

Programme Validation Report

Programme Validation Report for:

MA in Sound (ReSound)

European Joint Masters (EMJM)

NFQ Level 9 (EQF Level 7), 120 ECTS

Embedded Programmes:

N/A

Stand-alone modules leading to a minor award:

N/A

Date of Panel: 31 March 2025

Date of Report: 14 April 2025

**Faculty Response is included at the end of this document*

Table of Contents

Part 1 Introduction	2
1.1 Evaluators	2
1.2 Overall Recommendations.....	3
1.3 Principal Programme:.....	4
1.4 Stand-alone Module(s) Leading to a Minor Award.....	5
1.5 Embedded Programme(s).....	5
1.6 Programmes being replaced.....	5
Part 2 Evaluation against the Validation Criteria	6
2.1 Criterion 1.....	7
2.2 Criterion 2.....	7
2.3 Criterion 3.....	8
2.4 Criterion 4.....	9
2.5 Criterion 5.....	10
2.6 Criterion 6.....	11
2.7 Criterion 7.....	11
2.8 Criterion 8.....	12
2.9 Criterion 9.....	12
2.10 Criterion 10.....	13
2.11 Criterion 11.....	14
2.12 Criterion 12.....	14
Part 3 Overall Recommendation	15
3.1 Principal Programme: MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM).....	15
3.1.1 Reasons for the Overall Recommendation (Principal Programme)	15
3.2 Embedded Programme(s):	15
3.3 Summary of Recommended Special Conditions of Validation.....	15
3.4 Summary of Recommendations to the Provider	15
3.5 Summary of Commendations to the Provider	16
3.6 Signature of Chairperson Error! Bookmark not defined.	
3.7 Disclaimer Error! Bookmark not defined.	
Appendix 1: IADT Programme Validation Criteria – Full Descriptions	0

Part 1 Introduction

1.1 Evaluators

Name	Role	Affiliation
Dr Sheila Flanagan	Chairperson	Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
Dr Claire Fitch	Academic Expert	Lecturer, Department of Creative Arts, Media and Music, Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)
Mr Patrick Geeraerts	Academic Expert	Head of Curriculum, Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound (RITCS), Brussels
Mr Fionán Higgins	Industry Expert	Sound Supervisor, Outer Limits, Supernimbus

1.2 Overall Recommendations

Provider Name	Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design + Technology (IADT)
Date of Site Visit	31 March 2025
Date of Report	14 April 2025

Principal Programme	Title	MA in Sound (ReSound)
	Award	Master of Arts
	Credit	120 ECTS
	ISCED Code	
	Recommendation Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Embedded Award	Title	N/A
	Award	
	Credit	
	ISCED Code	
	Recommendation Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory	
Embedded Award	Title	N/A
	Award	
	Credit	
	ISCED Code	
	Recommendation Satisfactory OR Satisfactory subject to proposed conditions OR Not Satisfactory	

1.3 Principal Programme:

MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM)

NFQ Level 9 (EQF Level 7), 120 ECTS

Names of Centres where the programmes are to be provided	Maximum Number of Learners (per centre)	Minimum Number of Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IADT, Kill Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland Lusofona University, Campo Grande 376, 1749-024 Lisboa, Portugal Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre Gedimino Ave. 42, 01110 Vilnius, Lithuania 	24	18

Enrolment Interval (normally 5 years)	Date of First Intake	September 2025
	Date of Last Intake	September 2030
Maximum number of annual intakes	1 new intake group per annum	
Maximum total number of learners per intake	24	
Programme duration (months from start to completion)	22 months	
Target learner groups	This programme is intended for learners: Who have at a minimum a primary qualification at Level 6 on the European Qualifications Framework. The target applicants are typically sound / media school graduates, particularly those with post-qualification industry experience. Applicants may hold qualifications from other domains and significant industry experience in audio/media-related disciplines. The Masters is designed for those who wish to pursue a career in sound/audio in any aspect of the broader Cultural and Creative Industries.	
Approved countries of provision	Ireland, Portugal, Lithuania	
Delivery mode – Full-time/Part-time	Full Time	
The teaching and learning modalities	Studio, classroom, field study, professional mentorship and lab-based learning with additional online supports.	
Brief synopsis of the programme (eg who is it for, what is it for, what is involved for learners, what it leads to)	<p>The Master of Arts in Sound is a practical taught programme offered by a consortium of three European HEIs.</p> <p>ReSound is a pioneering MA program in Sound for Media Arts, transcending traditional film sound education. This initiative emphasises sound as a standalone discipline and explores the intricate relationship between sound and image across various formats, including immersive and interactive experiences. It delves into sound epistemology and technical aspects, acting as a conduit between Europe's creative industries due to sound's universal presence.</p>	

