Institutional Review Report 2023

INSTITUTE OF ART, DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY, DÚN LAOGHAIRE

CINNTE

Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann
Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Contents

Foreword

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) is responsible for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training in Ireland. One of QQI's most important functions is to ensure that the quality assurance (QA) procedures that institutions have in place are effective. To this end, QQI carries out external reviews of higher education institutions on a cyclical basis. This current QQI cycle of reviews is called the CINNTE cycle. CINNTE reviews are an element of the broader quality framework for institutions composed of Quality Assurance Guidelines; each institution's Quality Assurance Procedures; Annual Quality Reports (AQRs); and Quality Dialogue Meetings (QDMs). The CINNTE review cycle runs from 2017–2024. During this period, QQI will organise and oversee independent reviews of each of the Universities, the Institutes of Technology and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

Each CINNTE review evaluates the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of each institution. The review measures each institution's compliance with European standards for quality assurance, with regard to the expectations set out in the QQI quality assurance guidelines or their equivalent and adherence to other relevant QQI policies and procedures. CINNTE reviews also explore how institutions have enhanced their teaching, learning and research and their quality assurance systems and how well institutions have aligned their approach to their own mission, quality indicators and benchmarks.

The CINNTE review process is in keeping with Parts 2 and 3 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and based on the internationally accepted and recognised approach to reviews, including:

- the publication of terms of reference,
- a process of self-evaluation and institutional self-evaluation report (ISER),
- an external assessment and site visit by a team of reviewers,
- the publication of a review report including findings and recommendations and
- a follow-up procedure to review actions taken.

This QQI CINNTE review of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire (IADT) was conducted by an independent review team in line with the Terms of Reference in Appendix A. This is the report of the findings of the review team. It also includes the response of IADT to the report.

The Review Team

Each CINNTE review is carried out by an international team of independent experts and peers. The 2023 institutional review of the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire (IADT) was conducted by a team of six reviewers selected by QQI. In preparation for the main review visit the review team attended training on 3 April 2023. The Chair and Coordinating Reviewer undertook a virtual planning visit to IADT on 20 April 2023. The main review visit (MRV) was conducted by the team[1] between 22 May and 26 May 2023.

CHAIR

Andy Cook is Ravensbourne University London's Vice-Chancellor, responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the university.

In this capacity, Andy has focused on the key priorities of delivering an exceptional learning experience and ensuring a compelling offer for student recruitment. Andy has also been leading the institution towards identifying opportunities for diversification and collaboration at the intersection of creativity and technology.

Joining Ravensbourne in 2018, he holds considerable experience in the higher education sector, previously working in strategic management roles at a number of UK universities. He held the position of Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Chief Information Officer at the University of East London and was formerly Deputy IT Director at the University of Southampton.

Having entered the education field after retraining as a secondary school teacher, Andy previously spent ten years working in business development in the media sector.

Andy holds a BSc Honours degree in Applied Physics from the University of Portsmouth as well as a Postgraduate Certificate in Education from King's College London.

COORDINATING REVIEWER

Dr Áine Ní Shé is currently Registrar and Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Munster Technological University (Cork Campuses). In this role, she has executive responsibility for academic affairs in the Bishopstown Campus, Cork School of Music, Crawford College of Art and Design, and the National Maritime College of Ireland. She is an experienced reviewer in academic quality enhancement and has chaired and participated in several peer review panels for QQI and various HEIs.

Dr Ní Shé was previously Head of the Department of Mathematics at the then Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). She led the development and commencement of new programmes in Data Science & Analytics and a review of 1st year provision with a focus on assessment and online learning resources.

Dr Ní Shé has served on the boards of CIT (2010 to 2015) and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning (2019–2021). A member of the Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team which developed CIT's successful bronze award application, she subsequently was Vice Chair of Ireland's National Athena SWAN Committee and Chair of its Communications Sub-Committee.

Áine initially graduated with a B.Ed degree from Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, and then worked as a primary teacher for ten years.

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1   The main review visit is held over five consecutive days. Each team member was on site each day, apart from the industry representative who was in attendance for two days.

Concurrently, she undertook postgraduate study in Mathematics in University College Cork (UCC), graduating with a PhD in 2000. She joined CIT as a mathematics lecturer in 2001, and taught mathematics and statistics on a range of programmes in engineering, science, business and humanities.

A former member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, Áine remains involved in music to this day. A keen violinist and singer, she is an active participant in the cultural life of Cork, and currently sits on the Board of Directors of Cork Opera House.

IRISH REPRESENTATIVE

Kieran Corcoran is a former Head of Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) School of Creative Arts, a large research-based art and design school offering programmes at all levels in Fine Art, Visual Communication Design, Interior Design, Product Design, Visual Merchandising and Creative Industries and Visual Culture.

As Head of School, he was responsible for all aspects of quality assurance and enhancement processes and has participated in institution review panels internationally including Lithuania, Czechia and the Netherlands. He was an active board member of the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA), an organisation that represents nearly 300 arts universities from all European countries, from 2002–2018 and was elected President of ELIA from 2010–2014.

He is a founder member and former Chairman of the Galway International Arts Festival and worked as Visual Arts Coordinator for 20 years curating over 100 exhibitions by leading national and international artists. Currently, he is working on two Erasmus+ projects: Calohee Measuring and Comparing Achievements of Learning Outcome in Higher Arts Education led by University of Groningen and FAST45 – Future Arts School Trends 2045 led by St Luca School of Arts/KU Leuven.

LEARNER REPRESENTATIVE

Ruth Keogh is a Postgraduate Researcher in Atlantic Technological University (ATU) Donegal, under the Faculty of Business.

She has recently graduated with a First Class Honours in her BA Digital Film and Video from ATU and has attained her MRes by means of studentship.

Her research area is focused on exploring design pedagogy within the Department of Design and Creative Media and seeks to investigate the educational systems in place in design tertiary education and ensure the employability of graduates, on both a local and national level.

Alongside her academic work, she works as a freelance photographer and videographer in her hometown of Letterkenny in Donegal, working mainly with commercial clients, and hopes to transition into becoming a third level educator in the creative media department.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

Dagmar Provijn is senior policy advisor at the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders and was involved in the development of the new Quality Assurance System Flanders – 2019–2025. Dagmar is co-author of several of its frameworks, takes part in its implementation and will be engaged in its evaluation process.

He is secretary of the Resonance Group that is aimed at consulting the Flemish stakeholders on important policy changes planned by NVAO or on developments in the system of external quality assurance in Flanders. Internationally, he is a representative for NVAO Flanders in the Quality Audit Network (QAN), acted as process coordinator for one of the pilot procedures in the EUniQ project on the external quality assurance of European universities, is a member of ENQA's Working Group on microcredentials and their quality assurance and is responsible in NVAO Flanders for the implementation of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, and the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education's (ECA's) Certificate for Quality

in Internationalisation and is member of its Certification Group. He is also facilitator of ECA's Training Academy 'Assessing the Quality of Internationalisation'.

He holds a PhD in Philosophy from Ghent University. Prior to his career in quality assurance, he was part-time assistant professor for logic, philosophy of science and epistemology at Ghent University and conducted a postdoctoral fellowship of the Research Foundation–Flanders.

INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE

Elaine Geraghty is an experienced media professional with over 30 years' involvement in the broadcast, print and screen content industries. Her career at Communicorp Group included the role of project manager Europe and CEO at Newstalk Radio. Elaine was CEO at Screen Producers Ireland from 2017 to 2020 when she was recruited to take up the role of managing director of Ardmore and Troy Studios. The studios were acquired by global property and studio operators Hackman Capital and MBS Group in 2021 and the Irish portfolio now also includes the Greystones Media Campus which will be Ireland's largest media content campus.

Elaine is Chair of the steering groups for two of the three Screen Ireland-funded Regional Crew Academies in the Eastern and Western Regions together with the National Talent Academy. She is also a Board member of the Cork International Film Festival.

Elaine holds an MBA Marketing (First Class).

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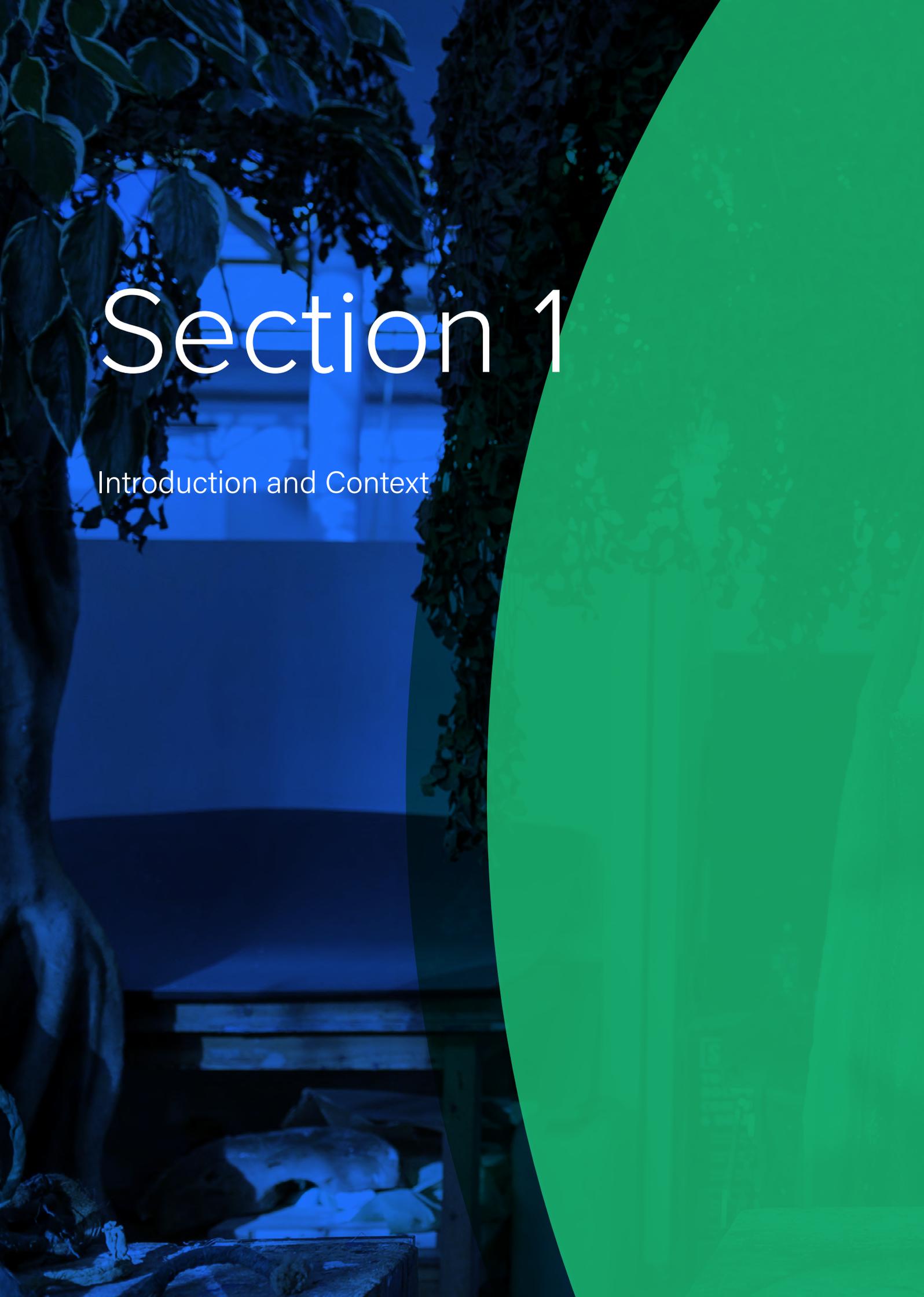
Section 1

Introduction and Context

Introduction and Context

The Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire (IADT), holds a distinct position in Ireland as an Institute of Art, Design and Technology with a stated mission to drive and inform the creative, cultural and technological industries through teaching, learning, research and innovation.

Established in 1997 through the expansion of the former Dún Laoghaire College of Art and Design, IADT seeks to support and influence dialogue on the creative and cultural industries, nationally and internationally, through its programmes, members of staff, stakeholder engagement, partnerships, student life and graduates. IADT's sense of distinction defines and informs its ethos and approach to education. It also prides itself on its interdisciplinary environment, drawing on strengths in visual arts, media arts, enterprise, technology and humanities.

The IADT campus is located in Dún Laoghaire, 12 km from Dublin's city centre. It has grown significantly since the late 1990s. Until 2013, expansion included its first building, the Róisín Hogan House, followed by the Atrium building, Carriglea Building, the Digital Media Incubation Centre Media Cube, the Backlot and the National Film School Building. A new Digital Media Teaching Building is under construction at present and is due to open in 2024.

IADT has defined a set of core values which underpin its work:

- Valuing our Students,
- Excellence,
- A Supportive Environment,
- Valuing our Staff,
- Academic Freedom,
- Equity and Diversity,
- Social Responsibility,
- Integrity and Ethics,
- Communities of Practice.

