requirements of professional, regulatory, and associative bodies where applicable, in the context of student achievement of learning outcomes and in the overall student experience?	Yes ✓	No ☐
The panel were provided with a draft of the School Work Placement Guide detailing all aspects of placement.		
If applicable, have the relevant Blended Learning Checklists (i.e. Learning Experience Context & Programme Context) been fully completed and submitted to the Panel?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Is the required programme and module information provided in the correct format?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Extracts from the PMC of both programme descriptor and book of modules were provided to the panel.		

Learning, Teaching & Assessment		
Is there an effective student-centred learning and teaching strategy that aligns with the University's strategies and guidelines in this regard?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Does the assessment strategy provide an appropriate mix of assessment types that will enable students to demonstrate that they have met the module and programme learning outcomes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
The panel concurred that the mix of assessment types was appropriate and that the assessment criteria and events as described within the submission documentation and through discussion at the panel meeting will enable students to demonstrate that they have met the module and programme learning outcomes.		
Do the learning outcomes and assessment strategy ensure that academic integrity can be maintained and attempted breaches of academic integrity are minimised/easily detected?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is there a comprehensive mapping of assessment methods and module learning outcomes and between module learning outcomes and programme learning outcomes?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Evident within the assessment section of the module syllabi and tables mapping the module learning outcomes to the programme learning outcomes as provided within the submission documentation.		
Are there opportunities in all modules to provide students with timely and constructive feedback on their learning and development?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Do the teaching and assessment methods consider the diversity of the student cohort?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Student Supports & Learning Environment		
Are there sufficient and appropriate resources (e.g. human, financial and physical) to support the proposed programme aims and objectives, to deliver the programme as specified?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are there sufficient staff that are appropriately qualified and capable to support the programme delivery?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are there appropriate arrangements in place to support the student experience and to monitor student performance?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Are the access, transfer and progression arrangements including RPL clearly defined and appropriate, and aligned to TU Dublin policy/strategy in this regard?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Do the student supports and learning environment cater for equality, diversity and inclusivity of students?	Yes ✓	No ☐
Is the relevant programme information clearly communicated to the students to ensure they are informed, guided and cared for?	Yes ✓	No ☐

Collaborative Provision (if applicable)		
Are the roles and responsibilities of each partner clearly defined?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		
In the case of Joint or Multiple Awards, has due diligence on the capacity of the partner institution to meet the QA/QE requirements for the programme been undertaken?	Yes ☐	No ☐
N/A		

Section F	Overall Recommendation of the Panel

1.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme as submitted, without amendment**	☐
2.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme, subject to minor amendments/editorial changes to be completed as soon as possible and with recommendations for consideration.** **Note:** recommendations are attached where it is considered that the programme would benefit from particular changes, or from a review of certain aspects of the programme over a period of time, with changes made if required. While recommendations are advisory in nature, there is an expectation that all recommendations are responded to appropriately and acted upon as appropriate.	☐
3.	**Recommend continuing approval of programme subject to the fulfilment of conditions. Recommendations for consideration may also be attached.** **Note:** conditions are attached where it is agreed that changes must be made to the programme / programme documentation prior to the commencement of the programme. Conditions must be set where issues are identified that relate directly to academic standards or to University regulations or procedures. It should be clear what is required in order to meet the conditions. A new programme cannot go forward to Faculty Board for consideration unless a response to the Review Report is submitted with revised programme documentation.	☒
4.	**Do not recommend continuing approval of programme.**	☐

Areas for commendation	
	The panel commended the: ▪ Staff's open and frank engagement at all sessions. ▪ Pragmatic and learner-focused approach to elective provision. In particular, the integration of a reliable, accessible free elective reflects a clear commitment to offering meaningful learner choice within the realities of programme delivery. This approach demonstrates thoughtful engagement with the principles and fundamentals of the University Education Model by expanding curricular flexibility and responding to diverse learner needs in a scalable and sustainable way. ▪ Clear commitment to aligning the curriculum closely with industry expectations, notably through robust practical and project-based modules, excellent integration

	of work-based learning opportunities, and proactive incorporation of emerging industry tools and technologies. ▪ Introduction and thoughtful integration of contemporary modules, such as 'Games for Impact', reflecting responsiveness to current industry trends and social relevance.