	<p>While visual studies often dominate arts and perception, sound studies present a unique perspective on art and the human experience, spanning cinema, home environments, performance arts, and natural spaces. ReSound aims to redefine our auditory experience, equipping artists and researchers to deepen our interaction with sound and its evolving roles in diverse fields.</p> <p>ReSound integrates Europe's cultural, economic, and social objectives, fostering a blend of curriculum development and creative processes that benefit learners, audiences, and industries across regions. Unique to our program is its joint delivery by the European University Alliance, FilmEU, and relevant partners. This collaboration shapes the curriculum and degree, involving education in various fields like filmmaking, animation, sound studies, videogames, and sound production, offering a comprehensive and innovative outcome for graduates.</p> <p>ReSound is crucial in producing specialised sound designers and practitioners for media arts, including film, television, immersive media, and emerging fields. This program not only enriches academic and practical understanding of sound but also opens doors to quality industry opportunities.</p>	
Summary of specifications for teaching staff	WTE¹	Qualifications and Experience
	1	Qualified to at least MA level with specialist experience in Sound. Industry Mentors should have at a minimum 10 years relevant and current industry experience.
	Visiting Lecturers up to 1 WTE	Qualified to at least Bachelors of Arts (Hons) in Sound or a cognate discipline relevant the discipline or a person with at least 5 years practical experience of in a professional capacity.
Summary of specifications for the ratio of learners to teaching staff	Staff to Learner Ratio	Learning Activity Type
	1:24	Lectures
	1:5	Seminars and thematic research groups
	1:1	Research project supervision
	1:1	Professional Mentorship / Clinics

1.4 Stand-alone Module(s) Leading to a Minor Award

N/A

1.5 Embedded Programme(s)

N/A

1.6 Programmes being replaced

N/A

¹ WTE is the whole-time equivalent number. The number 1 indicates a full-time person fully dedicated to the programme or a number of people whose time combined equals a full time person.

Part 2 Evaluation against the Validation Criteria

The programme presented for validation falls under the designated awarding body status and related quality assurance processes of IADT. ReSound is a two-year Joint Masters Degree in Sound delivered by a FilmEU consortium of IADT Dún Laoghaire in Dublin – Ireland, Lusofónia University Lisbon – Portugal and LMTA Vilnius – Lithuania.

The Programme Validation meeting was conducted online on 31 March 2025 using Microsoft Teams. The Programme Validation Panel met with the Vice President, Academic Affairs + Registrar, Head of Faculty of Film, Art + Creative Technology and Head of Department of European Projects / FilmEU, the Programme Development Team and Members of Faculty from across the three partner institutions.

The Programme Validation Panel members were issued the proposed Programme Document before the meeting. This document presents a proposal for the validation of an **MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM)**. The Panel considered the proposal to be aligned with twelve Validation Criteria, as outlined in the following pages.

2.1 Criterion 1	
The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>Under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019 (Commencement) (No. 2) Order 2019 (SI No. 540 of 2019), made 5 November 2019, IADT may make awards up to Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications, and became a designated awarding body, on 1 January 2020.</p> <p>Following a review of the documentation provided and presentations and discussions with IADT Management and representatives from the Programme Team, the Programme Validation Panel were satisfied that IADT meets the prerequisites of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act, 2012 and is eligible to apply for validation of the MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM).</p>

2.2 Criterion 2	
The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the awards sought	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The programme document sets out the rationale for this programme being a Level 9 Master of Arts programme. The core knowledge skills and competencies for Level 9 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and Level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) are aligned with the appropriate discipline Award Standards.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel commended the programme document and appreciated how the format and structure with linked tags made it easy to read and navigate.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel considered the Programme and Learning Outcomes, suggested that the Programme Team review learning outcomes to ensure they and the assessments are aligned the Level 9 (NFQ) descriptors, and also suggested that the consider the language used, (e.g. use of “understanding”), and revising as necessary to ensure they are clear and consistent.</p> <p>Having considered and discussed the objectives and outcomes of the programme with the Programme Validation Panel, they were overall satisfied that the objectives and outcomes were consistent with the awards sought.</p> <p>Commendation #1: The Programme Validation Panel commended the quality of the programme document and expressed appreciation for its structure and the use of linked tags, which made the reading process more intuitive.</p> <p>Recommendation #1: Update the Programme Document to ensure that the learning outcomes and objectives are appropriately aligned to NFQ Level descriptors, and review and revise the language used to ensure clarity and explicitness.</p>

2.3 Criterion 3

The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme Document represents the views of all relevant stakeholders, and the Faculty, Department and Programme Team developed the programme and learning outcomes informed by research, surveys, benchmarking against similar programmes, nationally and internationally. The programme's learning outcomes (MIPLOs) and related module learning outcomes (MIMLOs) have been mapped against the QQI awards standards for Art and Design.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel noted the timeliness of proposing this programme and welcomed the transnational approach. They also recognised the challenges within the discipline in achieving gender balance, but commended the Programme Team's efforts to address this issue. Following the discussion with the Programme Development Team, the Panel noted that Section 3 of the programme document did not fully reflect the breadth of consultation and analysis undertaken. They suggested that the Programme Team review and expand this section, such as by including a schematic to illustrate the stakeholder consultation process, to better demonstrate the extent of the engagement.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel were satisfied that the programmes met the criteria around the concept, implementation, and interpretation of QQI standards.</p> <p>Commendation #2: The Programme Validation Panel recognised the challenges to ensure gender balance with regard to the delivery of modules within this area, and noted the Programme Development Team's particular efforts to ensure that gender balance in the programme.</p> <p>Recommendation #2: It is recommended that the Programme Development Team review, update and expand Section 3 [programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards] of the Programme Document, including a schematic to illustrate the stakeholder consultation process.</p>