IADT underwent an organisational restructuring in 2012, when three existing Schools were amalgamated to become two faculties. The Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies (FFACT), the larger of the two faculties, has three academic departments and the Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities (FEH) has two academic departments.

IADT's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) confirms a student population of 2344 full-time and part-time students enrolled on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across a wide range of disciplines including film and television, design and the creative arts, humanities, psychology, business and technology. It currently provides 28 bachelors' degree programmes, 22 masters' and post-graduate degree programmes and 29 certificate programmes.

IADT operates under the primary legislation of the Institutes of Technology Acts (1992 to 2006), and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Acts (2012 and 2019). It is one of the publicly funded institutes of technology (IoTs) in Ireland, funded through the Higher Education Authority (HEA).

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012) gave IADT degree awarding powers for programmes up to Level 9 of the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ). These powers were granted under Delegation of Authority from Quality and Qualification Ireland (QQI). As a consequence of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019, IADT, as an institute of technology, became a designated awarding body (DAB) on 1 January 2020, up to and including Level 9. Thus, IADT now has the power to make awards in its own right up to and including NFQ Level 9.

IADT's Governing Body, appointed by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) has ultimate responsibility for the overall direction of the institution, with functions as set out in the Institutes of Technology Acts (1992 to 2006). These include reviewing and guiding strategic direction and major plans of action, risk management policies and procedures, annual budgets and business plans, setting performance objectives, monitoring implementation and institution performance, and overseeing major capital expenditure and investment decisions. The composition of the IADT Governing Body as currently constituted is determined by the Institutes of Technology Acts (1992 to 2006), as amended. Governing Body consists of a chairperson, seventeen ordinary members drawn from staff and representative organisations, and the president of the institution. The secretary/financial controller acts as secretary to Governing Body. The Higher Education Authority Act (2022) requires a reorganisation of the Governing Body which will impact membership and term of office. These changes will be implemented by November 2023.

IADT's most recent Strategic Plan, 'Better Futures Created Together' (2019–2023), was launched in February 2019. It positioned IADT uniquely within Irish higher education, producing creative, entrepreneurial and technologically astute graduates. The strategic plan encompassed three main themes – Excellence, Growth and Community — with eleven strategic priorities of equal significance aligned to these themes.

In 2021, IADT conducted a mid–term review of its Strategic Plan. As a result of that review, with the approval of the Governing Body, the timeframe for completion of the plan was brought forward from 2023 to 2022. IADT's decision to accelerate the conclusion of this strategic plan was made in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, cognisant of significant and rapid developments in the Irish higher education landscape and informed by its own ambition in that context. A small number of actions were discounted, and all strategic priority areas were signalled for completion by the end of 2022. It is anticipated that 80% of actions will be completed, including most institution-level actions.

At the time of the site visit, the process for the development of the new IADT strategy was under way, with a view to having the new plan in place by the end of 2023.

The Higher Education System Performance Framework (2018–2020) details the national priorities and key objectives of government for higher education and is used by the Higher Educational Authority (HEA) to conduct a process of strategy and performance dialogue with HEIs. IADT published its Mission-based Performance Compact (2018–2021) with the HEA in March 2019. This outlined 12 institutional strategic priorities for IADT. Progress against the compact was assessed annually through the institution's self-evaluation report and its dialogue meeting with the HEA. The final and concluding self-evaluation under Compact 2018–2021 was undertaken in early 2022. It was concluded that, over the period of the System Performance Framework, IADT had demonstrated satisfactory institutional progress against the targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) set out in its Compact.

IADT has a strong and demonstrated commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). In 2020, the Governing Body of IADT established an EDI Committee to assist it in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities in ensuring a good governance structure and to provide leadership and accountability for EDI in all aspect of the institution's activities. The EDI Committee has since overseen many positive enhancements at IADT, most notably the award of an Athena Swan Bronze Institution Award to IADT in September 2022.

The past 7 years have seen a small increase in the student population at IADT. While undergraduate and postgraduate full-time student numbers have remained reasonably consistent, there has been a significant increase in the number of part-time students, both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. As of January 2023, IADT had a total of 2344 registered students, of which 1952 were undergraduate full-time and 100 post-graduate full-time.

While this enrolment includes students from every province in Ireland, there is strong representation,

as might be expected, from Leinster, and especially Dublin. The student body of IADT is also becoming increasingly international. Based on self-declared nationality, the student population includes 65 different nationalities, up from 37 in 2010. At the time of the review, 54 countries are represented in the current total student population. IADT partners on international mobility programmes and academic exchanges globally in excess of 20 countries in Europe, Canada, USA, Asia and Africa.

In 2021/22, 60% of the student intake of approximately 1000 into IADT entered using the Central Applications Office (CAO), the predominant entry route to undergraduate higher education in Ireland. Of those undergraduate entrants, 25% were already holders of further education qualifications. IADT also participates in the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) schemes. Currently, 19% of IADT's undergraduate population are from under-represented groups and have availed of one of those two schemes.

IADT has an established commitment to lifelong learning and actively delivers Springboard+ programmes, with approximately 90 students enrolled on five Springboard+ programmes during 2021/22.

IADT's staff numbers have grown steadily over recent years. Between 2019 and 2021, whole-time equivalent staff (WTE) increased from 210 to 242. In December 2022, IADT had a total headcount of 372 staff. This comprised 266 academic staff (including hourly paid academic staff) and 106 professional, managerial, administration and support staff (PMASS). The institution's gender profile is balanced, with female headcount, in respect of FTE, being 53% in 2021.

IADT's Executive Team comprises the President, three Vice Presidents (Research, Development and Innovation, Academic Affairs and Registrar, and Corporate Affairs/Secretary/Financial Controller), two Heads of Faculty and, since April 2023, a new post of Director of Strategic Projects. Day-to-day operations are managed by a Management Team,

which comprises 23 members, including Heads of Academic Departments and Managers of most functional areas.

The Media Cube, IADT's start-up innovation centre, is based on the IADT campus. It houses 15 client companies, providing them with bespoke supports including onsite expertise, mentorship, venture capital (VC) in residence, access to professional business knowledge and external networking opportunities.

IADT actively seeks out and establishes collaborations which assist it in achieving its strategic objectives. In 2022, it secured Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers programme, being the lead partner in a 5-year partnership with NovaUCD, the innovation hub of University College Dublin (UCD). IADT is also a partner in the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium (DRIC). It also works in collaboration with Dublin City Council, City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB) and Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). IADT co-chairs Dublin Learning City, a partnership working to advance Dublin as a learning region, as defined by UNESCO.

Funded under Pillar 3 of the Human Capital Initiative (HCI3), the Creative Futures Academy (CFA) is a collaboration between industry and three providers of creative education in Ireland: IADT, National College of Art and Design (NCAD), and UCD.

IADT is also participating in the European Universities Initiative through its involvement in FilmEU, the European university for film and media arts, of which it is a founding partner. FilmEU is one of just two proposed European universities in the broad fields of the creative arts and industries.

As previously stated, IADT became a designated awarding body on 1 January 2020 and may make awards up to and including Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

The National Strategy for Higher Education 2030[2] (commonly known as the 'Hunt Report'), which was published in 2011, set out a transformation of the Irish higher education sector, including consolidation of the 14 institutes of technology (IoTs) and the creation of the technological universities (TUs). Since then, much of this change has been realised, most especially in the past five years since the enactment of the Technological Universities Act (2018). At the time of this review, all but two of the original 14 IoTs stand dissolved, with five TUs having been established over the period 1 January 2019 to 1 May 2022.

Previously, IADT took the view that the interests of IADT, its staff, and students were best served by remaining as an independent institution, and therefore it did not seek to amalgamate with other IoTs or join a TU. While IADT has not ruled out future partnerships or indeed the prospect of seeking university status, its stated priority in the medium term is to preserve its ethos, discipline expertise and international reputation as a specialist provider.

That said, IADT is cognisant of the criteria for designation of TU status, including requirements in relation to research student numbers and staff qualifications at doctoral level, as set out in the Technological Universities Act (2018). It also has a strong ambition to grow and increase current levels of research activity and industry engagement.

As previously mentioned, IADT has brought forward the completion of its current Strategic Plan. It has commenced work on the development of its new strategy which it aims to have finalised and approved by the Governing Body by the end of 2023.

In making this decision, IADT wished to consolidate its existing offering, deliver upon short-term strategic priorities, and, as stated by its President in IADT's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER), 'create favourable conditions to fully explore future strategic opportunities and develop our new strategy from early 2023'. IADT intends that the new strategy will propel it into the next phase of its strategic and academic development.

Though currently remaining as an institute of technology, IADT has been awarded funding from the Technological Universities Transformation Fund, a €90 million fund (over 3 years) allocated by DFHERIS to the HEA, to assist the development and progression of technological universities. It has also been awarded funding by National Technological University Transformation for Resilience and Recovery (N-TUTORR), an innovative collaboration across the Irish Technological Higher Education sector which is funded by NextGenerationEU (€38 million) over two years to transform teaching, learning and assessment through student empowerment, building staff capabilities and developing the digital learning environment. IADT is also participating in the National Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education Project, a five-year project funded by HCI3 (the Human Capital Initiative, Pillar 3)[3] and co-sponsored by the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) and the Irish Universities Association (IUA).

Following on from its current strategic plan, growing student numbers remains a key objective of IADT. As stated in the ISER and confirmed during the main review visit, IADT aims to grow its student numbers during the lifetime of the next strategy from the current baseline of approximately 2700 students to over 3000, with 3200 having been identified as an appropriate target. It also aspires to continue to develop its physical infrastructure to support this growth. With the campus currently at capacity, there are space constraints. These have had a particularly marked impact on high-demand programmes with significant practical elements, with many applicants to those programmes disappointed year-on-year as demand exceeds capacity. As discussed in the ISER and during the site visit, the progression and completion of critical elements of the Campus Development Plan is a priority for IADT. Commenced in 2003, this masterplan has gone through various iterations and updates, with the current plan reviewed, updated and submitted to the HEA in 2017. The plan

2   https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/072a65-national-strategy-for-higher-education-to-2030/#national-strategy-for-higher-education-to-2030
3   Human Capital Initiative | Skills and Engagement | Higher Education Authority (hea.ie)

identifies a priority list of new building projects and essential upgrades for existing buildings including a major refurbishment of the Quadrangle. The implementation of key priorities of the plan is now underway. A new digital media building, developed under a public private partnership (PPP), is currently under construction and is expected to be ready for its first intake of students in September 2024/ January 2025. It will include a new 600-seater canteen, learning commons, relaxing area and a multi-functional space. IADT has determined that the new building will enable the accommodation of an additional 600 students. This will potentially require a further 30-40 new staff to meet the needs of this number. An additional consideration currently is that of student accommodation, with limited availability and high costs impacting students not just in IADT, but also nationally.

The establishment of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) in 2020 has generated several developments, including a significant new policy on the development of a unified tertiary sector, announced by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in December 2022. A new National Tertiary Office (NTO) has been charged with the development of tertiary degree programmes. IADT is participating in the initial pilot in collaboration with Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) and Ballyfermot College of Further Education (BCFE), two neighbouring colleges of further education.

As stated in the ISER and discussed during the site visit, IADT is progressing its strategic objectives for international engagement by leveraging existing collaborations and developing new ones to enhance and expand its international profile and impact. Building upon organic growth within its own networks, IADT is actively engaging with Enterprise Ireland and Education in Ireland to advance international recruitment over the coming years.

The review team considers IADT's approach to quality assurance and enhancement to be aligned with its strategic plan and informed by relevant legislation and the requirements of DFHERIS and the HEA. It is also aligned with QQI QA guidelines. Furthermore, IADT has formally adopted the

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG) as a set of standards and guidelines for internal quality assurance in higher education, recognising that the ESG are not standards for quality, nor do they prescribe how the quality assurance processes are implemented, but rather provide guidance, covering the areas which are vital for successful quality provision and learning environments in higher education.

IADT's Quality Assurance Framework, the current version of which has been put in place and implemented since 2015, is intended to cover all policies and procedures approved by Academic Council or Governing Body. These cover the following headings:

- Policy for Quality Assurance
- Design and Approval of Programmes
- Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Student Enrolment, Progression, Recognition and Certification
- Staff
- Learning Resources and Student Support
- Information Management
- Public Information
- On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
- Cyclical External Quality Assurance

In addition, IADT has specific policies and procedures for the effective provision of higher education, a research environment, as well as industry and community engagement opportunities, ensuring high quality and relevant learning experiences. Throughout its policies and procedures, IADT aims to state its goals and describe its processes in documents which are clear, helpful, and easy to implement.

In its ISER, IADT has undertaken to devise and agree a structured Quality Action Plan informed by recommendations identified therein and the recommendations made in this report.

Two key roles in the area of quality, Senior Quality Officer and Assistant Registrar, were established and filled in 2016 and 2021.

