NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART &DESIGN

Professional Certificate in AI for Design

AD490PC

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS

Programme title	Professional Certificate in AI for Design	**School**	School of Design
Resulting awards	Professional Certificate in AI for Design	**Head of School**	Professor Alex Milton
Level	Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications	**ECTS credits**[1]	5 credits
University award	Professional Certificate (Special Purpose) award	**Programme type**	Postgraduate programme delivered flexibly
Programme Co-ordinator	Bernie McCoy	**External Examiner**	TBC
Programme team	NCAD staff team (Co-ordinators, Lecturers and Technical Officers)		

1. Programme Aims and Objectives: Purpose, Vision and Values

Background

NCAD is the lead partner in the Creative Futures Academy, a major new government funded initiative. In partnership with IADT, UCD and industry partners from across the creative sector, we are developing a range of courses that will empower creative practitioners from a range of disciplines, and at different stages of their learning, with the sustainable and adaptable skills and attributes that they will require to shape the future of Ireland's creative sector.

The Creative Futures Academy will prepare graduates for work in a major sector of the national economy; and support the early and mid-career needs of creative professionals in our fast-changing social, economic and technological contexts. The suite of programmes being developed to form NCAD's Design Futures offering is a key delivery model for NCAD to meet this challenge.

Purpose

Professional Certificate in AI for Design (5 credits)

As one in a suite of programmes that make up the Creative Futures offer at NCAD, the Professional Certificate in AI for Design seeks to provide a framework for learners to explore various viewpoints on the future of AI and how designers can embrace AI technologies and methodologies to position themselves at the cutting edge of design innovation.

[1] European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year (two trimesters)

Artificial Intelligence is a transformative force revolutionising design. The Professional Certificate in AI for Design programme explores this rapidly evolving field, helping learners to navigate design challenges and opportunities in the age of AI.

This programme has been created for designers looking to refine and develop their use of AI, enabling creative practitioners to seamlessly incorporate artificial intelligence tools and methods into their design process and learn how to design for and with AI.

The programme explores AI's transformative impact on design and how to anticipate future trends. Introducing fundamental principles, methods, skills, and theories of AI for design helps future proof design careers and position learners at the forefront of design innovation.

The Professional Certificate in AI for Design programme allows participants to develop their specialist practice, their professional, technical and organisational skills and their knowledge and application of critical contexts to:

- **ENGAGE** with emerging technology, tools and practices to create continual change in the creative sector.
- **EXPAND** creative thinking to support a change of perspective across and beyond the sector.
- **CONNECT** with social and cultural change to create impact.
- **ALIGN** learning and teaching to a change-led view of the world, society, economies and sectors in and beyond Ireland.
- **POSITION** change from a communication and content led place.

The programme aims to:

- Unlock new thinking and perspectives, to generate novel concepts and solutions.
- Provide participants with requisite knowledge and skills to creatively contextualise their practice and imaginatively demonstrate its wider validity.
- Critically evaluate and engage with contemporary debates regarding practice-based research, practice-led research and cognate creative methodologies.

2. Programme Outcomes

On successful completion of the Professional Certificate in AI for Design students will be able to:

- Understand and apply AI tools responsibly by grasping their functionality, assessing associated ethical and creative risks, and identifying potential biases and harms.
- Accelerate design research and development to reach insights quickly, ensuring continuous evaluation and validation of AI-generated outputs throughout the creative process.
- Explore various viewpoints on the future of AI and how designers can embrace AI technologies and methodologies to position themselves at the cutting edge of design innovation.

3. Admission Requirements

To be accepted into the programme, applicants must have a 2.2 degree. Alternatively, applicants who can demonstrate equivalent and relevant professional practice or industry experience in the subject or a related field will be considered for entry.

Students should apply to the programme with evidence of previous successful qualifications and statements of work-related achievement etc.

Students who have not been educated through English must show proof of achieving IELTS 6.5 (with a minimum of 6 in the writing section on the Academic Version) or an equivalent score in another accepted test.

4. Further Educational Opportunities

This programme provides a sound and strong basis for further education at professional diploma and MA level, in direct relation to contemporary creative practice and theory, and also within related fields.