2.4 Criterion 4

The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme Validation Panel considered the access, transfer and progression elements of the programme, and in particular, explored with the Programme Development Team the entry requirements and prospective learners for this programme. The Panel noted some revision required to ensure consistency related to admission dates, and also suggest that the programme document and marketing information make clear that there are no Exit Awards or part-time options for this course.</p> <p>It was noted that the programme may attract students from a range of disciplinary backgrounds with varying skill sets, and the Panel welcomed the inclusion of first-semester modules designed to align students' skills and foster a cohesive learning experience.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel were satisfied overall that the programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory.</p> <p>Recommendation #3: The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the Programme Document and information provided to prospective students be updated to correct references to admission dates, and clearly state that the programme does not offer Exit Awards or part-time study options.</p>

2.5 Criterion 5

The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme Validation Panel reviewed the programme's written curriculum and discussed different aspects of the modules with the Programme Team. They commended the programme document's quality. The Panel discussed and explored further with the Programme Team the content and structure of the curriculum.</p> <p>The Panel reviewed the modules and were satisfied with the content, but provided feedback, including suggestions to improve the clarity of language in certain sections of the programme document, such as the module descriptors. The Panel highlighted the concept of students 'learning to fail' as a distinctive and interesting idea. In reviewing the reading lists, the Panel noted that some resources may be outdated and recommended a review and update to ensure relevance and inclusivity, including consideration of gender balance in selected materials.</p> <p>Overall, the members of the Panel were satisfied that the written curriculum is well structured and fit for purpose.</p> <p>Commendation #3: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Development Team on the incorporation of the concept of 'learning to fail' as an interesting and distinctive learning opportunity for students.</p> <p>Recommendation #4: It is recommended that the module descriptors be reviewed to ensure the language is consistent and specific, thereby providing greater clarity on expectations for students.</p> <p>Recommendation #5: The Programme Validation Panel recommends the Programme Development Team review and revise the reading lists and resources to remove outdated materials, ensuring that selections are current and reflect, as far as possible, a gender-balanced perspective.</p>

2.6 Criterion 6	
There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme Validation Panel considered the information provided in the Programme Document and the staff profiles of the staff, and met with a number of the faculty on the Programme Development Team from across the three partner institutions. They noted the cohesive nature of the collaboration.</p> <p>The Panel met with representatives from the Programme Team across all three partner institutions and was impressed by the high level of collaboration and the cohesive approach demonstrated by the team, particularly given the differing regulations and institutional systems in place.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel was satisfied that sufficient qualified and capable programme staff are available to implement this programme as planned.</p> <p>Commendation #4: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Development Teams for their effective collaboration and unified approach across the three partner institutions.</p>

2.7 Criterion 7	
There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned	
Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme document outlines the facilities and physical resources available on the IADT campus, including the new Digital Media building on the IADT Campus, scheduled to open in Spring 2025.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel noted that while there is a variety of equipment and physical and virtual resources available, they are not explicitly laid out in the document.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel were satisfied that sufficient physical resources will be available to implement this programme as planned.</p> <p>Recommendation #6: The Programme Validation Panel recommend updating the programme document in applicable sections to outline the physical and virtual learning resources available to students from all locations.</p>

2.8 Criterion 8

The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The learning environments support social, cultural, and intellectual development through engagement with their peers, lecturers and the wider community.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel expressed their appreciation for the mobility component and the opportunities afforded to students to study across various geographical locations. They noted that the discussion with the Programme Development Team provided greater clarity on this aspect than was conveyed in the programme document. Accordingly, they recommended that the document be revised to accurately reflect this information.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel were satisfied that the learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners.</p> <p>Recommendation #7: The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the programme document be revised to include a schematic clearly outlining the geographical locations where students will be based during each semester, and ensure this is also clearly outlined for prospective and current students.</p>

2.9 Criterion 9

There are sound teaching and learning strategies

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>Learners are enabled to meet the Learning Outcomes using a diverse and blended set of Teaching Strategies. The Teaching strategies for this programme have been developed, giving consideration to the Signature Pedagogies of the Discipline, National Quality Framework, Learner needs, Academic standards, Industry / Professional requirements, and IADT's Teaching and Learning policy and guidelines.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel considered and discussed requirements in terms of future-proofing the technologies and software that will be used in the programme and made a recommendation</p> <p>They noted the comprehensive and varied selection of modules and content.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel agreed that the teaching and learning strategies were sound and fit for purpose.</p>