In accordance with the Institutes of Technology Acts (1992–2006), Academic Council is appointed to assist Governing Body in the planning, coordination, development and oversight of the academic work of IADT and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of its programmes and activities. Since becoming a designated awarding body (DAB) as a consequence of the QQI Amendment Act, the authority (and responsibility) of Academic Council has been strengthened, though its fundamental relationship to Governing Body remains unaltered.

IADT has completed and submitted its Annual Quality Report (AQR) to QQI on an annual basis since 2017. The AQR is drafted by the Senior Quality Officer, in consultation with institution management. It is then considered and approved by the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) of the Academic Council and subsequently by the Academic Council. Whereas all AQRs are published online on the QQI website, IADT also elects to publish its AQR on its own website. A quality dialogue meeting (QDM) between IADT and QQI is convened bi-annually. The most recent meeting took place in May 2022.
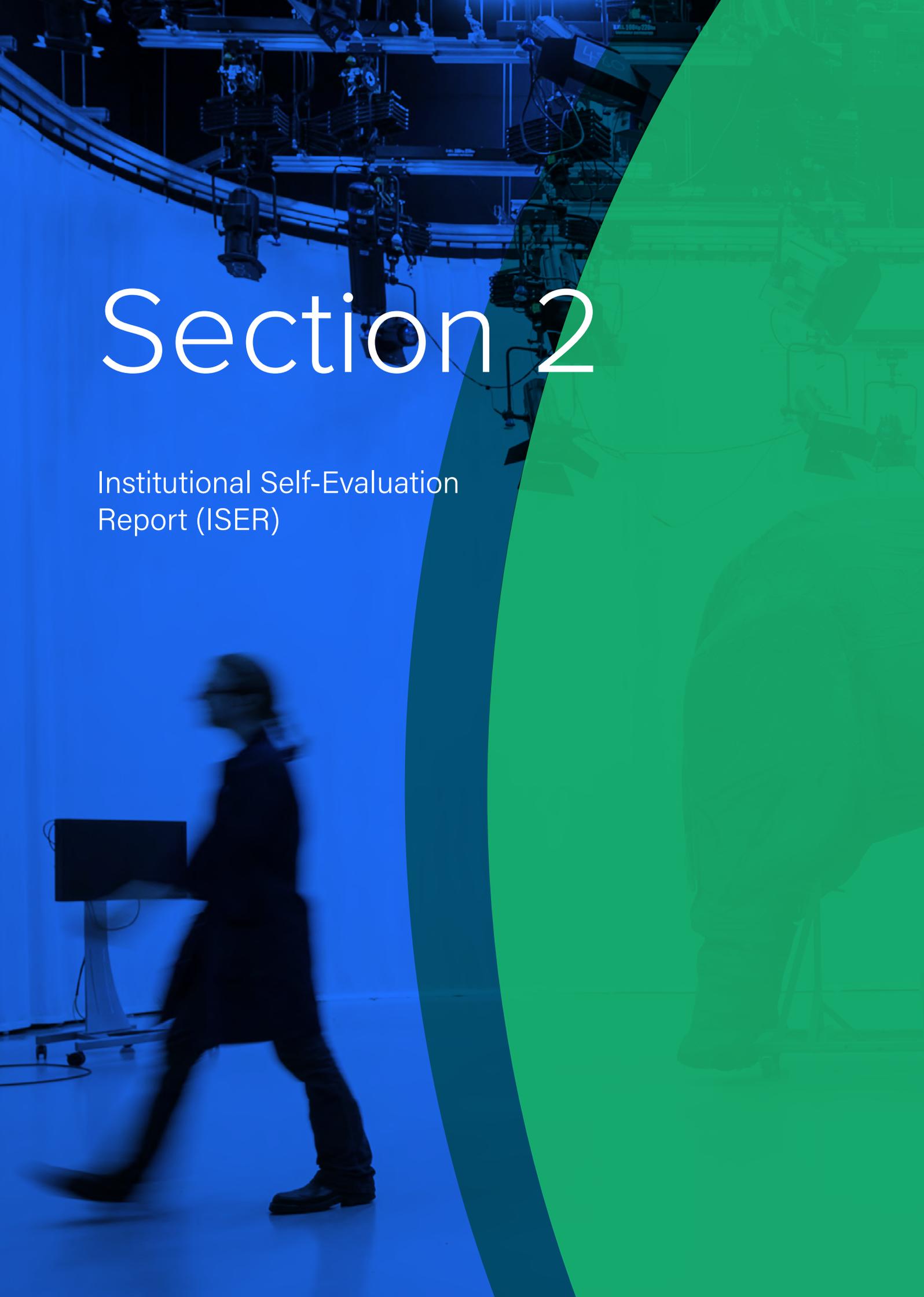
Section 2

Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)

Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)

METHODOLOGY USED TO PREPARE THE ISER

The CINNTE Institutional Review schedule was agreed between higher education institutions and QQI and published in 2017. IADT was originally scheduled to undergo the CINNTE Institutional Review in 2022. Subsequently, however, due to factors including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the appointment of a new President in 2020 and the retirement of the then Senior Quality Officer, it was agreed between the Institution and QQI that the review would be postponed by a number of months. The date for submission of IADT's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) was revised to early 2023 with the main review visit taking place after that.

IADT began the process of preparing for institutional review in January 2022. Preparatory work was undertaken by the Quality Office team.

Following consultation and discussion with the IADT Senior Management Team, IADT established its CINNTE Steering Group to oversee the CINNTE Institutional Review process. The CINNTE Steering Group, chaired by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, met on a fortnightly basis from September 2022 until submission of the ISER in March 2023. The group's membership comprised members of management, (non-management) academic staff members, professional, managerial, administration and support staff (PMASS) members and Students' Union representatives.

Following consideration of the CINNTE Institutional Review objectives, IADT's Strategic Plan (2019–2023) and early work on the development of the next Strategic Plan (2024–2029), a thematic approach to institutional review was agreed, with the following three themes emerging:

- Building Research Capacity – Readiness and implications of potentially awarding Doctoral Degrees at NFQ Level 10
- Internationalisation and Collaboration – Capacity to effectively deliver programmes collaboratively with international partners as well as local and regional collaborations and increasing the number of international students at IADT.
- Growth
    i. Growing student numbers, campus development priorities over coming years, sustainable programme planning and design for future IADT Students.
    ii. Growing IADT's local and regional collaborations, including with the FE sector.

As stated in the ISER, it was an objective of IADT that the self-evaluation would be both inclusive and comprehensive, giving staff, students and stakeholders the opportunity to input into the institutional review process. Therefore, Governing Body, Executive Management Team, Academic Council and its subcommittees, and the wider staff and student groupings were briefed on a regular basis from the outset. During the review visit, the review team heard from Governing Body members that the President updated them regularly on the process, and that the Vice President for Academic Affairs provided progress updates to Academic Council and its subcommittees for each of which institutional review was a standing agenda item. This information cascade to staff and students was supported by the Quality Office team. There was also a dedicated webpage on the public IADT website. Overall, the review team finds that the communication plan in relation to the self-evaluation process was greatly effective

in informing staff. This was demonstrated through the meaningful engagement of staff in the sessions during the main review visit and their knowledge of the purpose of the review.

Self-assessment at department level and the subsequent drafting of the ISER was undertaken via a range of methodologies as follows:

- Dedicated meetings of the CINNTE Steering Group, academic faculties and departments and PMASS departments
- Desk review of relevant documentation, including programme board reports, external examiner reports, programmatic review reports, programme validation reports, minutes of Academic Council and subcommittee meetings
- Analysis of data, including registry data (student numbers, progression rates etc) and student survey data
- Benchmarking exercises with similar national and international institutions
- Surveys of staff, students and stakeholders
- Focus groups with staff and students
- Consultation and information sessions with staff and students and stakeholders

Discussions during the main review visit gave the review team further insight into these methodologies. The review team finds from these discussions that staff and student engagement through dedicated meetings and focus groups was quite effective in the derivation of findings and recommendations. Conversely, the review team finds that more needs to be done in terms of data analysis, and this is the subject of more detailed discussion and recommendations later in this report.

The steering group's proposal on the structure of the ISER was informed by consideration of the CINNTE Institutional Review objectives as set out in the CINNTE Terms of Reference,[4] IADT's Strategic Plan (2019–2023), and early preparations for the development of the next Strategic Plan for IADT

(2024–2029). Themes addressed included:

- The Institutional Self-Evaluation Process
- Governance and Management
- IADT Students
- Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement
- Staff Recruitment and Professional Development of Staff, Students + Graduates
- Research, Enterprise and Innovation
- Collaborations + Partnerships
- Public Information, Communication and Data Management
- Conclusions and Recommendations from the ISER

Each department/ unit was required to undertake a self-assessment, the findings of which were collated centrally into a set of recommendations listed by chapter in the ISER. The review team was impressed by the reflective self-evaluation undertaken by the various departments/units, together with the open discussion presented in each chapter. The recommendations were also collated into a set of institution-wide recommendations which were stated at the end of the ISER. While this was useful, the review team finds that the self-evaluation and ISER document would have benefitted from further collation and derivation of overarching enhancement themes.

IADT's recommendations, as listed at the end of the ISER, were also mapped against the objectives of the CINNTE Institutional Review, as set out in the CINNTE Terms of Reference. This mapping was extended to demonstrate compliance with relevant QQI guidelines and ESG. This was helpful to the review team by indicating compliance and identifying issues for enhancement. It also provided visibility to the review team of the quality assurance framework and its compliance with national and international regulations and guidelines.

The CINNTE Institutional Review was discussed regularly at Governing Body, Senior Management Team meetings and Executive Management

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4   cinnte-review-tor-dab-website.pdf (qqi.ie)

meetings. Institutional review was a standing item at meetings of Academic Council and its subcommittees, with regular progress updates being provided to the Academic Council by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar. During the main review visit, the review team had the opportunity to consider minutes of Governing Body[5] and Academic Council[6] meetings during the self-evaluation period and noted evidence of regular updates on the drafting of the ISER and preparation for institutional review. The Quality Enhancement Subcommittee (QEC) of the Academic Council had specific oversight of the CINNTE Institutional Review. Members of the QEC provided the review team with an overview of the committee's involvement in the self-evaluation process, particularly in relation to reviewing drafts of the ISER.

In relation to consultation with and involvement of students in the self-evaluation process, the review team notes that the SU President sat on the Steering Group. Furthermore, briefings were provided to the Students' Union and Class Representative Council once the institutional self–evaluation report was drafted. It is also acknowledged that there is student representation throughout the academic governance structure, Governing Body, Academic Council and its subcommittees (including the Student Experience Subcommittee), and that the CINNTE Review was a standing agenda item for all these entities throughout. That said, feedback from the Students' Union, as provided during the main review visit, suggests that the Students' Union would have welcomed more involvement in the ISER and the review team therefore makes a recommendation in this regard.

The structure of the ISER was agreed and approved by the CINNTE Steering Group, which was also responsible for approving initial drafts. In March 2023 the ISER was finalised by the Quality Office team, signed off by the Steering Group, and approved by the President prior to its submission to QQI.

It is evident to the review team that IADT, at all levels of the institution and throughout the review process, perceives the institutional review as a learning and enhancement opportunity. This, and the collective commitment to continuous improvement, was clear in the discussions during the main review visit. An open and engaged style of engagement was established from the start by the President and Executive Team, working in connection with the Governing Body, and percolated through staff and students of the institution. A comprehensive and methodological approach was also promoted by the Vice President for Academic Affairs and driven by the Assistant Registrar (also Institutional Review Coordinator) and Senior Quality Officer who, as the Quality Office team, led the development of a document which the review team found to be informative, coherent and of value. It was evident to the review team through both the ISER and discussions at the main review visit that IADT has already learned much and benefitted from its self-evaluation process.

As part of the self-evaluation process, and to provide additional insight on the performance of the Office of the President, the President engaged internal and external stakeholders through a survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine the opinions and views of key strategic stakeholders on the executive leadership of the institution. The survey engaged with Governing Body members, staff representatives, executive peers, senior management and senior external executives in higher education, national agencies, peer institutions (nationally and internationally), and other education and community stakeholders.

Feedback is considered by the President in the context of the review and also informs the development of the institution's new Strategic Plan and Compact with the HEA.