Conditions of Approval	
1.	Programme schedule Provide a definitive programme schedule clearly outlining the elective choice within each semester of delivery and update the programme descriptor on the PMC to accurately reflect same for 2025/26.
	Response: - The programme schedule for 2025/2026 has been submitted to the Faculty Academic Quality Advisor. - AKARI has been updated with the validated programme schedule, and all module descriptors have been submitted for final approval on TU Dublin systems.
2.	Derogations Provide a definitive list of any derogations sought as part of this validation, in particular a listing of any modules where compensation does not apply.
	Response: Following a thorough review, the Programme Board has considered the applicability of compensation across all modules within the programme. In alignment with academic standards, professional expectations, and the integrity of programme outcomes, it has been decided that the following modules will ***not*** be eligible for compensation: • **Work Placement (WKPL 3004)** – 30 ECTS Credits • **Project Development (DMED H4084)** – 20 ECTS Credits These modules represent critical capstone components of the programme, requiring students to demonstrate the integration and application of knowledge, skills, and competencies at an advanced level. They carry a high level of academic and professional significance and must be passed on their own merit.

	• **Work Placement (WKPL 3004)** involves substantial engagement with external employers and reflects the student's ability to perform effectively in a real-world, professional context. The module is positioned at an *award stage* for students of **TU796** and also at an *exit award stage* for students exiting early from **TU981**. As such, student performance in this module is directly linked to the attainment of programme-level outcomes and the classification of the qualification awarded. Compensation in this 30 ECTS credit module risks undermining the assurance of graduate readiness and professional competence. • **Project Development (DMED H4084)** is a major academic endeavour that serves as the culmination of the student's programme. It demands independent research, critical analysis, application of skills, and a synthesis of knowledge acquired throughout the programme. Given its central role in evidencing academic achievement and intellectual development, the module must be passed without compensation. Permitting compensation for either of these modules would compromise the integrity of the programme and the standards expected by both academic and industry stakeholders. The Programme Board has therefore determined that these modules are non-compensable to uphold the academic and professional value of the awards.

Recommendations **Overall Response** The School of Media Executive and the programme team welcomes the collegiate and constructive recommendations of the panel. While we have responded to all recommendations in the report, in order to reflect and develop an integrated plan to address them, the programme team will meet in early September 2025. They will review and prioritise the recommendations and develop an action plan to address the key issues arising. The action plan will be shared with AQEC and a report on the implementation of the plan will be presented at the beginning of Semester 2 2025, in time for review before the roll-out of the full revised programme in September 2026.	
1.	Programme title Reflect on the programme title and the inclusion of the word 'Design' as opposed to 'Development'.
	Response: We appreciate the panel's recommendation to reflect on the programme title and the conversation during the panel visit was certainly thought provoking. Following internal discussions and in consideration of current programme positioning, we propose to retain the existing title. In the short term the key reasons for this are:

	Alignment with Programme Content and Ethos: The TU984 programme has a strong and deliberate emphasis on design. Students engage deeply with game mechanics, narrative design, interaction, visual aesthetics, and asset design etc. While technical competencies such as coding and provisioning are embedded, they are framed in support of creative design goals rather than as standalone development tracks. The programme's learning outcomes and graduate profile clearly reflect a design-led philosophy. **Market Positioning:** The title *Game Design* is consistently used across TU Dublin's official channels, including the website, printed prospectus, CAO materials, social media, and open day events. Prospective students, schools, and guidance counsellors associate TU984 with a creative and conceptual approach to games, distinguishing it from more development-heavy or engineering-oriented programmes. **Competitive Differentiation:** The term *Game Design* helps differentiate TU Dublin's offering from other programmes in the Irish and international marketplace that focus more on software development, coding, or game engineering. Our title communicates a unique value proposition insofar as it communicates a strong creative programme combined with relevant technical skills and not the other way around. We recognise the importance of regularly reviewing programme titles in light of evolving sectoral terminology and stakeholder needs. Over the next 18-24 months, we commit to: • Continuing to benchmark programme titles and nomenclature across Irish and international institutions offering similar degrees. • Continuing to gather feedback from students, alumni, industry partners, and academic colleagues on the clarity and relevance of the current title. • Reviewing CAO data and applicant trends, particularly with regard to entry preferences, conversion rates, and feedback from schools and guidance counsellors.
2.	Career Development Carry out a mapping exercise to show how career development is supported for each of the design roles as a student progresses through the programme.
	Response: Please see **Appendix A - Career Development Mapping** for an initial attempt to map modules to career pathways. As part of the programmatic review process, the main thematic areas were mapped directly to common design and development roles which are listed in this document. This is a working document which will be updated through ongoing dialogue with industry and other stakeholders.
3.	Current Trends The panel noted the current trend towards live gaming, analytics and player feedback and that many companies are actively hiring for game design roles that require Unreal Engine