2.10 Criterion 10

There are sound assessment strategies

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The programme document outlines the programme assessment strategy and module assessment strategies. Programme assessment procedures are consistent with IADT's Quality Framework and Learning and Teaching Assessment Strategy, and related policies and procedures.</p> <p>The Programme Validation team considered the <i>Thesis</i> element, in the context of an artistic, creative discipline. It was noted that this term is used as opposed to <i>Project</i>, but it was clarified during the discussion with the Programme Team that the requirement for the thesis relates to regulations across partner countries. The Panel recommended that the academic and creative, practical aspects need to be balanced.</p> <p>They were informed of the work underway preparing the assessment schedule, but recommended an indicative schedule is added to the programme document, and also noted the varying terminology used in relation to submission dates (e.g. <i>week x / end of semester</i> etc.) and suggested reviewing the text to ensure consistency in the document and the final version for students.</p> <p>The Programme Validation Panel considered the assessment strategies outlined in the programme documentation as discussed with the Programme Team, and were satisfied overall.</p> <p>Recommendation #8: The Programme Validation Panel recommend that Programme Team ensure that there is a practical element to the Thesis at all times, and an appropriate balance between the academic writing and artistic output.</p> <p>Recommendation #9: Ensure that an indicative Assessment Schedule is embedded in the programme document, and the finalised full schedule is provided to the students. In addition, ensure that the language related to assessment submission timeframes used in the schedule is coherent and consistent throughout.</p>

2.11 Criterion 11

Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Panel concurred that there are suitable arrangements in place to ensure learners are well informed, guided and cared for, and as discussed, they were satisfied with the mechanisms in place.</p> <p>Following review of the programme document and discussion with the Programme Team, the Programme Validation Panel impressed by the thorough attention given to the duty of care for students, particularly in supporting incoming students with information on visas, accommodation, etc., and general pastoral care.</p> <p>Commendation #5: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Teams consideration and commitment to provide a duty of care for students throughout the programme.</p>

2.12 Criterion 12

The programme is well managed

Satisfactory (Yes, No, Partially)	Comment
Yes	<p>The Programme Validation Panel enjoyed meeting the Programme Development Team, including management from across the partner institutes. As noted above, the Panel were impressed with the collective and cohesive nature of how the Team engaged with the Panel, and was satisfied that the programme will be professionally managed.</p>

Part 3 Overall Recommendation

3.1 Principal Programme: MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM)

Select One	
X	Satisfactory (meaning that it recommends that IADT can be satisfied in the context of Unit 2.3 of Core Policies and Criteria for the Validation of Programmes of Education and Training)
	Satisfactory, subject to proposed special conditions (specified with timescale for compliance for each condition); these may include proposed pre-validation conditions, i.e. proposed (minor) things to be done to a programme that almost fully meets the validation criteria
	Not satisfactory

3.1.1 Reasons for the Overall Recommendation (Principal Programme)

The Programme Validation Panel were satisfied that all the criteria were met, as demonstrated in the programme document and information provided by management and the Programme Team. The Panel were satisfied to recommend this programme, MA in Sound (ReSound) European Joint Masters (EMJM) for validation with 5 commendations and 9 recommendations as outlined below.

3.2 Embedded Programme(s):

N/A

3.3 Summary of Recommended Special Conditions of Validation

N/A There were no conditions

3.4 Summary of Recommendations to the Provider

3.4.1 Recommendation #1: Update the Programme Document to ensure that the learning outcomes and objectives are appropriately aligned to NFQ Level descriptors, and review and revise the language used to ensure clarity and explicitness.

3.4.2 Recommendation #2: It is recommended that the Programme Development Team review, update and expand Section 3 [programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards] of the Programme Document, including a schematic to illustrate the stakeholder consultation process.

3.4.3 Recommendation #3: The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the Programme Document and information provided to prospective students be updated to correct references to admission dates, and clearly state that the programme does not offer Exit Awards or part-time study options.

3.4.4 Recommendation #4: It is recommended that the module descriptors be reviewed to ensure the language is consistent and specific, thereby providing greater clarity on expectations for students.

3.4.5 Recommendation #5: The Programme Validation Panel recommends the Programme Development Team review and revise the reading lists and resources to remove outdated materials, ensuring that selections are current and reflect, as far as possible, a gender-balanced perspective.

3.4.6 Recommendation #6: The Programme Validation Panel recommend updating the programme document in applicable sections to outline the physical and virtual learning resources available to students from all locations.

3.4.7 Recommendation #7: The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the programme document be revised to include a schematic clearly outlining the geographical locations where students will be based during each semester, and ensure this is also clearly outlined for prospective and current students.

3.4.8 Recommendation #8: The Programme Validation Panel recommend that Programme Team ensure that there is a practical element to the Thesis at all times, and an appropriate balance between the academic writing and artistic output.

3.4.9 Recommendation #9: Ensure that an indicative Assessment Schedule is embedded in the programme document, and the finalised full schedule is provided to the students. In addition, ensure that the language related to assessment submission timeframes used in the schedule is coherent and consistent throughout.

3.5 Summary of Commendations to the Provider

3.5.1 Commendation #1: The Programme Validation Panel commended the quality of the programme document and expressed appreciation for its structure and the use of linked tags, which made the reading process more intuitive.

3.5.2 Commendation #2: The Programme Validation Panel recognised the challenges to ensure gender balance with regard to the delivery of modules within this area, and noted the Programme Development Team's particular efforts to ensure that gender balance in the programme.