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5   Governing Body Minutes - IADT

6   Minutes of meetings of Academic Council are published internally. A sample of minutes was provided to the review team.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on the quality and openness of its self-evaluation and the detailed and robust analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which was clearly articulated in the ISER and during the review visit. The review team finds clear evidence of a professional culture, led by the Executive with strong staff engagement and commitment. Throughout the review visit, all the staff who participated demonstrated high awareness of the purpose of institutional review and were clearly engaged with a culture of continuous improvement. The open and engaged style of engagement was set from the start by the President and Executive Team, working in connection with the Governing Body, and percolated through staff and students of the institution. It was also evident to the review team that IADT has already benefitted from its self-evaluation process.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that, given the key role played by the Students' Union as a 'bridge' between the students and the institution, IADT consider how it might better engage its Students' Union in future institutional reviews and strategic planning.
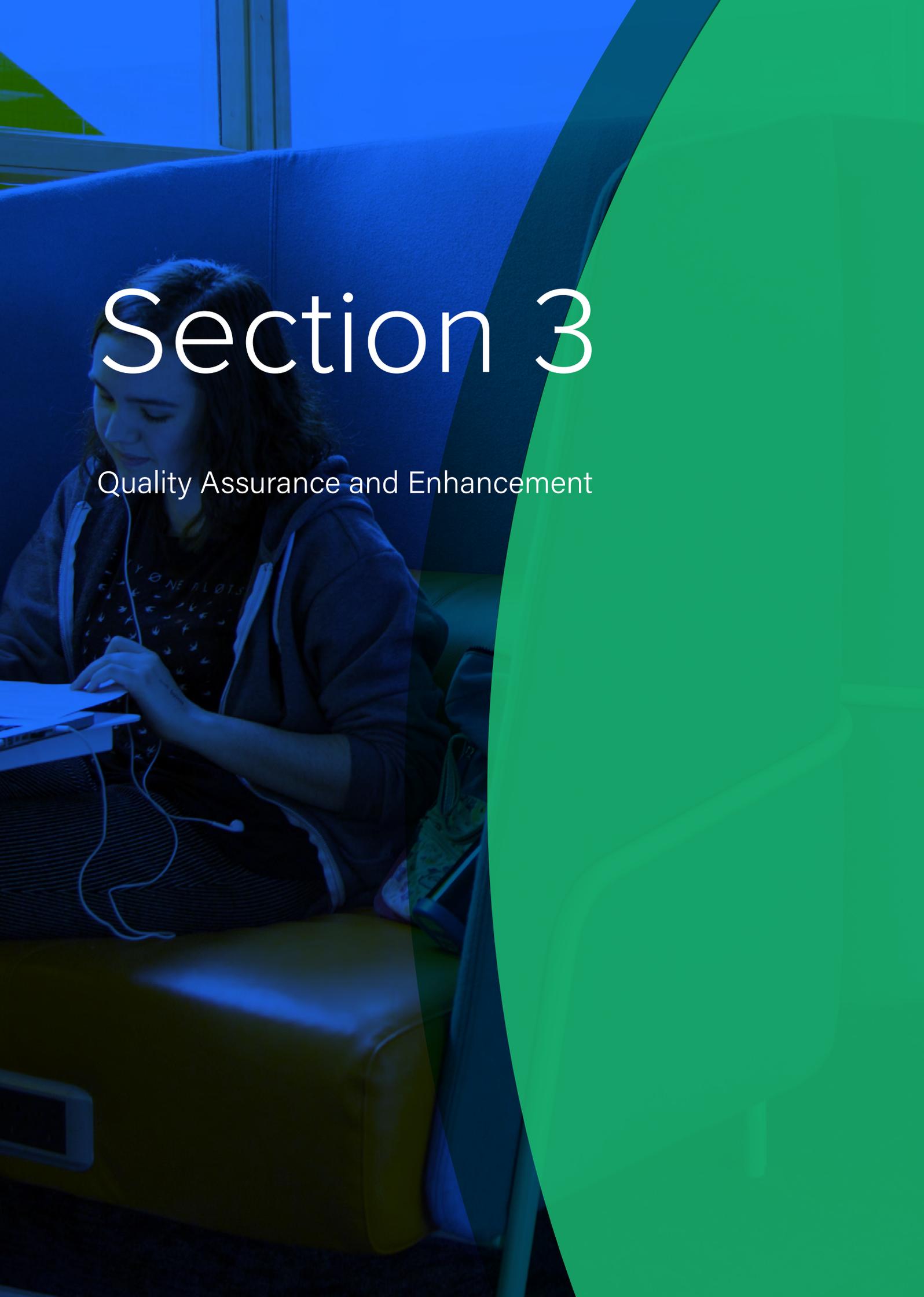
Section 3

Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Quality Assurance/ Accountability

REVIEW OBJECTIVES

3.1 OBJECTIVE 1 – CURRENT QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES

In the ISER, IADT presented a mapping of the five objectives of institutional review to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2015) and the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016). This mapping included commentary regarding the attainment of the institutional review objectives. Throughout the ISER document, policies and procedures were referenced through website links. The review team found this to be a comprehensive analysis which showed that IADT's Quality Assurance Framework is aligned with relevant QQI policies and guidelines as well as international guidelines and policy instruments including the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) which, as confirmed during the main review visit, it has formally adopted.

In its overarching quality assurance framework document[7], IADT states that the Quality Assurance Framework is intended to cover all policies and procedures developed by the institution and approved by Academic Council or Governing Body. Furthermore, as set out in that document and amplified in the ISER, IADT aims to set out its goals and processes in clear, helpful documents which are easy to read, and to implement.

Policies and Procedures are published on the IADT website and presented under the following category headings: Academic Quality; Student Policies; HR Policies; Corporate Affairs. Each policy has a formal owner, normally a member of the Executive Team, who has responsibility for its implementation, monitoring and review. Policies are initially drafted by the applicable department and circulated to relevant stakeholders before being presented for approval. All procedures relating to academic matters and student wellbeing must be approved by Academic Council. Certain procedures require the approval of the Governing Body.

Following approval, policies and procedures are communicated in various ways. This can be centrally by the Senior Quality Officer or via programme boards as part of a standing item which covers updates to policies, or by Heads of Department to their teams. The ISER also states that policies are also communicated as part of the induction package for 1st years, and also refers to the role played by the Students' Union in communicating policies to students, in collaboration with Registry and Student Experience. The review team also found that policies and procedures were easy to access on IADT's public website. That said, student feedback during the main review visit suggested varying awareness of the policies and procedures which are relevant to them, for example, assessment appeals. Communication mechanisms are discussed later in this report, in particular the balance between formal and informal, and the recommendation of the review team in this regard.

In the ISER, IADT states that all policies and procedures are periodically reviewed for effectiveness and relevance. The review team, on completion of the main review visit, found that the process for monitoring and revising policies and procedures could be improved in order to ensure

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7   00_iadtpolicy_IADT_Quality_Framework1.pdf

a more systematic approach to policy review, to ensure consistency across the quality assurance framework, and to prevent anomalies. The review team suggests that the recently developed Policy and Procedure tracker list, as referenced in the ISER, will be a useful tool in the progression of the recommendation set out below.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on its system of policies and procedures. Notwithstanding the relatively small size of the institution, the policy and procedure framework is well-elaborated and comprehensive. The language and format used are clear and easy to understand, and easy access is provided on the institution's public website.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT complete the development of a schedule for review of policies and procedures. As part of this review, policies and procedures should first be systemised in a way that supports easy conformation and practice, and then checked for completeness, consistency, and alignment. This can be a particularly complex task for a smaller institution. However, the recently developed Policy and Procedure tracker list, as referenced in the ISER, should provide a more efficient means of monitoring, alerting and tracking.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY
GOVERNING BODY

IADT'S Governing Body, as currently constituted, is determined by the Institutes of Technology Acts (1992 to 2006), as amended. It consists of a Chairperson, the President, and seventeen ordinary members, including staff, student and external members. The Secretary/Financial Controller acts as Secretary to Governing Body. The current Governing Body was appointed for five years by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) and commenced its term on 1 April 2021. The Higher Education Authority Act 2022 requires a reorganisation of the Governing Body which will impact on membership and term of office. At the time of the main review visit, the review team heard from staff that planning was underway for these changes to be implemented by November 2023.

Governing Body has adopted, and operates in accordance with, the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology (latest version January 2018). The Governing Body adopted Standing Orders on 1 September 2010, which were updated in January 2018, September 2020 and January 2023, and the Governing Body operates in accordance with these Standing Orders.

IADT submits an Annual Governance Statement to the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Based on the response of the HEA, IADT is compliant. Governing Body minutes and those of its Audit and Risk Committee are published on the institution's public website.

Governing Body has established the following committees to assist and advise it on a number of its functions:

- Audit and Risk Committee
- Recruitment and Selection Committee
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee
- Governing Body Reform Committee
- Presidential Recruitment Committee (when required)

All of these committees operate in accordance with terms of reference agreed by the Governing Body and provide an annual report to it.

In its ISER, IADT states that its Governing Body conducts an annual internal review of its performance and effectiveness, the outcomes of which are noted in the minutes of the meeting in which that review was conducted. Furthermore, an external review of Governing Body is commissioned at the middle and end of each Governing Body term, with the results being documented in the Governing Body meeting minutes. The review at the end of the previous Governing Body term (March 2021) generated findings regarding the timing of meetings and identifying areas of specialist expertise among members to enhance the work of the Governing Body. The findings were documented in the meeting minutes and have been implemented since. Previously, a formal review of Governing Body performance and effectiveness was conducted by the institution's internal auditors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, using a template developed for the Institute of Technology sector consistent with the questionnaire contained within the Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology.

During the main review visit, the review team met with members of the Governing Body including its Chair. Discussion confirmed to the team that the Governing Body and Executive work well together, with the Chair encouraging debate. Governors indicated that the President's Report was a good means of keeping up to date on general institutional developments and on the implementation of the strategic plan. Documentation is detailed and is made available in good time, with executive members willing to answer questions both in advance and at the meeting. Governors and Executive are both involved in developing strategy, and there is a shared understanding on the learnings from the previous plan, for example in relation to key performance indicators (KPIs) and the link with the performance compact with the HEA. It was clear to the review team that the future strategic direction of IADT has been regularly considered and discussed by Governing Body, and that there is agreement

that this needs to be addressed in advance of other areas.

Governing Body's EDI Committee, established in 2020, has overseen many positive institutional developments with respect to EDI, most notably the Athena Swan Bronze Institution Award. The associated EDI Action Plan is currently being implemented. The EDI Committee membership includes Governing Body representatives, an external member, three staff members, the IADT President, the IADT EDI Manager, the IADT Students' Union Welfare & Equality Officer, and two student representatives (one from each Faculty).

The link between Governing Body and Academic Council is also effective. Governing Body members reported to the review team that the Academic Council meeting minutes are comprehensive and circulated as part of the meeting documentation. Governors also confirmed that, as conveyed by the Governing Body minutes, the President provides an informative briefing on Academic Council proceedings and discusses general academic matters with governors including, inter alia, student numbers, programme portfolio, and staff strategy.

Governing Body and Academic Council both include student membership, while, as confirmed by student representatives during the main review visit, the IADT Executive Team, including the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar, have an open-door policy to the Students' Union. As such, this ensures that the student voice is captured at the highest levels of the institution.

ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Academic Council is appointed to assist Governing Body in the planning, coordination, development and oversight of the academic work of the institution and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the institution's programmes and activities. Its membership totals 22, including the President and Registrar. Since becoming a designated awarding body (DAB), the authority (and responsibility) of Academic Council has been strengthened, though its fundamental relationship to Governing Body is unaltered.

Academic Council has appointed a number of subcommittees to undertake activities and tasks on its behalf:

- Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC)
- Programme Validation Committee (PVC)
- Teaching and Learning Committee (T+L)
- Academic Planning, Coordination and Review Committee (APCR)
- Student Experience Committee (SEC)
- Research and Development Committee (R+D)

These committees are established and operate in accordance with IADT's Policy on Committee Membership and Terms of Reference which are published on the IADT website. Each committee reports to Academic Council via its meeting minutes which are reviewed by the Council at its monthly meeting. Each subcommittee also prepares an annual report, which is discussed at the Academic Council. Minutes from Academic Council and subcommittees are made available to staff internally. The review team heard during the main review visit that the institution's intranet is currently under development. This will provide enhanced access to documentation of Academic Council and its committees.

The Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) of the Academic Council facilitates an integrated approach to academic quality, including institutional policies, procedures and systems. The committee is central to both programmatic and institutional reviews. It provides guidance to the Academic Council on issues of quality, provides an advisory audit function of the academic quality system to ensure compliance with standards and monitoring and review cycles within the institution to ensure compliance via periodic review of items such as programmes and quality manual reviews. It is the central forum for monitoring and improving standards of academic quality and is guided by the approach outlined in the institution's Quality Framework and by relevant policies and procedures.

During the main review visit, discussions with members of this subcommittee confirmed to the

review team its central role in relation to academic quality and enhancement in IADT. While the institution has created and filled the assistant registrar role in recent years, the contribution of this subcommittee is particularly relevant in an institution of this size. It is very much a 'working' committee as well as being strategically driven. The committee works in parallel with the Registrar's Office, the Assistant Registrar and Senior Quality Officer in particular, but it is also progressing issues from the two faculties through their representation from both academic and professional, managerial, administration and support staff (PMASS).

The Programme Validation Committee (PVC) of the Academic Council ensures quality within the suite of programmes offered by IADT. It reviews recommendations for new programmes using an internal validation process, and also reviews proposals for minor changes to programmes.