	expertise. The panel recommended that the programme team consider incorporating same into the revised curriculum.
	Response: The programme team acknowledges the panel's observations regarding the growing importance of live gaming, analytics, player feedback, and Unreal Engine expertise in the current game design employment landscape. While the revised curriculum reflects our strong commitment to design-led learning and creative innovation, we accept that further engagement with current and emerging industry technologies and practices (particularly in relation to live operations and real-time analytics) would have enhanced the review. In response, we commit to the following actions: - Formally reviewing the programmes alignment with industry expectations in areas such as live gaming etc and tool-specific competencies (including Unreal Engine), beginning in the next academic year. - Engaging with industry partners and alumni to gather specific insights and learnings into the application of these recommendations. - Exploring targeted enhancements through assessment briefs (e.g. engine agnostic), or external collaboration opportunities that expose students to analytics tools and live game environments. Undertake a comprehensive review of the design and development technology stacks, with particular attention to game engines such as Unreal, Unity, and Godot. The programme team acknowledges ongoing internal discussion/debates regarding the pedagogical and industry value of each and will seek to establish a clear rationale for future tool selection based on educational outcomes, accessibility, and relevance to current and emerging industry practice.
4.	Portfolio Development Further develop the use of portfolios, not only as an assessment tool, but as a key graduate skill that supports reflection, iteration, and the professional showcasing of student work. A structured, programme-wide approach to portfolio development could provide a coherent way to evidence process, support learner progression, and prepare students for external audiences and industry engagement.
	Response: The programme team fully supports the panel's recommendation to further develop the use of portfolios, not only as an assessment method, but as a structured tool for reflection, iteration, and professional presentation. Portfolio development is embedded across multiple modules within the programme, including Experimental Game Design, Asset Design, Group Project, and the Final Year Project. These modules offer students multiple opportunities to generate and curate artefacts that reflect both process and outcome, with an emphasis on originality, creative intent, and technical execution. In many cases, portfolio artefacts are used to demonstrate skill development, creative problem solving, and team-based collaboration.

	However, we recognise that while portfolio work is present throughout the programme, there is scope for a more coherent, programme-wide strategy that would more explicitly support students in documenting their creative journeys, articulating their design rationale, and preparing for professional engagement. Following on from comments on this topic in the review meeting, the programme team recently collaborated with Black Shamrock, hosting a portfolio review event for final year students. During this event, Black Shamrock staff provided one-to-one feedback on student portfolios, offering valuable insights into industry expectations and presentation standards. The event, which took place shortly after the programme's validation meeting, was well received and underscored the value of formalising such interactions as part of a broader portfolio strategy. The programme team will commit to the continued development of a structured, programme wide framework for portfolio development, commencing in year 1 and progressively building toward a professional-quality portfolio by year 4. We are also hoping to strengthen our links with **industry partners** such as Black Shamrock, to provide students with ongoing external feedback and professional benchmarking opportunities.
5.	Work Placement & Preparation Reflect on how the programme team can further assist students in identifying and acquiring work placement opportunities. Also, following on from recommendation 4, the panel recommends that explicit instruction and support around creating professional CVs and cover letters be integrated into the curriculum. Ideally, this preparation should occur before the placement year, to better equip students in securing placement opportunities and enhance their overall employability.
	Response: The programme team acknowledges the importance of structured support for student work placement and welcomes the panel's recommendation to enhance preparation for and access to such opportunities. To date, uptake of work placements by Game Design students has been limited. This is attributable to several factors, including the relatively small scale of the Irish games industry, the sensitive and often confidential nature of in-development projects, the high number of students across programmes seeking placements, and the current capacity of industry partners to host interns. Additionally, while students are encouraged to pursue placements, the support structures available to facilitate and coordinate these experiences have been relatively limited to date. Recognising the value of work placement in enhancing graduate employability, the School of Media is currently seeking to embed work placement opportunities across all its undergraduate programmes as part of the review of all such programmes. As part of this, a review of existing placement support mechanisms at both School and Faculty level is underway. This includes the development of clearer pathways for student/employer