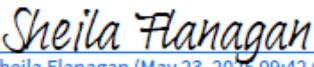
3.5.3 Commendation #3: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Development Team on the incorporation of the concept of 'learning to fail' as an interesting and distinctive learning opportunity for students

3.5.4 Commendation #4: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Development Teams for their effective collaboration and unified approach across the three partner institutions.

3.5.5 Commendation #5: The Programme Validation Panel commended the Programme Teams consideration and commitment to provide a duty of care for students throughout the programme.

3.6 Signature of Chairperson

This report has been agreed by the evaluation panel and is signed on their behalf by the Chairperson.

Panel Chairperson Name	Sheila Flanagan
Panel Chairperson Signature	 <small>Sheila Flanagan (May 23, 2025 09:42 GMT+1)</small>
Date	23/05/2025

3.7 Disclaimer

The Report of the External Review Panel contains no assurances, warranties or representations express or implied, regarding the aforesaid issues, or any other issues outside the Terms of Reference.

While IADT has endeavoured to ensure that the information contained in the report is correct, complete and up-to-date, any reliance placed on such information is strictly at the reader's own risk, and in no event will IADT be liable for any loss or damage (including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage) arising from, or in connection with, the use of the information contained in the Report of the External Evaluation Panel.

Appendix 1: IADT Programme Validation Criteria – Full Descriptions

Criterion 1	
The provider is eligible to apply for validation of the programme	
a)	The provider meets the prerequisites (section 44(7) of the 2012 Act) to apply for validation of the Programme
b)	The application for validation is signed by the provider’s Chief Executive (or equivalent) who confirms that the information provided is truthful and that all the applicable criteria have been addressed
c)	The provider has declared that their programme complies with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements. ²
Criterion 2	
The programme objectives and outcomes are clear and consistent with the QQI awards sought	
a)	The programme aims and objectives are expressed plainly
b)	A QQI award is specified for those who complete the programme
(i)	Where applicable, a QQI award is specified for each embedded programme
c)	There is a satisfactory rationale for the choice of QQI award(s)
d)	The award title(s) is consistent with unit 3.1 of QQI’s <i>Policy and Criteria for Making Awards</i>
e)	The award title(s) is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements
f)	The programme title and any embedded programme titles are:
(i)	Consistent with the title of the QQI award sought
(ii)	Clear, accurate, succinct and fit for the purpose of informing prospective learners and other stakeholders
g)	For each programme and embedded programme
(i)	The minimum intended programme learning outcomes and any other educational or training objectives of the programme are explicitly specified ³
(ii)	The minimum intended programme learning outcomes to qualify for the QQI award sought are consistent with the relevant QQI awards standards
h)	Where applicable, the minimum intended module-learning outcomes are explicitly specified for each of the programme’s modules.
i)	Any QQI minor awards sought for those who complete the modules are specified, where applicable.
(i)	For each minor award specified, the minimum intended module learning outcomes to qualify for the award are consistent with relevant QQI minor awards standards. ⁴

² This criterion is to ensure the programme can actually be provided and will not be halted on account of breach of the law. The declaration is sought to ensure this is not overlooked but QQI is not responsible for verifying this declaration of enforcing such requirements.

³ Other programme objectives, for example, may be to meet the educational or training requirements of a statutory, regulatory or professional body.

⁴ Not all modules will warrant minor awards. Minor awards feature strongly in the QQI common awards system however further education and training awards may be made outside this system.

[Type here]

Criterion 3	
The programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards are well informed and soundly based (considering social, cultural, educational, professional and employment objectives)	
a)	The development of the programme and the intended programme learning outcomes has sought out and taken into account the views of stakeholders such as learners, graduates, teachers, lecturers, education and training institutions, employers, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies, the international scientific and academic communities, professional bodies and equivalent associations, trades unions, and social and community representatives. ⁵
b)	The interpretation of awards standards has been adequately informed and researched. Considering the programme aims and objectives and minimum intended programme (and, where applicable, modular) learning outcomes:
(i)	There is a satisfactory rationale for providing the programme
(ii)	The proposed programme compares favourably with existing related (comparable) programmes in Ireland and beyond. Comparators should be as close as it is possible to find
(iii)	There is support for the introduction of the programme (such as from employers, or professional, regulatory or statutory bodies)
(iv)	There is evidence ⁶ of learner demand for the programme.
(v)	There is evidence of employment opportunities for graduates where relevant ⁷
(vi)	The programme meets genuine education and training needs ⁸
c)	There are mechanisms to keep the programme updated in consultation with internal and external stakeholders
d)	Employers and practitioners in the cases of vocational and professional awards have been systematically involved in the programme design where the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented
e)	The programme satisfies any validation-related criteria attaching to the applicable awards standards and QQI awards specifications

⁵ Awards standards however detailed rely on various communities for their interpretation. This consultation is necessary if the programme is to enable learners to achieve the standard in its fullest sense.

⁶ This might be predictive or indirect.

⁷ It is essential to involve employers in the programme development and review process when the programme is vocationally or professionally oriented.

⁸ There is clear evidence that the programme meets the **target learners'** education and training needs and that there is a clear demand for the programme.