The review team heard during the main review visit that the committee plays a supportive role in the programme approval process. Academic staff members of the committee see themselves as critical friends of programme proposers. The membership of the committee also draws from areas such as marketing and management information systems. Overall, the review team finds that this approach ensures that all necessary voices are heard, allowing issues to be identified and addressed in good time. As with the QEC, it is evident to the review team that the PVC undertakes much of the quality assurance review which might be undertaken by a central academic quality and enhancement function in a larger institution.

The Student Experience Committee (SEC) of the Academic Council was established in 2012. Its membership, as set out in its terms of reference, includes all staff parties who are central to student engagement within IADT, together with four student members including Students' Union officers. Thus, while it provides institutional oversight of student wellbeing and student administrative policy issues and develops and advises on policy and procedures relating to overall student wellbeing and experience, it also strives to create a culture of partnership between IADT and its students. The review team met with members of this

committee during the main review visit and the discussion evidenced strong engagement between students and staff, with partnership on initiatives and developments within IADT to further the engagement of students, both present and future. Students' union representatives spoke of their positive experience on the committee and of issues being heard and acted upon.

Given the relatively small size of IADT, it was no surprise to the review team that there is some overlap in membership between the subcommittees of the Academic Council. On probing this during the main review visit, it was evident that a certain amount of this overlap in membership is by design, to ensure a 'joined up' approach. For example, the Head of Teaching and Learning as well as the Assistant Registrar are both members of the PVC and QEC. IADT's programme validation policy was developed by the QEC in consultation with the PVC and Registrar. The Chair of the QEC is a member of IADT's Partnership Oversight Committee (POC) which advises Academic Council and the President on decisions to be made in respect of partnerships and collaborative programme development.

Discussions during the main review visit included frequent reference to the successful introduction of a programme board annual report to Academic Council. The review team had the opportunity to review a sample of these reports and finds that they are a useful means to regularly and formally capture and act upon student and staff feedback on programme delivery and operation. It was evident that the introduction of the Programme Board Annual Reports has been beneficial and worthwhile and that they are made available to and viewed by the Academic Council.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on its whole-of-institution approach to quality assurance at all levels of the organisation including Governing Body, Academic Council, its committees, and programme boards. IADT's Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive of IADT are working and interacting effectively in what is a coherent and rigorous

approach to governance of the institution. While noting that academic quality assurance and enhancement is the business of everyone in the institution, the review team notes that the committees of the Academic Council play a significant role in academic affairs in IADT, both strategically and operationally. The work done by those committees on the more operational quality assurance matters is particularly important for IADT, given its relatively small size. Furthermore, it is clear that the introduction and implementation of an annual report by the Programme Board to the Academic Council has been well-implemented and is beneficial and worthwhile.

EXECUTIVE

IADT's Executive Team comprises the President, three Vice Presidents (Research, Development and Innovation, the Office of the Registrar and Academic Affairs and the Office of Corporate Affairs), two Heads of Faculty and, since April 2023, the new post of Director of Strategic Projects. Day-to-day operations are managed by a Management Team, which comprises 23 members, including Heads of Academic Departments and managers of most functional areas.

Recently, an academic management group has been set up, and is currently operating on a somewhat ad hoc basis. Initial feedback from management members who met the review team during the main review visit is positive. In noting this feedback, the review team acknowledges that IADT may wish to formalise this structure but suggests that well-defined terms of reference would then need to be established. This would support the group to achieve positive outcomes by focussing on areas of common interest while ensuring that current management structure and reporting lines are respected.

The larger of IADT's two faculties, the Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies (FFACT), comprises three Departments: The Department of Design and Visual Arts, the Department of Technology and Psychology and the Department of Film and Media. It also hosts Ireland's National Film School (NFS). FFACT accounts for 70% of

the student population at IADT, being home to over 1700 students studying programmes in film, art, design, creative technologies, animation and psychology. IADT and the NFS specialises in all aspects of production for screen, from ideation through to final delivery of the creative project. The NFS at IADT is a creative transdisciplinary hub that brings together all the aspects of the modern screen industries.

The Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities (FEH) accounts for 30% of the total student community at IADT. It comprises two departments: The Department of Entrepreneurship and the Department of Humanities and Arts Management. FEH offers undergraduate programmes in the following disciplines: Arts Management, Management and Entrepreneurship, Media Studies, English Literature, Equality Studies, Digital Marketing and postgraduate programmes, in a flexible mode, in the areas of Cultural Events Management, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Media Studies, Digital Entrepreneurship.

PROGRAMMES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

IADT's academic portfolio includes NFQ Level 7, Level 8 and Level 9 programmes across a wide range of disciplines including film and television, design and the creative arts, humanities, psychology, business and technology. It currently provides 28 bachelor's degree programmes, 22 master's and post-graduate degree programmes and 29 certificate programmes.

Certain of the programmes offered by IADT are "restricted" programmes in that they have special application requirements alongside the standard admissions procedures. Typically, applicants to such programmes are required to submit a portfolio and/or project as part of a pre-entry assessment process.

Since the last institutional review, over 30 new programmes have been designed, validated and commenced including new bachelor's degree programmes, post-graduate degrees and certificate programmes including special purpose awards and microcredentials at NFQ Levels 8 and 9. The

most recent round of programmatic reviews of undergraduate programmes in 2020 brought many quality enhancements to the learning experience for students including the implementation of a Common Curriculum Framework in FFACT and the inclusion of accredited work placement or work–based projects in all FEH undergraduate programmes.

As part of its Quality Framework, IADT has procedures and documents to govern institution-wide quality assurance for the ongoing development, delivery and assessment of programmes.

IADT's programme development and approval process is set out clearly in its Procedure for the Development and Approval of Programmes,[8] the purpose of which is to ensure that any programme leading to awards of the institution meets the following overarching objectives:

- It complies with the strategic and academic plan of the institution,
- It fulfils an identifiable need for industry,
- It complies with relevant national policies and procedures,
- It is of appropriate academic breadth and depth with assessable learning outcomes that are consistent with the levels of knowledge, skill and competence prescribed by the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ),
- It maximises opportunities for learners to avail of access, transfer and progression routes, including the flexible and innovative use of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL),
- It can be adequately resourced – academic, physical and human resources – and can be provided within a supportive and engaging intellectual and skills-based learning environment.

The Programme Validation Committee (PVC) of the Academic Council plays a key role in the programme development and approval process, acting as a 'critical friend' when reviewing recommendations for new programmes. Its

involvement in and oversight of the programme validation and change process is key to ensuring quality within the suite of programmes offered by the institution.

The initial programme proposal is brought to both Faculty Executive and the PVC for approval to proceed. The PVC includes membership from relevant central services areas including Marketing to identify and address any issues as soon as possible. The Faculty Executive develops a business plan in consultation with the Directorate of Corporate Affairs/ Secretary/Financial Controller and this is brought by the Head of Faculty to the Executive for approval. Programme development then commences. A programme document is developed and is presented to the PVC for initial approval, following which it is considered by a specially convened external validation panel. This panel conducts a site visit, prepares a report and makes a recommendation to IADT on the approval of the programme. The programme development team responds to the findings of the panel within six weeks. The Registrar submits to Academic Council a recommendation that the panel validation be endorsed, presenting the Panel Report and the Response of the institution to the Council. Academic Council and subsequently Governing Body notes the validation of the programme. All Programme Validation Reports along with a copy of the faculty response are published on the IADT website. During the main review visit, a timeframe of one year was cited by members of the PVC as the typical turnaround for new programmes, with timelines being shorter for non-CAO programmes. For example, proposals funded by Springboard or the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) are typically single stage programmes.

As part of its self-evaluation process, IADT undertook a desk review of 24 Programme Validation Reports, comprising all Validation Panels that had been convened between 2014 and 2022. The reports demonstrated positive and wide-ranging commendations regarding the innovative and enthusiastic nature of programme development at IADT, in terms of both programme proposals and processes. Validation Panel

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8   00_iadtpolicy_IADT_Procedure_Development_Approval_Progs._Approved_AC_Apr_191.pdf

members were very complimentary regarding their experience participating on IADT validation panels and the administration of the process. Programme Teams responsible for developing smaller, microcredential programmes noted that current programme validation templates are not suitable for documenting microcredential programmes. The Quality Office Team confirmed to the review team that it is reflecting on these findings to strengthen the programme development and validation process and monitor the continued progress and implementation of recommendations recorded in the reports, in conjunction with programme development teams.

Other themes which emerged from the review of validation reports included industry links, work placement, and alumni relationships, all of which are addressed by the review team in subsequent sections of this report.

The ISER contains several references to IADT's status as a designated awarding body (DAB) and to the implications of, and opportunities arising from, same. During the discussions at the main review visit, the review team heard what while, as already noted, IADT has adopted QQI's award standards, it now has the opportunity, as a DAB, to review and amend those to adopt bespoke award standards for IADT and to develop new standards and awards reflective of and unique to IADT.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its policy and procedure for approval of new programmes. Approval mechanisms are clear at all levels, with supports for proposers through internal peer review and helpful documentation.
- The review team commends IADT on its consideration to date of the implications of DAB status, including the potential for the development of new awards unique to IADT.

As previously noted, each IADT programme of study has a programme board which is responsible for the effective management, operation and review of the programme within the wider context of the academic plan of the faculty and institution.

Membership of the programme board includes the Programme Chair, every full-time member of academic staff teaching on the programme and student representatives chosen by democratic election. Part-time lecturing staff and external members can be co-opted, as appropriate. Each programme holds three programme board meetings each academic year, attended by all contracted staff and student representatives from each year group in the programme.

On the basis of the documentation presented to the review team by the institution and discussions with students and staff during the main review visit, the review team finds that the programme boards operate well. They provide an effective forum in which the student voice is heard and in which issues, suggestions and innovative ideas and views regarding pedagogy, assessment, and programme content can be discussed. Student feedback provided during the review visit suggests that consistency of reporting should be enhanced, in order to provide assurance to students that their voice is always fully heard.

As discussed earlier in this report, the review team finds the introduction of a Programme Board Annual Report to Academic Council to have been beneficial and worthwhile. An institution-wide template has been developed for this report, and the review team viewed a sample of completed reports during the main review visit. Items reported include key accomplishments, student achievements, student performance, student feedback, programme changes, external examiner feedback, priorities for coming year, and areas for improvement. What was less clear, however, was the degree to which this data is collated at department level to provide a more strategic and high-level view to Academic Council and to the faculty.

As previously noted in this report and confirmed during the main review visit, IADT has invested significant effort in the development and commencement of a number of taught post-graduate programmes. Industry stakeholders and graduates provided positive feedback on these career-focused offerings which form an increasingly important component of IADT's programme

portfolio. Several of these programmes have input from industry practitioners, many of whom are graduates of IADT.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on the development and commencement of a number of career-focused and industry-informed taught postgraduate programmes.

Recommendation
- The review team recommends that IADT put in place a system for the synthesis of the annual programme board reports at department/faculty level so as to provide both faculty and Academic Council with a higher level and strategic view of issues arising and being addressed. In turn, feedback from the Academic Council to programme boards would be useful. This work should be supported through training for Programme Chairs and student representatives on programme boards.

Programmatic review is the quality review process through which IADT conducts a critical evaluation of its programmes, reviewing and assessing them under a defined set of criteria and allowing their further development to improve educational quality. IADT's Programmatic Review Policy[9] outlines the purpose, objectives and steps involved in conducting programmatic reviews. As part of preparing for programmatic reviews, programme teams conduct self-evaluations of their department or faculty and provide a report in addition to the programme documents. Similar to the programme validation process, an external validation panel is organised, and the panel conducts a site visit, prepares a programmatic review report, and makes recommendations to IADT following review of the programme documents and meeting with the programme teams. All final Programmatic Review Reports together with a copy of the faculty response are published on the IADT website.

Since the last institutional review[10], there have been three cycles of Programmatic Reviews in IADT: in 2015, 2018 and most recently in 2020. The 2020 Programmatic Review covered all undergraduate programmes, with four Programmatic Review panels put in place. These were confirmed in early 2020 and were initially planned to convene onsite. Plans had to change following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. IADT was quick to respond, pivoted online, and completed the review. Key outcomes of the 2020 Programmatic Review included the proposal and implementation of a Common Curriculum Framework for FFACT programmes, and the inclusion of accredited work placement or work-based projects in all FEH and FFACT undergraduate programmes. Further discussion on these is provided later in this report.

The review team heard that there are plans for a programmatic review of all postgraduate programmes to take place during academic year 2023–24.

IADT's external examining system assists in the comparison and benchmarking of academic standards across awards. The system ensures that the assessment process is fair and fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance as well as providing the institution with informed and appropriate points for the comparison of academic standards. There are approximately 50 external examiners active each academic year, across programmes in each faculty. The External Examiner Procedure[11] aims to create a reference document that gives clear and concise information for IADT staff and prospective and appointed external examiners. The review team heard from staff during the main review visit that there are varying practices in terms of the mode of external examiner engagement, with regular onsite engagement in one, but not both faculties. While acknowledging that this is currently in accordance with a procedure that is not prescriptive in this regard, the review team suggests that this should be further considered by IADT to ensure a consistent approach across the institution.