	engagement and the exploration of new placement models that reflect the project-based nature of the games sector. The programme team is also committed to enhancing career readiness supports, both within the curriculum and in partnership with TU Dublin student services. To that end: • We are planning for increased collaboration with the TU Dublin Careers Office, particularly around CV and cover letter writing, interview preparation, and industry engagement sessions. • Careers events are now a more prominent feature of the student experience, and Game Design students have recently participated in faculty-wide Careers Days, gaining valuable exposure to industry panels, networking sessions, and employer Q&A forums. • We will explore embedding explicit instruction in professional documentation and self-presentation (e.g., CVs, cover letters, online portfolios) into the curriculum in advance of the placement year or final year progression. • We are also reviewing ways to better communicate alternative industry engagement routes (e.g., live briefs, collaborative projects, and studio mentorship) that may complement or supplement traditional placements. The programme team is fully committed to strengthening the work placement pipeline and employability skillset of our students, and will continue to monitor progress in this area as part of wider School and Faculty initiatives.
6.	Legacy modules Review any legacy module descriptors not updated as part of this review process to ensure alignment with the University's strategic intent.
	Response: Legacy modules have been reviewed as part of this process and updated on AKARI
7.	Audio Consider relocating audio content for delivery earlier in the programme possibly in year 2.
	Response: The programme team acknowledges the panel's recommendation to consider relocating audio content earlier in the programme, and we recognise the importance of audio design as a key competency in contemporary game design and development. This recommendation aligns with similar feedback from our external examiner, who advised that audio should be positioned at a point in the programme where students have sufficient design and technical context to apply it meaningfully in projects etc. In response, and as part of the current programme review, we have moved the audio module to year 3, where it is now better integrated with students' design and development skills. While audio is now formally delivered in year 3, students are introduced to core audio principles and practices earlier through a number of modules that involve sound as part of broader design or development work. This ensures that audio awareness is scaffolded across the programme and not confined to a single module. We commit to monitoring and evaluating the impact of this change through ongoing feedback from students, staff, and external stakeholders, and will remain open to further adjustment based on evidence of student progression and industry relevance.

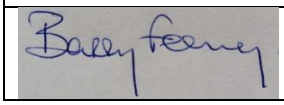
8.	Hours per semester Review the hours per semester as stated within the module descriptors to ensure that what is stated accurately represents delivery in relation to lectures, tutorials, studio time, self-directed learning etc. such that all stakeholders' expectations can be managed.
	Response: The School of Media executive has committed to reviewing overall resource allocation to the programme, including staffing and space requirements, to ensure that the programme is appropriately supported in delivering the kind of studio-based, design-focused learning experience that is core to its ethos.
9.	Graduate employability Increase content in relation to employability skills necessary for the various design roles (level, UI (User Interface), UX (User Experience) and system) to further support graduate employability.
	Response: We recognise the need to further support students in developing and articulating the employability skills required for various roles in industry, including those beyond Game Design. We would note that many of our students tend to frame their identity narrowly as 'game designers', often overlooking the multi-disciplinary and transversal nature of the skillset they acquire through the programme. The creative, technical, analytical, and collaborative skills developed over four years are highly transferable and applicable in a range of sectors beyond traditional game development, including: • Interactive media and immersive experience design • Digital product and service design (UX/UI) • Simulation, education, and training technologies • Creative technologies and digital arts • Software and systems design • Media production and content development To address this, the programme team and School will: • Make greater efforts to communicate the transversal nature of the graduate skills • Collaborate with the TU Dublin Careers Office to highlight diverse employment pathways and to integrate targeted supports for CVs, cover letters, and role-specific portfolios relevant to game and interaction design. • Work with Careers Day organisers to ensure broader employer representation across adjacent creative and technology sectors and facilitate student exposure to non-traditional game design careers.