[Type here]

Criterion 4	
The programme's access, transfer and progression arrangements are satisfactory	
a)	The information about the programme as well as its procedures for access, transfer and progression are consistent with the procedures described in IADT's policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further and higher education and training. Each of its programme-specific criteria is individually and explicitly satisfied ⁹
b)	Programme information for learners is provided in plain language. This details what the programme expects of learners and what learners can expect of the programme and that there are procedures to ensure its availability in a range of accessible formats
c)	If the programme leads to a higher education and training award and its duration is designed for native English speakers, then the level of proficiency in English language must be greater or equal to B2+ in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR ¹⁰) in order to enable learners to reach the required standard for the QQI award.
d)	The programme specifies the learning (knowledge, skill and competence) that target learners are expected to have achieved before they are enrolled in the programme and any other assumptions about enrolled learners (programme participants).
e)	The programme includes suitable procedures and criteria for the recognition of prior learning for the purposes of access and, where appropriate, for advanced entry to the programme and for exemptions.
f)	The programme title (the title used to refer to the programme):
(i)	Reflects the core <i>intended programme learning outcomes</i> , and is consistent with the standards and purposes of the QQI awards to which it leads, the award title(s) and their class(es)
(ii)	Is learner focused and meaningful to the learners
(iii)	Has long-lasting significance
g)	The programme title is otherwise legitimate; for example, it must comply with applicable statutory, regulatory and professional body requirements.

⁹ Each of the detailed criteria set out in the Policy and criteria for access, transfer and progression in relation to learners for providers of further, higher education, and training must be addressed in the provider's evaluation report. The detailed criteria are (QQI, restated 2015) arranged under the headings

- Progression and transfer routes
- Entry arrangements
- Information provision

¹⁰ http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf (accessed 26/09/2015)

[Type here]

Criterion 5	
The programme's written curriculum is well structured and fit-for-purpose	
a)	The programme is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of its intended programme learning outcomes. The programme (including any stages and modules) is integrated in all its dimensions
b)	In so far as it is feasible, the programme provides choice to enrolled learners so that they may align their learning opportunities towards their individual educational and training needs
c)	Each module and stage is suitably structured and coherently oriented towards the achievement by learners of the intended <i>programme</i> learning outcomes
d)	The objectives and purposes of each of the programme's elements are clear to learners and to the provider's staff
e)	The programme is structured and scheduled realistically based on sound educational and training principles ¹¹
f)	The curriculum is comprehensively and systematically documented
g)	The credit allocated to the programme is consistent with the difference between the entry standard and minimum intended programme learning outcomes
h)	The credit allocated to each module is consistent with the difference between the module entry standard and minimum intended module learning outcomes
i)	Elements such as practice placement and work based phases are provided with the same rigour and attentiveness as other elements
j)	The programme duration (expressed in terms of time from initial enrolment to completion) and its fulltime equivalent contact time (expressed in hours) are consistent with the difference between the minimum entry standard and award standard and with the credit allocation ¹²

Criterion 6	
There are sufficient qualified and capable programme staff available to implement the programme as planned	
a)	The specification of the programme's staffing requirements (staff required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme and its defined purpose. The specifications include professional and educational qualifications, licences-to practise where applicable, experience and the staff/learner ratio requirements. See also criterion (12(c))
b)	The programme has an identified complement of staff ¹³ (or potential staff) who are available, qualified and capable to provide the specified programme in the context of their existing commitments
c)	The programme's complement of staff (or potential staff) (those who support learning including any employer-based personnel) are demonstrated to be competent to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes and to assess learners' achievements as required.
d)	There are arrangements for the performance of the programme's staff to be managed to ensure continuing capability to fulfil their roles and there are staff development ¹⁴ opportunities ¹⁵ .
e)	There are arrangements for programme staff performance to be reviewed and there are mechanisms for encouraging development and for addressing underperformance.
f)	Where the programme is to be provided by staff not already in post there are arrangements to ensure that the programme will not enrol learners unless a complement of staff meeting the specifications is in post.

¹¹ This applies recursively to each and every element of the programme from enrolment through to completion.

In the case of a modular programme, the pool of modules and learning pathway constraints (such as any prerequisite and co-requisite modules) is explicit and appropriate to the intended programme learning outcomes.

¹² If the duration is variable, for example, when advanced entry is available, this should be explained and justified

¹³ Staff here means natural persons required as part of the programme and accountable (directly or indirectly) to the programme's provider, it may for example, include contracted trainers and workplace supervisors.

¹⁴ Development here is for the purpose of ensuring staff remain up-to-date on the discipline itself, on teaching methods or on other relevant skills or knowledge, to the extent that this is necessary to ensure an adequate standard of teaching.

¹⁵ Professional or vocational education and training requires that teaching staff's professional/vocation knowledge is up to date. Being qualified in a discipline does not necessarily mean that a person is currently competent in that discipline. Therefore, performance management and development of professional and vocational staff needs to focus on professional/vocational competence as well as pedagogical competence. Professional development may include placement in industry, for example. In regulated professions it would be expected that there are a suitable number of registered practitioners involved.