9   https://iadt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/00_iadtpolicy_IADT_Programmatic_Review_Policy1.pdf#:~:text=Programmatic%20Review%20is%20 the%20quality%20review%20process%20through,further%20development%20in%20order%20to%20improve%20educational%20quality.

10   Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL, IRELAND, (2011)

11   https://iadt.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/00_iadtpolicy_IADT_External-Examiner-Procedures-May-21.pdf

STAFF RECRUITMENT, MANAGEMENT, AND DEVELOPMENT

In its ISER, IADT states that it 'is committed to recruiting competent, motivated, and highly skilled staff to achieve institutional strategic priorities and meet the needs of students'. The review team was very impressed by the commitment and open engagement demonstrated by the staff it met during both the planning visit and the main review visit, across all categories.

Since 2011, IADT has had an increase in staff numbers of just under 10%, to a total current headcount of 372, with the corresponding whole time equivalent (WTE) staff number being 247. In the ISER, IADT makes reference to Ireland's Employment Control Framework (ECF), a government mechanism designed to manage and regulate the recruitment and hiring of public servants so as to ensure that public sector employment remains within predetermined limits to maintain fiscal stability while also meeting the needs of essential public services. IADT reports on how the ECF continues to be restrictive, and that its current permitted headcount does not fully meet its needs. Previously, IADT's ratio of whole time to part-time academic staff was 80:20. At the time of this review, just over 8% of IADT's academic staff are employed on Hourly Paid Associate Lecturers (HPAL) contract arrangements. IADT's key objective in employing HPAL staff is to use this mechanism to involve industry professionals in programme delivery, thereby continuing to foster close contacts with industry and embedding and maintaining industry best practice in the institution's programmes.

IADT's Human Resources (HR) Department is part of its Corporate Services Directorate, and is responsible for recruitment and selection, staff training and development, and employee wellbeing. It also acts as a support to both staff and management in all matters relating to staff members from 'hire to retire'. In its ISER, IADT describes how all HR processes and policies take account of EDI. This was confirmed during the main review visit through a range of examples provided by staff of measures taken to ensure that EDI is embedded in HR policies and procedures, including recruitment.

Following a comprehensive review of recruitment and selection practices in 2020–21, several updates and improvements were made to recruitment and selection processes in the institution, including the establishment of a Recruitment and Selection Committee which reports to Governing Body and the implementation of a revised Recruitment and Selection Policy which includes an appeals process. These enhancements were informed by a benchmarking exercise. More recently, and as part of the CINNTE Institutional Review, the HR Team carried out a review of the key services relating to recruitment and selection and continuing professional development (CPD), in tandem with observations and input from the EDI manager and the results of the Athena Swan Survey.

The review team heard that in line with equality legislation and sector-wide EDI priorities, IADT is committed to providing equal opportunities to job applicants from diverse backgrounds. Arising from the 2020–21 review, competency-based frameworks are now in place for all competitions. Question banks are linked to the job profile, but also contain mandatory EDI questions which are tailored to the grade of the post. All job advertisements have an equal opportunities statement and refer to IADT's Code of Practice for the Employment of Staff with a Disability. Each selection board is inducted by a member of HR regarding correct procedure and conduct, including the IADT Equal Opportunities Policy. As far as is practicable, the board is gender-balanced and interviewers receive a gender breakdown of shortlisted candidates. Candidates for interview are invited to declare if they require reasonable accommodation.

All applicants and competitions are tracked, and HR staff reported that the good reputation of IADT stands it in good stead. In certain instances, the institution has been successful in recruiting PhD qualified academics without requesting these qualifications in the job specification.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its revised recruitment policy and practices. It

was clear from discussions during the main review visit that IADT has invested significant effort in enhancing its recruitment practices, benchmarking them with best practice, and that this has had a very positive impact on its reputation and on recruitment outcomes.

Notwithstanding these achievements, challenges in relation to recruitment and staffing surfaced during the main review visit. IADT seeks to employ a limited number of hourly paid assistant lecturers (HPALS) to ensure industry input into career-focussed programmes, particularly at Level 9. However, both the Employment Control Framework (ECF) and the provisions of the Cush Report on fixed-term and part-time employment in lecturing in Irish higher education[12] have impacted on IADT's capability to make strategic hires.

IADT allocates 3% of the overall pay budget of the previous year to support implementation of its staff training and development policy. All staff are invited to take part in a number of CPD courses and events funded by the institution, and in some cases, through external funding from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Ireland (NFETLI). The format of delivery is mixed, with online, face-to-face and hybrid offerings to maximise staff participation. The range of courses is broad and covers teaching and learning (short courses, events and certified programmes), briefings on policies, procedures and legislative requirements, leadership development (including Aurora and Ready to Lead), technical/IT training/upskilling, health and safety, EDI, research supports and staff wellbeing.

IADT's Staff Training and Development Policy is, at the time of the main review visit, being revised. The Staff Training and Development Officer works with managers and staff to define performance objectives and a plan to achieve them. In June 2022 a staff survey was carried out to prioritise relevant training and development requirements on a cross-institution basis.

All staff are encouraged and supported to engage in relevant further study at IADT or at other HEIs. The criteria for technological university designation in the Technological Universities Act (2018) include requirements in relation to the percentage of staff qualified to Level 10. Currently, 38% of IADT academic staff are qualified to Level 10. In the ISER, IADT views this as reasonably positive given the nature of the institution and its discipline but has also observed that this percentage has remained unchanged since 2014–15 and therefore staff qualifications has been identified as an increasingly critical issue. At the time of the submission of its ISER, IADT was supporting an additional 8% of current academic staff in their doctoral studies.

The Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Council plays an important role in identifying and providing CPD for staff. Accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities are offered to all staff, engendering a community of practice approach to teaching and learning in IADT. This is reinforced at programme level with programme team meetings, programme boards and open discussions on pedagogy. All staff are encouraged to take part in the learning opportunities presented by teaching and learning as part of their continuing professional development. At least two accredited programmes run each academic year leading to postgraduate certificate awards at Level 9. A Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching, Learning and Assessment is currently under development, for delivery in 2024. Along with existing modules in Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Evaluation, Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the Diploma will also include a new module offering of 'Teaching and Learning for the Creative Industries'. The Teaching and Learning Newsletter is distributed every quarter and alerts staff to events, news, and research (funded and non-funded) activities and opportunities within the context of scholarship in teaching and le arning.

The Staff Training and Development Officer is a member of the Teaching and Learning

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12   The Cush report on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Third Level Education in Ireland led to a reduction of the qualification period for a lecturer Contract of Indefinite Duration (CID) from three years to two years of continuous employment with the same employer and to implementation procedures whereby additional teaching hours are offered first to existing qualified lecturers on CIDs or pro-rata fixed-term contracts before advertising externally.

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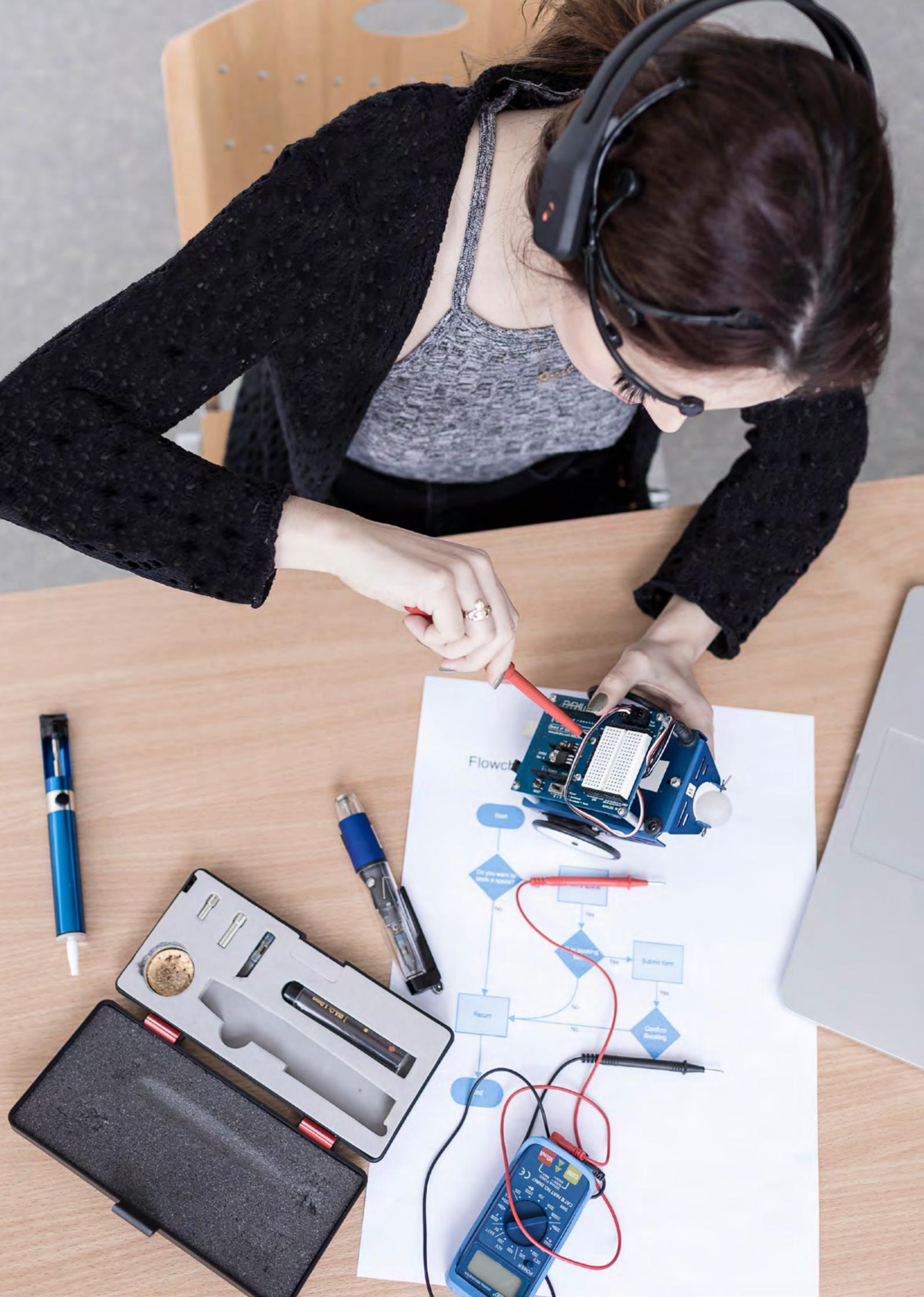
Subcommittee of Academic Council and is a key link between HR and the committee in terms of CPD for academic staff.

Commendation

• The review team commends the proactive and inclusive approach being taken by IADT to staff development. It was impressed with how the HR Department and the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Council collaborate with each other and with other departments and functions in a collegiate and effective manner to ensure that a broad range of offerings is made available to staff.

It was clear from both the ISER and main review visit that IADT is supportive of the provision of professional development opportunities to its staff, including the undertaking of advanced qualifications up to and including Level 10. However, the degree to which performance management and development systems are implemented in the technological higher education sector, IADT included, was apparent from the discussion with staff during the main review visit. The review team heard that systems including feedback forms for modules and programmes which were nationally agreed and implemented in the early 2000s are now largely dormant. While acknowledging that sectoral factors are an issue here and that these impact on IADT's capacity to implement performance management at this time, the review team finds that a more structured approach to staff development, management and appraisal can and should be adopted. This is also key in terms of research development, establishment and consolidation of industry links, and retaining staff.

Recommendation

• The review team recommends that IADT establish a more structured framework for staff development, appraisal and workload allocation. While cognisant of current contractual arrangements, the review team recommends IADT to consider how staff

engagement in research and collaboration with industry and other external stakeholders might be further enhanced and more effectively recognised.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

In its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy,[13] IADT states its aim to 'help students to reach their potential through the provision of a supportive, vibrant and challenging learning environment' with all staff involved in its construction. The teaching and learning mission statement speaks of how curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment at IADT are centred on the student, with policies that promote the increasingly international and culturally diverse nature of those studying at IADT.

This student-centred approach was confirmed through discussions with both students and staff during the main review visit. The review team found that their interactions with those involved in teaching and learning – lecturers, academic management and PMASS – indicated that staff are approachable and very committed to achieving a learning and teaching experience of high quality, with student success at its core. The introduction of the role of Module Leads, who coordinate delivery of modules involving multiple lecturers, helps support a consistent approach to teaching, learning and assessment across multiple delivery instances of a module.