Careers and skills

The programme is designed to meet the needs of the creative sector within and beyond Ireland. As such the constituent awards explicitly address key requirements identified in extensive discussions and research undertaken with educational partners and representative bodies such as the Arts Council, Design and Crafts Council of Ireland and Institute of Designers in Ireland, and findings from government and educational sectoral reports.

The programme seeks to provide the transversal and specialist skills to equip creative practitioners to work within existing career paths, while also forging new career and creative pathways as creative educators and facilitators

5. Teaching and Learning

The programme encourages inter and trans-disciplinary activity through collaborative projects and skill acquisition, while enabling students to develop a strong specific creative philosophy, research-led agenda and vocational focus.

Specialist lecturers and researchers support a rich learning and research environment and supply the critical, disciplinary and technical expertise to support students to develop their practice and professional competencies.

The Professional Certificate in AI for Design curriculum has been informed by industry and sectoral needs, and subject to a co-creation model of development where possible.

Learning, teaching and assessment techniques include:

Lectures	Tutorials	Technical Instruction/ Demonstrations
Group Crits	Student Projects	Group Teaching and Learning
Self-Directed Study - Research and practice		General Coursework
Practice-Related Learning Experience		Student Self-evaluation

6. Methods of Assessment

Work undertaken by students on the Professional Certificate in AI for Design will be assessed in both of the following ways.

Assessment Methods

- Formative Assessment: typically involves feedback (oral or written) to students on their progress, and does not usually involve a mark. It is used to provide constructive feedback to improve learning and understanding. Formative assessment does not form part of the student's final grade or mark.
- Summative Assessment: these assessment results are aggregated and used to determine whether students have fulfilled the specified learning outcomes and have met the standard required to achieve a passing grade, and so can be granted the credits for successfully completing each module.

Learners will also undertake on-going self and peer evaluation, helping foster a culture reflective practice that empowers creative professionals on the programme.

Assessments are undertaken by a team of staff who are examining how students have met the learning outcomes. Assessment may occur or be required on or off campus or on line, and will be timetabled well in advance.

7. Programme Review and Evaluation

All programmes are subject to College-wide evaluation practices and events. The annual online student evaluation takes place in May or June, asking all College students to provide feedback. Results are sent to each School to respond to and report to Programmes Board on what changes or developments will be implemented in response to the evaluations.

External Examiners review and moderate assessment. In addition, informal feedback is gathered from discussions with students, staff and management.

These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD. In addition, learners are invited to discuss their experience on the module with their lecturers at any point during the year.

This programme is delivered under the support of the Creative Futures Academy HCI pillar 1 funded project, which is subject to an annual evaluation. A major review of this programme will be carried out in 2026/27.

8. Modular Provision

Module	Credits	Core or Option	Trimester
PGCFAD1054 Design Principles - AI for Design	5	Core	Any

The programme is designed specifically to recognise the qualities and expertise that the practitioners themselves bring to the module. Collaborative learning is a central feature, fostering an environment that encourages the sharing of creative processes, practices, resources and ideas. Each

cohort of creative practitioners will contain a rich mixture of backgrounds, in terms of disciplinary specialisms and personal and professional interests.

9. Programme Structure

Year 1: Autumn, Spring or Summer Trimester
PGCFAD1054 Design Principles - AI for Design 5 Credits

10. Exit Points and Credit Requirements

- 100 student effort hours
- Completion of 5 credits
- Award: Professional Certificate in AI for Design

Final Award Calculation

The final award is calculated on the basis of successful competition of the module PGCFAD1054 Design Principles - AI for Design.

11. Resources

Name	Title/Role
Teaching Staff	
Bernie McCoy	Programme Co-ordinator
NCAD School of Design	Teaching staff
Administration	
NCAD School of Design Administrative Staff	Programme Administration
Technical Support Staff	
NCAD School of Design Technical Officers	Technical Support

Space

The programme will be delivered in a blended format to afford the student cohort the convenience of online learning, and the opportunity to connect and collaborate together in-person availing of external spaces where appropriate for on location or work-based learning.

Facilities

The programme will utilise existing college facilities. Access to facilities across the CFA partners will be available subject to nature and availability.

For further information on this programme,
contact: Dr Joanna Crawley, crawleyj@staff.ncad.ie