[Type here]

Criterion 7	
There are sufficient physical resources to implement the programme as planned	
a)	The specification of the programme's physical resource requirements (physical resources required as part of the programme and intrinsic to it) is precise, and rigorous and consistent with the programme, its defined purpose and its resource/learner-ratio requirements. See also (criterion 12(d)).
b)	The programme has an identified complement of supported physical resources (or potential supported physical resources) that are available in the context of existing commitments on these e.g. availability of:
	(i) Suitable premises and accommodation for the learning and human needs (comfort, safety, health, wellbeing) of learners (this applies to all of the programme's learning environments including the workplace learning environment)
	(ii) Suitable information technology and resources (including educational technology and any virtual learning environments provided)
	(iii) Printed and electronic material (including software) for teaching, learning and assessment
	(iv) Suitable specialist equipment (e.g. laboratory, workshop, studio) – if applicable
	(v) Technical support
	(vi) Administrative support
	(vii) Company placements/internships – if applicable
c)	If versions of the programme are provided in parallel, at more than one location, each independently meets the location-sensitive validation criteria for each location (for example staffing, resources and the learning environment)
d)	There is a five-year plan for the programme. It should address:
	(i) Planned intake (first five years) and
	(ii) The total costs and income over the five years based on the planned intake
e)	The programme includes controls to ensure entitlement to use the property (including intellectual property, premises, materials and equipment) required

Criterion 8	
The learning environment is consistent with the needs of the programme's learners	
a)	The programme's physical, social, cultural and intellectual environment (recognising that the environment may, for example, be partly virtual or involve the workplace) including resources and support systems are consistent with the intended programme learning outcomes
b)	Learners can interact with, and are supported by, others in the programme's learning environments including peer learners, teachers, and where applicable supervisors, practitioners and mentors
c)	The programme includes arrangements to ensure that the parts of the programme that occur in the workplace are subject to the same rigours as any other part of the programme while having regard to the different nature of the workplace

[Type here]

Criterion 9	
There are sound teaching and learning strategies	
a)	The teaching strategies support achievement of the intended programme/module learning outcomes
b)	The programme provides authentic learning opportunities to enable learners to achieve the intended programme learning outcomes
c)	The programme enables enrolled learners to attain (if reasonably diligent) the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of overall learner effort and a reasonably balanced workload)
d)	Learning is monitored/supervised
e)	Individualised guidance, support ¹⁶ and timely formative feedback is regularly provided to enrolled learners as they progress within the programme

Criterion 10	
There are sound assessment strategies	
a)	All assessment is undertaken consistently with Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards ¹⁷
b)	The programme's assessment procedures interface effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures
c)	The programme includes specific procedures that are fair and consistent for the assessment of enrolled learners to ensure the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are acquired by all who successfully complete the programme ¹⁸
d)	The programme includes formative assessment to support learning
e)	There is a satisfactory written programme assessment strategy for the programme as a whole and there are satisfactory module assessment strategies for any of its constituent modules ¹⁹
f)	Sample assessment instruments, tasks, marking schemes and related evidence have been provided for each award-stage assessment and indicate that the assessment is likely to be valid and reliable
g)	There are sound procedures for the moderation of summative assessment results
h)	The provider only puts forward an enrolled learner for certification for a particular award for which a programme has been validated if they have been specifically assessed against the standard for that award ²⁰

¹⁶ Support and feedback concerns anything material to learning in the context of the programme. For the avoidance of doubt it includes among other things any course-related language, literacy and numeracy support.

¹⁷ See the section on transitional arrangements.

¹⁸ This assumes the minimum intended programme/module learning outcomes are consistent with the applicable awards standards.

¹⁹ The programme assessment strategy is addressed in the Assessment Guidelines, Conventions and Protocols for Programmes Leading to QQI Awards. See the section on transitional arrangements.

²⁰ If the award is a QQI CAS compound award it is not necessarily sufficient that the learner has achieved all the components specified in the certification requirements unless at least one of those components is a capstone component (i.e. designed to test the compound learning outcomes).

[Type here]

Criterion 11	
Learners enrolled on the programme are well informed, guided and cared for	
a)	There are arrangements to ensure that each enrolled learner is fully informed in a timely manner about the programme including the schedule of activities and assessments
b)	Information is provided about learner supports that are available to learners enrolled on the programme
c)	Specific information is provided to learners enrolled on the programme about any programme-specific appeals and complaints procedures
d)	If the programme is modular, it includes arrangements for the provision of effective guidance services for learners on the selection of appropriate learning pathways
e)	The programme takes into account and accommodates to the differences between enrolled learners, for example, in terms of their prior learning, maturity, and capabilities
f)	There are arrangements to ensure that learners enrolled on the programme are supervised and individualised support and due care is targeted at those who need it
g)	The programme provides supports for enrolled learners who have special education and training needs
h)	The programme makes reasonable accommodations for learners with disabilities ²¹
i)	If the programme aims to enrol international students, it complies with the <i>Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students</i> ²² and there are appropriate in-service supports in areas such as English language, learning skills, information technology skills and such like, to address the particular needs of international learners and enable such learners to successfully participate in the programme
j)	The programme's learners will be well cared for and safe while participating in the programme, (e.g. while at the provider's premises or those of any collaborators involved in provision, the programme's locations of provision including any workplace locations or practice-placement locations)

