

**Report of the Review Panel**

**Approved by the Teaching Council**

**following the review of the**

**MA in Socially Engaged Art: (Further, Adult and Community Education)**

**National College of Art and Design**

**Dublin**

October 2013

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## Report of the Review Panel to the Teaching Council following the review of the MA in Socially Engaged Art: (Further, Adult and Community Education) – Level 9

### 1 Background

The Teaching Council is the statutory body charged with setting the standards for entry to the teaching profession and ensuring that these standards are upheld.

In accordance with Section 38 of The Teaching Council Act, 2001, the Council shall:

- (a) review and accredit programmes of teacher education and training provided by institutions of higher education and training in the State,
- (b) review the standards of education and training appropriate to a person entering a programme of teacher education and training, and
- (c) review the standards of knowledge, skill and competence required for the practice of teaching, and shall advise the Minister and, as it considers appropriate, the instructions concerned.

The Teaching Council's role in relation to the review and accreditation of programmes of initial teacher education is distinct from the academic accreditation which programmes already undergo. Academic accreditation is based on the suitability of a programme for the award of a degree/diploma whereas professional accreditation for any profession is a judgement as to whether a programme prepares one for entry into that profession.

The review and accreditation of programmes of teacher education by The Teaching Council provides an opportunity for colleges and universities to demonstrate that they offer quality programmes of teacher education. It is expected that the graduates of such programmes achieve programme aims and learning outcomes which are aligned with the values and professional dispositions and the standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence which are central to the practice of teaching.

In order to guide its review of programmes, the Teaching Council has published its *Further Education: General and Programme Requirements for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Qualifications* (March 2011). In 2011 the Council invited expressions of interest from colleges and universities wishing to put forward programmes for review in accordance with the Council's review strategy. A number of programmes were subsequently put forward for review. This report sets out the findings following one of those reviews, i.e. the review of the MA in Socially Engaged Art: (Further, Adult and Community Education), hereinafter referred to as 'the programme', in the National College of Art and Design, Dublin (NCAD).

## **2 Statement with regard to the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 and 2003 (FOI Act) and 2003 (FOI Act)**

The Teaching Council routinely makes information available to the public in relation to its functions and activities and, in line with that practice, a summary of this report may be available on the Council's website, [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie).

The FOI Act is designed to allow public access to information held by public bodies which is not routinely available through other sources. The Teaching Council complies fully with the terms of the FOI Act and access to this document may be sought in accordance with that Act. It should be noted that access to information under the FOI Act is subject to certain exemptions and one or more of those exemptions may apply in relation to some or all of this report.

## **3 Overview of the Review Process**

The review took place on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 in accordance with the Council's review strategy. The process was formally initiated when the Review Panel was appointed by the Teaching Council's Director with Stan McHugh as Chair<sup>1</sup>.

From the outset, there was wholehearted engagement by staff of the College and a genuine openness to the review and accreditation process.

At the conclusion of the visit, the Review Panel Chair, in the company of fellow panel members, gave feedback to management and course staff in which he summarised their findings in broad outline and the next steps in the review process. The Chair subsequently emailed the Panel's initial findings to the College authorities. Following its consideration, NCAD submitted a revised document addressing the recommendations contained in the Panel's initial feedback. This report sets out the initial and final findings of the Review Panel

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<sup>1</sup>Details of the Review Panel membership are included at Appendix I.<sup>1</sup>

(hereinafter referred to as the Panel) following its review of both the original and revised submission.

#### **4 Documentation**

The initial documentation submitted by the College conformed generally to *the Pro Forma for the submission of programmes of initial teacher education (further education) for accreditation by the Teaching Council (August 2011)*. Key areas of focus were:

- Programme description
- Conceptual framework
- Programme aims
- Programme design and structure
- Programme content
- Teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- Practical teaching programme
- Staffing
- Facilities
- Student support and guidance systems
- Communication and decision-making structures
- Financial resources
- Programme outcomes

The Review Panel considered that in general terms the initial document articulated the general requirements of the Teaching Council, and noted that it was of considerable assistance in identifying the various components of the programme. It formed a valuable evidential base for the Panel in its initial assessment of the quality of the submission.

The programme document was revised by College staff following feedback from the Panel, and this document was reviewed separately by the Panel. The revised document was found to have complied generally with the Pro Forma in a systematic manner. However, a small number of additional recommendations were made by the Panel so the programme will be more fully in keeping with the requirements of the Teaching Council's Programme Requirements for the Further Education sector.

#### **5 Review Visit**

As set out in the overview above, the Review Panel's visit to the College took place on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013. It consisted of continuous dialogue with the College leadership, relevant programme staff members and potential students. This process afforded the Review Panel a valuable opportunity to consider the programme in detail. The logistical preparations made by the Course Director and colleagues facilitated a systematic and efficient examination of the various components of the programme.

The full schedule for the visit to the college is included in Appendix III.

## **6 Overall Finding**

Having regard to the initial documentation which was submitted and considered in detail in advance of and during the Review Panel's visit to the College on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013, and the revised document reviewed by the Panel on the 19<sup>th</sup> July, the Review Panel recommends to the Teaching Council that the College be granted accreditation for its MA in Socially Engaged Art: (Further, Adult and Community Education).

