



**TUS**

**Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest**

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:  
Lár Tíre Iarthar Láir

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**Scoil Ealaíne agus Deartha Luimnigh  
Limerick School of Art and Design**

**An Roinn Ealaíne  
Department of Fine Art**

**Report of External Validation Panel**

**External Validation Panel, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**for the**

**Master of Arts in Fine Art**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report outlines, in summary form, the proceedings of the external validation visit for the proposed, Master of Arts in Fine Art and the findings and conclusions of the External Validation Panel on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The external validation visit was undertaken in accordance with TUS Academic Council regulations. An external validation panel makes an independent impartial judgement on a programme proposal.

## 2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

### 2.1 Higher Education Provider

Institute: Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest  
Faculty: Limerick School of Art and Design  
Department: Fine Art  
Date of Visit: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### 2.2 Programmes Evaluated

Programme Title: Master of Arts in Fine Art  
Award Title: Master of Arts  
NFQ Level: Level 9  
ECTS Credits: 90  
Duration: 1 year full-time /2 years part time

### 2.3 External Validation Panel of Expert Assessors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Prof. Marie Parker Jenkins (Chairperson)	Prof. Emeritus of Education,
Dr. Daniel Shippide	Ulster University
Mr. James Hayes	Crawford College of Art and Design, MTU
Ms. Siobhan Mulcahy	Clare County Council
Ms. Eva Birdthistle	Nenagh Arts
Mr. Cormac Dillon	Student Representative

## **2.4 Institute Staff**

Vice President Academic Affairs & Registrar	Ms. Marion Duggan
Dean of Faculty	Mr. Mike Fitzpatrick
Head of Department of Fine Art	Dr. Susan Halvey

### Programme Development Team

Michael Minnis  
Michael McLoughlin  
Shelagh Honan  
Dr Susan Halvey  
Fiona Woods

## **3.0 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF EXTERNAL VALIDATION PANEL**

### **3.1 Main Findings**

The External Validation Panel of Assessors recommends approval of the proposed Master of Art in Fine (Level 9), subject to the conditions as specified in Section 3.2 and recommendation(s) as specified in Sections 3.3.

### **3.2 Conditions**

3.2.1 None

### **3.3 Recommendations**

- 3.3.1 Consider the development of an embedded award to enable students gain recognition for completion of less than the full 90 credits.
- 3.3.2 Include further information on the marketing and recruitment strategy for prospective students: the strategy should be informed by the aims and objectives of the programme; desire for a diversity of candidate types and included in the final programme document.
- 3.3.3 Give further thought to the recruitment cohort size of 16 prospective students given the nature of the course and the challenges of finding appropriate Residency.
- 3.3.4 The panel notes that the Residency is a viable fit from a Pedagogical/Educational Perspective. However:
  - (i) define the term “Residency” in its inclusive sense in the programme document. Make more explicit how the “Residency” will be organised including diversity of residency options, longevity, agreements with residency sites and supports for students for its duration.
  - (ii) provide greater detail on how consistency of the learning can be attained and for contingency planning for challenging residencies.
  - (iii) clarify further the role of the Placement Coordinator and the role of Department Staff in the sourcing of and support of residency for its duration;
  - (iv) the potential for alternative learning opportunity provided in cases where a student cannot fulfil the conditions for residency or source an appropriate residency.
- 3.3.5 Consider further how students can be supported to work in peer environments and in group and collaborative learning practices. Develop opportunities for peer

experience within this programme community and in addition with students from other programmes.

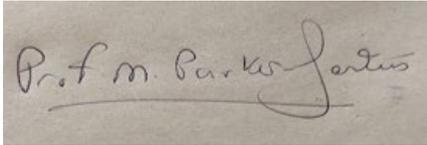
- 3.3.6 Identify and provide appropriate shared spaces/postgraduate hub for students to enable 'Transformation as an Artist' which is particularly important to support the development of Students and their broader graduate attributes.
- 3.3.7 Strengthen the TUS/LSAD links to external cultural communities to reinforce how the programme can underpin an emerging career in the arts world and as artists from a longer term perspective.
- 3.3.8 Define blended learning more closely and evaluate and specify the optimal blend of online and face to face learning for an MA in Fine Art.
- 3.3.9 Provide further information in the programme document with respect to specific types of supports available to students; pedagogical, mentoring, technical and individual.
- 3.3.10 Develop a diagrammatic/schematic representation of the programme emphasising programme structure, key themes and progression that would be a useful aid to registered and prospective students.
- 3.3.11 Embed issues relating to Governmental/Societal priorities such as Climate Change, among others, in the *Critical and Contextual Studies* module and throughout the programme.
- 3.3.12 Ensure that the programme is adequately resourced with relevant new technologies for the production of contemporary fine art.
- 3.3.13 Update the reading lists throughout the programme. Include additional references relating to the rhetoric of research; diversify from an over reliance on Biggs.
- 3.3.14 Update the programme document to reflect the change in status to TUS: Midlands Midwest.
- 3.3.15 Consider the provision of Bursaries to encourage/support student recruitment.

#### **3.4 Commendations and Observations**

- 3.4.1 The panel commends the LSAD, Department of Fine Arts and the Programme team for the development of an innovative programme and creating further learning opportunities at postgraduate level.
- 3.4.2 The panel commends the quality of the documentation provided and noted that it is comprehensive.

3.4.3 The panel commends the evident skills mix, expertise and enthusiasm of the programme team.

3.4.4 The panel commends the use of Guest Lecturers as described for Contemporary and Contextual Studies.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored, textured paper. The signature reads "Prof. M. Parker Jones" in a cursive script. The name "Prof. M. Parker Jones" is written in a single line, with a horizontal line drawn underneath the entire signature.

Signature of Chairperson