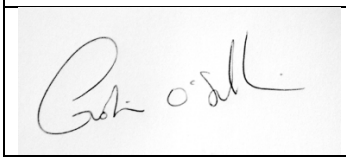
10.	Modalities Reflect on how delivery modalities might be diversified in future iterations of the programme to better support the diverse needs of learners. While maintaining the value of in-person engagement, the team is invited to consider validating modules in more than one delivery format where appropriate. This would offer greater flexibility for learners facing logistical or socio-economic barriers, while enhancing the programme's adaptability and resilience.
	Response: The programme team acknowledges the panel's recommendation regarding the diversification of delivery modalities to better support the needs of learners, and we recognise the growing importance of flexibility and accessibility in contemporary higher education. That said, we also wish to highlight that the **applied, studio-based nature** of the Game Design programme relies heavily on face-to-face interaction, peer collaboration, and hands-on iterative learning, all of which are central to both the pedagogical model and the professional context students are preparing to enter. The in-person experience fosters critical soft skills, communication, and creative problem-solving within a team environment. It is also important to acknowledge the **diverse cohort of learners** on the on the programme. For many of these learners, the structured and socially supportive environment of face-to-face teaching contributes significantly to their engagement, well-being, and academic success. Furthermore, we are mindful that our students, as digital natives and aspiring game creators, **already spend considerable time engaged in screen-based activity**. The physical classroom offers a valuable counterbalance, a space for collaboration, connection, and embodied learning that supports the development of well-rounded creative professionals. Nevertheless, the programme team remains open to exploring additional modalities and flexible learning approaches once institutional and sectoral conditions permit. We are committed to reviewing how best to support students facing logistical, personal, or socio-economic challenges, and we will engage in ongoing dialogue with the School, Faculty, and University to explore how enhanced flexibility can be meaningfully and appropriately integrated into future programme iterations.
11.	Embedding UDL and Digital Capabilities While there is strong evidence of authentic assessment and portfolio use, the programme team is encouraged to more consistently embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and digital capabilities across the curriculum. The panel welcomes the stated commitment to UDL and inclusive practice and recommends alignment with TU Dublin's EDI principles to further strengthen inclusive, digital, and equity-focused learning design.
	Response: The School is proud of our commitment to EDI and appreciate the panels acknowledgement of same. We recognise that while inclusive approaches are evident in many areas of the programme, particularly through portfolio-based assessment, group work, and project flexibility, there is an opportunity to more consistently and explicitly

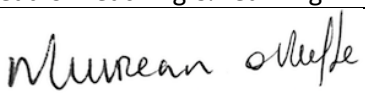
	align our curriculum with UDL and TU Dublin's broader EDI principles. We are committed to reviewing our learning design practices to ensure they offer multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression, while also reflecting the diverse needs and strengths of our student cohort. The Final Year Project and User Research modules already serve as natural opportunities for students to explore inclusive design principles and digital accessibility in context. These modules encourage students to consider user experience (UX) and the ethical implications of design decisions, including accessibility, usability, and inclusivity. These values are essential in both game development and broader digital design fields.
12.	Operationalising Sustainability at Module Level The programme team has made meaningful progress in integrating sustainability at programme level. The next step should focus on embedding sustainability outcomes more consistently within individual modules, using GreenComp as a guiding framework where appropriate. Explicit integration across teaching, learning, and assessment would support a coherent and measurable approach to sustainability education.
	Response: We acknowledge the meaningful progress made so far at the programme level and agree that embedding sustainability outcomes more consistently within individual modules is a crucial next step. Using GreenComp as a guiding framework will help ensure alignment across teaching, learning, and assessment, fostering a coherent and measurable approach to sustainability education. We will review and plan to implement these enhancements for the coming academic year.
13.	Graduate Attributes The programme team is encouraged to ensure that TU Dublin's Graduate Attributes are meaningfully embedded and progressively scaffolded across the learner journey. Learners at all exit points (e.g., Levels 6, 7, and 8) should have demonstrable opportunities to engage with and achieve relevant attributes, supported by clear alignment across curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessment methods.
	Response: The programme team has already devoted significant effort to aligning the curriculum with TU Dublin's Graduate Attributes, ensuring that the high-level attributes developed reflect the expectations for graduates across all relevant NQF levels. These attributes have been carefully considered to represent the diverse outcomes expected at Levels 6, 7, and 8. Moving forward, as part of our ongoing programme QA process, we will place greater emphasis on embedding these graduate attributes explicitly and progressively throughout the learner journey. This will include refining teaching strategies to support active engagement with these outcomes and enhancing assessment design to provide clear evidence of attribute achievement at each exit point. By ensuring this alignment is coherent and transparent, we aim to provide learners with meaningful, demonstrable opportunities to develop and showcase these attributes consistently across all levels of their studies.

Other matters to be brought to the attention of Faculty Board and/or Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee
N/A

Section G Approvals

Review Report	
This Review Report has been agreed by the Review Panel and is signed on its behalf by the Panel Chair.	
Dr. Finbarr Feeney	
	Date: 24 6 25

School Response	
The response to the conditions and recommendations has been agreed by the School and is signed by the Head of School.	
Dr. Caroline O'Sullivan	
	Date: 11/07/2025

Faculty Board	
The report and response have been approved by Faculty Board	
Faculty Head of Teaching & Learning:	19/07/2025
Signed: 	Date: Click or tap to enter a date.