Criterion 12	
The programme is well managed	
a)	The programme includes intrinsic governance, quality assurance, learner assessment, and access, transfer and progression procedures that functionally interface with the provider's general or institutional procedures.
b)	The programme interfaces effectively with the provider's QQI approved quality assurance procedures. Any proposed incremental changes to the provider's QA procedures required by the programme or programme-specific QA procedures have been developed having regard to QQI's statutory QA guidelines. If the QA procedures allow the provider to approve the centres within the provider that may provide the programme, the procedures and criteria for this should be fit-for-the-purpose of identifying which centres are suited to provide the programme and which are not.
c)	There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting persons who meet the programme's staffing requirements and can be added to the programme's complement of staff.
d)	There are explicit and suitable programme-specific criteria for selecting physical resources that meet the programmes physical resource requirements, and can be added to the programme's complement of supported physical resources.
e)	Quality assurance ²³ is intrinsic to the programme's maintenance arrangements and addresses all aspects highlighted by the validation criteria.
f)	The programme-specific quality assurance arrangements are consistent with QQI's statutory QA guidelines and use continually monitored completion rates and other sources of information that may provide insight into the quality and standards achieved.
g)	The programme operation and management arrangements are coherently documented and suitable.
h)	There are sound procedures for interface with QQI certification.

²¹ For more information on making reasonable accommodations see www.AHEAD.ie and QQI's Policies, Actions and Procedures for Access, Transfer and Progression for Learners (QQI, restated 2015).

²² See Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes to International Students (QQI, 2015)

²³ See also QQI's Policy on Monitoring (QQI, 2014)

MA in Sound (ReSound)

European Joint Masters (EMJM)

NFQ Level 9 (EQF Level 7), 120 ECTS

Programme Validation Report: FACULTY RESPONSE

Date of Response:

9 June 2025

[Type here]

MA in Sound (ReSound) – Programme Validation Report – Faculty Response

The Department and Programme Team thank the panel for their time, feedback, recommendations and commendations, which are welcomed.

The recommendations have each been considered, and our responses are below.

#	Recommendation	Response
1	Update the Programme Document to ensure that the learning outcomes and objectives are appropriately aligned to NFQ Level descriptors, and review and revise the language used to ensure clarity and explicitness.	Thank you for this observation. We will review the matter in light of your comment and, where appropriate, propose changes at the next meeting of the Academic Board. While it is essential that we maintain alignment with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), we must also ensure coherence with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the equivalent frameworks of our partner institutions.
2	It is recommended that the Programme Development Team review, update and expand Section 3 [programme concept, implementation strategy, and its interpretation of QQI awards standards] of the Programme Document, including a schematic to illustrate the stakeholder consultation process.	Thank you for this comment. We will add this section to the document.
3	The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the Programme Document and information provided to prospective students be updated to correct references to admission dates, and clearly state that the programme does not offer Exit Awards or part-time study options.	Thank you for this comment. We will add a section outlining that there is no exit award or option for part time study option. The admission date for the programme will be clearly outlined to applicants via the ReSound website, student handbook, and promotional. We will remove any reference to admissions dates from the programme document.
4	It is recommended that the module descriptors be reviewed to ensure the language is consistent and specific, thereby providing greater clarity on expectations for students.	Thank you for this comment. We will review the module descriptors and adjust the language to be more consistent and appropriate.

[Type here]

5	The Programme Validation Panel recommends the Programme Development Team review and revise the reading lists and resources to remove outdated materials, ensuring that selections are current and reflect, as far as possible, a gender-balanced perspective.	The team thank the panel for this this comment. While some books on the reading list are older, they are still very relevant to theories and concepts underpinning several of the modules. The gender balance of the reading lists will be reviewed.
6	The Programme Validation Panel recommend updating the programme document in applicable sections to outline the physical and virtual learning resources available to students from all locations.	We will add the list of virtual learning resources to the document and the physical resources listed on the ReSound website. https://resound-ma.eu/the-masters/#facilities
7	The Programme Validation Panel recommended that the programme document be revised to include a schematic clearly outlining the geographical locations where students will be based during each semester, and ensure this is also clearly outlined for prospective and current students.	A schematic will be added to the document.
8	The Programme Validation Panel recommend that Programme Team ensure that there is a practical element to the Thesis at all times, and an appropriate balance between the academic writing and artistic output.	Thank you for this comment. It is anticipated that, in most cases, the capstone/thesis project will include a substantial practical element. However, we would like to preserve the flexibility for students to undertake a more academic or theoretical approach where appropriate, depending on their interests and the nature of their research.
9	Ensure that an indicative Assessment Schedule is embedded in the programme document, and the finalised full schedule is provided to the students. In addition, ensure that the language related to assessment submission timeframes used in the schedule is coherent and consistent throughout.	Thank you for this suggestion. An example of this will be added to the programme document. An updated assessment schedule will be provided to students at the beginning of each semester.