## **7. Commendations**

- The commitment of staff to the delivery of the programme is highly impressive
- The commitment of the College leadership in NCAD to the programme is clear
- The programme draws on a strong tradition in teacher education preparing students for teaching art at post-primary level
- The programme also draws on the NCAD tradition and experience preparing practitioners in adult and community settings through the Graduate Diploma in Community/Arts/Education
- The programme has a strong conceptual framework underpinning socially engaged art practice, well supported with examples shown to panel, e.g. Rialto Group Project
- The programme shows a cogent vision of education as a transformative process, allied to the notion of developing students as self-confident and authoritative figures
- The cultural values espoused and exemplified throughout our conversations, such as social justice, collaboration, equality and respect, resonate fully with the values set out by the Teaching Council
- The aims of the programme are cogent and are aligned with the aims specified by the Teaching Council
- The college's culture of openness, inclusivity and engagement, as reflected in staff publications and in our conversations, aligns particularly well with the programme

## **8. Recommendations**

Following the initial assessment which took place on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013, the Panel made the following recommendations, while deferring a final decision on accreditation until the College had an opportunity to respond:

- The conceptual framework should be enhanced by clear reference to policy developments in further education in Ireland as outlined in the Teaching Council’s “Further Education: General and Programme Requirements for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Qualifications”, March 2011 (Section 3.5)
- All modules should be fully contextualised in Further Education in Ireland to enable student-teachers address the specific needs of learners in the further education sector, and the module reading lists should reflect this context also.
- The learning outcomes set out by the Teaching Council need to be clearly identified within the relevant module descriptors (Section 3 of the Teaching Council Programme Requirements document referred to above), covering areas such as quality assurance, assessment, programme design and themes such as literacy and numeracy.
- It is not readily apparent from the document and structure presented that the requirements outlined in 2.4 of the same Teaching Council Programme Requirements document are structured in terms of foundation studies, professional studies and practical teaching experience. The student expectations (as expressed to and supported by the panel) emphasise the need for significant elements of foundation studies to be incorporated into the proposed MA programme.
- There is a need for clarity concerning the number of hours teaching accredited programmes, the settings and the timing of the placements and criteria for assessing teaching practice. Clarity is also needed in terms of the advanced entry to year two of the proposed MA programme
- In implementing the above recommendations it may be necessary to review the overall configuration of the modules.

The Panel welcomes the response of NCAD to these initial recommendations, recognising that College staff actively engaged with the issues arising and addressed the areas of concern cited.

Notwithstanding the Panel’s overall recommendation for accreditation, the Panel makes further recommendations as follows:-

### **8.1**

With regard to the two modules, Further Education Practicum 1 and 2, there is a need for greater clarity in respect of the total number of actual teaching hours on which students will be assessed in order to satisfy the Teaching Council requirements.

### **8.2**

While module 4, Situating Practice, addresses general areas in Sociology including inequality, class and gender, the Panel recommends that it should also specify its intention to address the core issues relating to the Sociology of Adult and Further Education.

### **8.3**

While the Panel commends the detail expressed in the aim of the module “Further, Adult and Community Education: theory and practice”, it recommends that the learning outcomes be aligned more closely with the aim.

### **8.4**

The Panel recognises that the current programme document maps the programme modules with Teaching Council outcomes. However, the Panel believes that the document would be further enhanced for the benefit of staff and students if the Teaching Council outcomes (presented under eight headings) were matched more specifically with the learning outcomes within the modules.

## **9. National Issue**

The Panel wishes to bring to the attention of the Teaching Council the possible longer term implications for the accreditation of programmes which are “subject specific”, such as the MA in Socially Engaged Art, given the generic thrust of programmes accredited to date by the Council. While those programmes provide for the teaching of any subject/module in further education, this MA focusses on the teaching of Art and Crafts.

## Appendix I – Review Panel Members

**Stan McHugh**, Former CEO of FETAC and Independent Review Panel Chair

**Evan Buckley**, Education Officer, City of Dublin Education and Training Board (formerly City of Dublin VEC)

**Dr Cathal de Paor**, Director of Continuing Professional Development, Faculty of Education, Mary Immaculate College

**Edward McArdle**, Former Registrar of Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

**Helen Murphy**, Head of Literacy Development Centre, School of Lifelong Learning and Education, Waterford Institute of Technology

**Brendan O’Dea**, Deputy Director, The Teaching Council and **Ailish Murphy**, Executive Officer, acted as rapporteur for the Review Panel

**Appendix II – Attendees at the Preliminary Meeting, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**Professor Declan McGonagle**, Director, NCAD

**Professor Des Bell**, Head of Academic Affairs and Research

**Professor Gary Granville**, Head of Faculty of Education

**Damian Downes**, Registrar

**Gemma Dukes**, Head of Department

**Nuala Hunt**, Head of Continuing Education

### Appendix III - Visit Schedule

#### Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013 (Day 1 of Site Visit)

- 9.00 a.m. Arrival of Panel at NCAD, followed by pre-assessment meeting of Panel until 11.30 a.m
- 11.30 a.m. **Tea/coffee break**
- 11.45 a.m. Panel meeting with Director of programme and senior management
- 12.15 p.m. Introductory presentation by NCAD – overview of the programme
- 12.45 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1.30 p.m. General requirements of the programme
- 1.45 p.m. Conceptual framework / programme aims and outcomes
- 2.30 p.m. Design, structure and content / teaching, learning and assessment
- 3.30 p.m. **Tea/coffee break**
- 3.45 p.m. Practical Teaching
- 4.15 p.m. Attitudes, Values / Lifelong Learning / Reflective Practice
- 5.00 p.m. Panel Discussion
- 5.30 p.m. End of session

#### Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013 (Day 2 of Site Visit)

- 9.15 a.m. Arrival of Panel
- 9.30 a.m. Student Facilities / Student Support
- 10.00 a.m. Students
- 10.30 a.m. Staffing / Governance / Financial Resources
- 11.15 a.m. **Tea/coffee break**
- 11.30 a.m. Tour of student facilities
- 12.00 p.m. Panel Discussion
- 1.00 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1.45 p.m. Panel Discussion reconvenes
- 2.45 p.m. Brief Feedback to senior management team
- 3.30 p.m. End of session