IADT's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is aligned with its current Strategic Plan (2019–2023) and is also informed by QQI guidelines regarding teaching and learning as well as the guidelines of the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN). The strategy is set within the broader UNESCO context and the Framework for Action (FFA) of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Following the pivot to online learning during the pandemic, many academics have continued to embrace technology in their teaching. Currently, both Blackboard and MS Teams are used to support and complement teaching and student

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13 https://www.iadt.ie/content/files/00_iadtpolicy_IADT_Learning,_Teaching__Assessment_Strategy.pdf#:~:text=Learning%2C%20teaching%20and%20assessment%20in%20IADT%20take%20place,the%20principles%20stated%20in%20the%20IADT%20Learner%20Charter

learning. Template blueprints for modules are currently being designed in Blackboard. Library and Educational Technology (EdTech) staff are collaborating on the introduction of academic integrity training modules and academic writing supports on the Blackboard virtual learning environment (VLE). Future plans include a library space on Blackboard for each module.

IADT was awarded a DELTA Award by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (NFETL) in the inaugural call in 2017. The winning application was made by an interdisciplinary team of five lecturing staff from the Departments of Film and Media and Design and Visual Arts who collaborated on an application entitled Critical Thinking and Creative Practice, aimed at showcasing IADT's approaches to teaching and learning in the creative disciplines. This work has since evolved into IADT's MA in Design for Change, which continues to build on collaboration and social design practice with an international ethos.

Over the last number of years, IADT has been awarded national funding by NFETL which has been used for several research, teaching, learning and assessment projects. IADT is also a collaborative partner and in receipt of dedicated funding for the HEA-funded PATH 4 initiative. Here, the focus is on Universal Design with the 'UD Champions' programme being rolled out. This is an institution-wide training programme and research initiative which seeks to embed Universal Design in each department in an inclusive and collaborative approach involving both academic and PMAS staff.

Interdisciplinarity has been a prominent teaching and learning theme in IADT. During the main review visit, staff provided an overview of the introductory interdisciplinary learning experience for 1st years, with students of different disciplines being brought together for delivery. The focus of this initiative was not just on promoting a sense of belonging in IADT, but also on encouraging students to make informed decisions during their academic journey.

However, at times during the main review visit, it was suggested by some undergraduate students that there is a perceived distance between

business students and arts students on the campus. The review team accepts that this can happen naturally in a college setting amongst various disciplines. However, more opportunity for collaboration amongst students could lessen the apparent divide. In some cases, the division may be due to a perceived difference in how resources are allocated across academic disciplines. However, it is inevitable that some disciplines will have more specific resource needs than others. Overall, IADT is already recognised for its sense of community. Addressing this issue, be it perceived or actual, is something to consider in maintaining that status. The teaching and learning context provides a good opportunity to address this in a constructive and positive manner.

The Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Council is a key cross-institution resource which engages with all academic departments and plays an important and effective role in promoting excellence in teaching and learning. This is achieved through the dissemination of good practice, the promotion of scholarship in teaching, learning and assessment, the identification and provision of CPD opportunities for staff and involvement in strategy and policy development. The committee's membership comprises not just academic staff, but also professional support staff who are involved in the learning and teaching ecosystem of IADT. The Students' Union is also represented on this committee.

The Teaching and Learning Committee is chaired by IADT's Head of Teaching and Learning who proposes an annual work plan to the committee. On approval by the committee, the work plan is presented to IADT's Registrar for ratification. The committee also works with the Registrar's Office with regard to policies and procedures as they pertain to teaching and learning. It also considers the programme board reports and reviews the findings of the national Student Survey for IADT.

The review team finds that IADT is committed to the promotion of scholarship in teaching and learning and to meaningful staff development opportunities in that area. The Post-graduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning currently comprises four stand-alone

modules, with a new module being introduced which deals with teaching in the creative disciplines. It was clear from discussions with members of the committee during the main review visit that there is openness to and enthusiasm for providing a master's option through the addition of a dissertation module. The review team also heard that its realisation is a matter of resourcing, and a decision regarding its introduction will be made by IADT as it plans the next phase of its strategic development.

Information, updates and opportunities are communicated to staff through a quarterly newsletter, dedicated web page, and a bank of resources for staff. Open talks, workshops and discussions such as the Lunchtime Conversations not only provide CPD opportunities in a range of delivery modes (online/hybrid/onsite) but also provide staff and students with the opportunity to network and share good practice.

The review team has received positive feedback from students on their teaching and learning experience in IADT, with many students speaking highly of their experience with lecturers. It was clear that in many cases, the relatively small size of the institution helps to expedite action on student feedback. During the main review visit, the review team heard several examples of such actions which were timely and impactful. However, some feedback also suggests that there are issues to address in relation to the consistency of feedback to students on their academic progress. More generally, while the size of IADT promotes open communication and an engaged quality culture, the review team finds that more formal systems for communication at programme level, whether between staff and students, or between staff themselves, will enhance the teaching and learning experience and ensure a fair and balanced distribution of workload and assessment at programme level.

The system for providing formal feedback to students on their progress during the term and academic year needs to be consistent across all modules and between all lecturing staff so as to ensure a positive and fair experience to all students.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on its commitment to an inclusive and high-quality teaching and learning experience for all students. The review team received positive feedback from students on their teaching and learning experience in IADT, with many students speaking highly of their experience with lecturers.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS

IADT's Annual Quality Reports (AQRs) provide a clear account of its policies and procedures for assessment, and these are accessible via its public website. Its Marks and Standards are complimented by a suite of policies and procedures including plagiarism, assessment appeals, and reasonable accommodations.

IADT's plagiarism policy and procedures are linked to its Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, the Learner Charter, and Student Handbook. The institution is involved in QQI's National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN). The review team heard that in light of current developments in academic integrity and the work done by NAIN, IADT plans to develop a significantly revised academic integrity policy in the near future.

A set of administrative procedures and regulations for examination and assessment details the step-by-step procedures for both written and practical examinations, covering all key stages of the examination process. The Examinations Office has also developed an associated Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) document.

At programme level, a schedule for assessment and feedback is developed at the start of each term. Innovations in relation to assessment include co-assessment, cross-moderation involving assessment panels and the introduction of UDL approaches (in collaboration with student services). The Disability Support Service (DSS) has worked with academic departments to encourage alternative forms of assessment.

IADT's external examining system assists it in the comparison and benchmarking of academic

standards across awards. The system aims to ensure that the assessment process is fair and fairly operated in the marking, grading and classification of student performance and provides informed and appropriate points for the comparison of academic standards. There are approximately 50 external examiners active each academic year. The External Examiner Procedure aims to create a reference document that gives clear and concise information for IADT staff and prospective and appointed external examiners.

SUPPORTS FOR LEARNERS

IADT has established a specially dedicated Student Experience Team that promotes support services to students as follows:

- The Access Service's mission is to support the participation of non-typical students at IADT and to promote a teaching and learning environment suitable for diverse learners. It supports students who may have concerns or queries for advice on financial supports.

- The Disability Support Service aims to promote inclusion, advocacy, and active participation in college life for students with disabilities and mental health conditions.

- The Student Learning Centre is an academic support service led by psychology professionals. Its primary goal is to empower students and equip them with the necessary tools to become independent learners. Additionally, the centre provides specialised support for students with neuro-diverse learning profiles.

- The Assistive Technology (AT) Service works with the Disability Support Service, the Student Learning Centre, and the Access office to support students with disabilities in IADT. Outside of student services, the AT Service works with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Faculties and Teaching and Learning to facilitate delivery of its supports.

- IADT Careers offers confidential one-to-one advice, support and information in relation to careers. Students can email and avail of one-to-one appointments both face-to-face and online. Workshops are also given across classes. IADT Careers regularly

partners with key employers and industry professionals through employer-led events and interventions.

- The Student Counselling Service aims to provide high-quality psychological support, efficient waiting list management, and promote best practices in collaboration with students and staff. The service is available to all registered undergraduate and post-graduate students, free of charge, and guarantees full confidentiality. It offers short-term evidence-based counselling, providing up to six sessions per student per academic year. It has recently transitioned to a tendered service provision with an additional Sessional Student Counsellor engaged for peak periods. The service conducts annual evaluations through anonymous online surveys. Self-help mental health resources are also provided on the institution's website and Blackboard Collaborate platform. Other supports include bi-weekly Mental Health Talks, covering topics such as anxiety, stress, depression, and addictions.

- Student Health offers a complete health service to all registered students. There is unlimited access to a registered nurse and access to a general practitioner (GP) 5 days a week. It is free to attend the nurse, and a reduced fee is charged to see the GP. The fee can be waived if the student is experiencing financial difficulties.

The Student Assistance Fund is open to all registered students at IADT on a course of not less than one year's duration leading to an undergraduate or post-graduate qualification. In addition, the Students Union operates a Student Hardship Fund for students who may be facing financial difficulties. IADT has also participated in the government's Covid-19 Laptop Loan Scheme, a measure introduced to support higher level students during the Covid-19 pandemic. This once-off Covid-19 Grant was used by IADT to provide disadvantaged students with access to laptops and necessary ICT hardware.

The Student Experience Committee of the Academic Council includes all parties who are

central to student engagement within IADT and facilitates a partnership approach with students on institutional initiatives and developments to further student engagement. During the main review visit, Students' Union representatives spoke very positively of their experience on the Student Experience Committee.

The self-evaluation process yielded very positive feedback from students who engage with student services. Overall, the findings showed that the Student Experience Team responds well to student needs and deals with each individual student in a person-centred, compassionate, and empathic manner. During the main review visit, students related specific examples to the review team confirming supports offered by the Careers Service to students of taught post-graduate programmes. This included the employers' forum and speed dating industry events which provide students with an opportunity to engage with prospective employers.

The number of students utilising the various services has been increasing year-on-year. Both staff and students indicated that this increase places pressure on service provision under current resource allocation.

Through both the findings of the self-evaluation process and discussions during the main review visit, it is evident to the review team that further work is needed to increase student awareness of the extent of supports on offer. In certain instances, there appears to be some lack of consistency in this information, in relation to mental health supports, for example. Post Covid-19, this is an area of significant demand, but feedback from the students suggests it is an area of significant workload for the Students' Union at present, with an attendant possibility that the Students' Union officers sometimes take on responsibilities that do not align with their intended roles, indicating a potential communication issue to be addressed.

Throughout this review, it has been clear to the review team that IADT's students are engaged learners and valued members of the institution's

community. Furthermore, there was a clear sense that staff and students alike are enthusiastic about, and committed to, a culture of staff-student partnership in the institution.

A Learner Charter is published and circulated to every IADT student upon enrolment at the beginning of the academic year and is updated periodically with input from students and staff. This sets out the responsibilities shared between staff and students, and the IADT's partnership approach to its learners.

The IADT Students' Union acts as a platform for dialogue between the institution and the student body. It also provides a range of dedicated supports to students including, welfare, education and entertainment. There are three full-time officers – President, Student Welfare Officer, and Student Education Officer.

IADT's President and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar operate an open-door policy with the Students' Union. Students' Union representatives gave positive feedback to the review team on this and indicated satisfaction with the effectiveness of engagement across campus. As mentioned in the previous section, student union representatives referred to the significant workload in dealing with mental health issues. Although happy to help, they stated that they would find training in this area useful. The review team understands this may be partially a communication issue as the Students' Union appears to be taking on work that does not align with its roles and responsibilities.

Within the Students' Union, there is an active system of class representatives who are elected by their peers. IADT supports the Students' Union in training class representatives on the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).[14] NStEP was launched in 2016 by the HEA, QQI and Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and applies best principles to student engagement to enhance and enrich the institution's interaction with class representatives. IADT's Class Representative Council is the primary forum for students to raise

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14   https://studentengagement.ie/

issues to a formal level within the institution. It meets once a month. Students' Union officers confirmed to the review team the openness of debate in the council.

Class representatives sit on programme boards and present any issues arising for consideration and resolution. As previously mentioned, there are suggested areas for improvement, such as ensuring efficient recording of minutes and providing supports and training for class representatives and programme chairs. Overall, however, student-staff relations at programme board level appear positive, and efforts are continuously made to enhance the student experience at IADT.

IADT's First Year Focus (FYF) Programme is an all-institution initiative that supports and facilitates the successful integration and transition to higher education for all incoming first year students. It is run over the first four weeks of the autumn term and is coordinated by the Students' Union and the FYF team, with the assistance of the Student Experience Department, faculties and staff.

Final Year Matters – Moving On (FYMMO) is a cross-institution initiative supporting students in their penultimate and final years as they transition from undergraduate status into the world beyond IADT. The programme is supported by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching in Ireland and is led by members of academic staff, student services, management, and the Students' Union. A holistic programme, FYMMO, supports professional and personal growth for all students. It is complementary to the Final Year Matters programme, which fosters belonging in first year students. FYMMO focuses on who students have become over their time in IADT, and where they want to go.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on its clear commitment to a high-quality student experience. It is apparent that staff across all categories have students' best interests at heart and are very committed to student success. The Students' Union also works proactively with IADT's management to represent the student body in an effective

and collegiate manner. The review team commends IADT on the quality, strength and drive of its student services. The Student Services Team is responsive to student needs, both individually and collectively, and collaborates with and is supported by the academic departments and faculties in which those students are based. This is particularly commendable given the current rate of increase in the number of service users.

INFORMATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Throughout the main review visit, there was a palpable sense of community in IADT, with very effective 'on-the-ground' relationships between students and all categories of staff. Student feedback is captured at programme, faculty, and institution level through regular communication. The review team heard that IADT's size, flexibility, and culture means that it can act quickly on student feedback and resolve issues arising.

Many staff, referring to the relatively small size of IADT, spoke of knowing their students well, particularly those working on studio-based programmes. It is clear, that as stated in its ISER, IADT's lecturers are accessible and responsive to students, including student representatives. This allows for flexibility and communication that is not captured in formal reports. Students communicate with course chairs, module leads, and individual lecturers about concerns, often in person or through email. The close relationship between lecturers and students was regularly cited by students as a reason to choose to study at IADT.

While the review team finds this to be commendable and a demonstration of IADT's commitment to staff-student partnership and to positive outcomes for students, there is evidence of issues. Students who met with the review team demonstrated varying awareness of matters to do with their academic departments, assessment, student services, and supports for students with disability. The review team finds that this is the outcome of communication which tends to be balanced in favour of the informal. The student voice is very much heard and acknowledged informally on a regular basis. However, the review team finds that this can be inconsistent. There is

also some variance regarding timing of lecturer feedback. It is evident that further work needs to be done on enhancing student awareness of policies, procedures, available supports, and other aspects of their programme and the wider student experience. From a staff perspective, the institution's intranet, currently under development, will provide opportunities to enhance staff access to and awareness of IADT policies and procedures.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT enhance its system for internal and external communication and feedback, so as to ensure a more systemic approach. This should include the development and implementation of a plan to improve awareness of policies and procedures and of support services available to students, including those offered by services such as Student Experience and Library. Information relevant to students which is presented on the main IADT website and other institution websites should be reviewed to ensure that it is easy to navigate, streamlined and targeted appropriately. The review team further recommends that IADT put the necessary training in place for staff to increase awareness and enhance consistency of implementation and experience for both current and prospective students. Informal communication methods, though effective, do need to have a formal counterpart to guarantee the sustainability of the existing quality culture, particularly if IADT adheres to its ambition to grow in the future.

The review team finds that a separate but related issue arises in relation to management information. In both the ISER and during the main review visit, numerous references were made to the need for evidence-based decision-making supported by data that is both usable and reliable. The review team considers there is insufficient evidence of data being used to drive continuous improvement.

For example, while the programme boards are functional and effective, the review team finds that their work could be enhanced further by implementing a better system for recording data so as to assure the quality and integrity of the student

voice in programme boards and to better capture, monitor, and analyse module-level data and feedback from external examiner reports. Students and staff alike are keen for feedback to be addressed in a timely manner, and a management information system is key to implementing a more efficient and formal system where data can be used and measured effectively.

The recent appointment of an Institutional Research and Data Analysis Officer – a new role in IADT – is a welcome development in this regard and will support the provision of data-based information for strategic choices as IADT seeks to grow. During the main review visit, an overview was given of work underway in relation to internal and external reporting, and support of projects around EDI and student retention, and supporting staff in terms of understanding data.

As part of a national sectoral project, IADT has upgraded its student records system to Banner Version 9 which is cloud hosted. Lecturer contact hours and allocations are set up on Banner, but there is no link to HR or finance systems. Banner is also used for results entry, of module grades only. The review team suggests that application of the full functionality of the electronic grade book would provide additional data on student performance. There is also potential to build from the Blackboard virtual learning environment (VLE) to Banner. Students have commented to the review team on the multitude of systems which they use.

IADT has engaged support from third party systems in relation to cybersecurity. At the time of the main review visit, a new Senior Technical Officer role was due to be advertised.

Recommendation

- The review team strongly recommends that IADT review and invest in its management information systems with a view to achieving and implementing a system that better captures, records, monitors and analyses data in a secure and reliable manner. This is particularly important if IADT continues in its aim to grow. In that context, an effective management information system is key to

strategic decision making. Improved use of data and management information will help to expose issues, drive improvement and inform decision making.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

IADT provides information in a variety of formats to various audiences including staff, students, external stakeholders and the public. The Marketing Department was established in 2016 to address gaps in the communication and provision of public information and has implemented many enhancements with regard to marketing and communication since. Much work has been done on identifying IADT's target market. This includes research undertaken with guidance counsellors, transition year and 5th year students, parents of post-primary school pupils and some competitor analysis. CAO data has also been analysed. Various marketing campaigns have been implemented over recent years which emphasise the practical nature of IADT programmes, for example small class sizes, and that diversity is welcomed. While good progress has been made on marketing, the review team finds that the approach to programme development tends to be very much from the ground up and that more work is needed at a strategic level to further define and convey the entire scope of IADT's academic portfolio, to look at the international market, to further enhance links with industry in order to ensure relevance of academic offerings, and to engage further with schools in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools (DEIS) programme.

The current award-winning IADT website was launched in 2017 and re-vamped in 2020. It contains programme information, interactive content, videos and recordings. A full prospectus is produced annually for undergraduate programmes and, since 2019, is published online. Information for current students is also published throughout the year and accessible via the website. This includes class timetables, examination timetables, student support services, student policies and procedures, the academic calendar, student handbook and learner charter. IADT publishes its Annual Quality Report (AQR) on its website, along with institutional review, programmatic review and programme

validation reports to the institution website. These include the response of the institution, faculty or department.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT further enhance its external communications through the development of a formal alumni network. This would be beneficial through highlighting student success stories, generating useful data, promoting various career pathways, and also encouraging collaboration between current students and alumni. Looking externally, alumni could be ambassadors for the institution.

OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In its institutional profile, IADT provides an overview of how it 'actively seeks out and puts in place collaborations and relationships which encourage diversity, enhance the student experience and assist the institution in achieving its range of strategic objectives'. In addition to collaborating with partners on programme development and delivery, IADT works closely with a wide range of partners through various initiatives ranging from bespoke projects to research collaborations and consortia activities.

A Quality Assurance for Collaborative Provision Policy and procedures are in place. The Partnerships Oversight Committee has a specific role in advising Academic Council and the President on decisions to be made in respect of partnerships and collaborative programme development. Currently, IADT does not have any linked providers.

Current collaborative programme provision in IADT includes the MA in Design for Change, designed in collaboration with George Brown College in Toronto and the MA in 3D Animation developed in association with Sheridan College, Ontario. Both agreements with George Brown College and Sheridan College were developed under the aegis of the Colleges of Ontario/IOTI agreement for the Technological Sector. Furthermore, there is a BA (Hons) in Creative Music Production delivered in

collaboration with Sound Training College (STC), Dublin. The BA (Hons) Creative Music Production is an IADT programme, delivered collaboratively by IADT and Sound Training College (STC). Students of this programme benefit from immersion in professional music production and practice facilities in Temple Bar, as well as the academic rigour and expertise in the creative industries offered by IADT.

Since its establishment, IADT has fostered links with the further education (FE) sector. Locally, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is in place with each of the following colleges: Blackrock Further Education Institute (BFEI), Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE), Dundrum College of Further Education (DCFE), Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute (DFEI), Sallynoggin College of Further Education (SCFE), and Stillorgan College of Further Education (Stillorgan FE). The first stage of each MOU formalises the existing links between IADT and each FE provider. In addition, following

and informed by a detailed mapping exercise, advanced entry pathways into year two of IADT programmes have been developed.

The recently established National Tertiary Office (NTO) is working towards the development of tertiary degree programmes with 13 disciplines. IADT has been selected to pilot one of the discipline areas in collaboration with Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) and Ballyfermot College of Further Education (BCFE). At the time of the main review visit, the proposed new programme was progressing with a view to commencement in September 2023. This initiative is discussed later in this report.

IADT's regional partners also include Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) and Wicklow County Council. IADT works closely with these partners and with the corresponding education and training boards (ETBs) across several projects and initiatives

including access programmes such as Young Women in Film and the DLR First Frames Fund for emerging film makers. Discussions with industry stakeholders during the main review visit confirmed that IADT is considered a key stakeholder. IADT was cited as 'incredibly supportive'.

IADT and Marino Institute of Education (MIE) are co-chairs and lead partners in Dublin Learning City, a partnership that is collaborating to advance Dublin as a learning region, as defined by UNESCO. Funded under the HEA's Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) initiative, it also involves strong links with universities and other HEIs, including University College Dublin (UCD), Trinity College Dublin (TCD), the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). The project also involves partnerships with Dublin City Council, City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB) and Dublin Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB). It achieved the UNESCO Dublin Learning City Award in 2021.

The Creative Futures Academy (CFA) is a HCI3-funded initiative (€10m) of IADT, NCAD, and UCD which aims to meet the changing and future needs of the creative industries and to support their professional growth, reach and impact. A key objective is to empower early and mid-career creative professionals through the provision of CPD and lifelong learning opportunities, thus ensuring that they can stay competitive and relevant in their fields. CFA offers accredited programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, with a key innovation being the development and delivery of microcredentials for the creative industries to provide an infrastructure for flexible and stackable pathways to post-graduate awards. Through ongoing consultation with an advisory industry council, CFA has increased engagement with the creative and cultural sector and is developing and supporting models of workplace learning as well as other initiatives by working with external providers and sectoral agencies.

CFA undertakes extensive research and collaboration to identify the ever-changing needs of the Irish creative industries. Through understanding industry demands, it aligns its programmes with

emerging trends and future requirements to prepare graduates for success in creative industry enterprises, from multinationals to start-ups. CFA also works with external providers and sectoral agencies to develop and support models of workplace learning. One key early outcome of CFA research and collaboration is the development of a systematic Creative Attributes Framework.

The CFA team comprises an academic lead, a project manager, a learning technologist, a researcher and three members of staff who are seconded for 50% of their time. IADT has an internal Academic Development Group which also sits on the cross-institution Academic Development Group (ADG) with academic colleagues from NCAD and UCD. The function and remit of ADG is academic oversight, programme development, delivery and alignment and complementarity between partners. The overarching CFA Management Committee is concerned with governance, reporting, finance and strategic development.

During the main review visit, the review team met representatives of IADT and its partners in CFA. It is clear to the team, at this halfway stage, that the project is working well. There is much collaboration on the ground, and the partners are currently exploring the issue of student mobility, e,g, modules of one partner being offered on programmes of another.

IADT is a founding member of FilmEU, a European University Alliance which comprises four European higher education institutions, the other three being the LUCA School of Arts (Brussels), Universidade Lusófona (Lisbon), and the Baltic Film and Media School at Tallinn University.

FilmEU is one of just two European universities in the broad fields of the creative arts and industries and is the only one with Irish participation. The alliance is in the process of expanding from 4 to 8 institutions.

FilmEU aspires to be a European University of excellence focused on Film and Media Arts education and research, and to become a collaborative structure that enhances cooperation

among current and future alliance members, promoting European values, quality, and inclusivity in higher education. FilmEU aims to implement a bespoke pedagogical model called 'Samsara' to develop challenge-driven international programmes with strong industry connections. To date, it has attracted core funding under Erasmus+ and additional funding from the HEA and other EU sources (Horizon Europe, European Institute of Innovation and Technology).

Work completed to date includes the submission of applications for a doctoral network (focused on artistic and practice-led research) along with the launch of a pilot of multi-national research clusters in various areas of the creative industries.

It is also planned that FilmEU will, in due course, create, promote, and deliver a suite of new and current Erasmus Mundus joint master's degrees (For example, in Sound, Film Cultures and Heritage, Videogames), as well as international bachelor's degrees. A pilot International BA in Film is due to commence in October 2025. The alliance also plans to launch the FilmEU Microcredential Academy, offering a suite of microcredentials.

As set out in IADT's ISER, all European Universities Alliances undertook a mid–term review in 2022. The FilmEU review evaluated achievements between November 2020 and May 2022 against the milestones and deliverables that had been agreed for the project. Extremely positive feedback was received from the European Commission in November 2022. This feedback confirmed that the project had delivered 'exceptional results with significant and immediate or potential impact'.

Locally, FilmEU has already had a positive impact on IADT's undergraduate provision, and this was evident during the main review visit.

IADT is the lead partner in New Frontiers, a 5-year partnership between IADT and NovaUCD, UCD's innovation hub, to support up to 265 entrepreneurs in the greater South Dublin area. A significant achievement for IADT's Enterprise and Innovation Department was securing Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers programme funding in 2022 (€1.6m over five years), with IADT acting as the lead partner.

Enterprise Ireland views its programme with IADT as important, referring to the institution's expertise in the creative industries which has brought new interest.

In the area of knowledge transfer, the Enterprise and Innovation Department works with the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium (DRIC) to provide a range of knowledge transfer supports to the researcher community of IADT. DRIC brings together TU Dublin (lead), IADT, the National College of Ireland (NCI) and the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS) for a common purpose 'to stimulate economic development in the Dublin Region by commercialising research from across the Institutes'. IADT currently has no in–house technology transfer dedicated expertise or case manager on the Enterprise and Innovation team and is therefore working with the lead partner's case manager in relation to intellectual property (IP) supports and knowledge transfer activity.

Commendation

- The review team commends IADT on the effective network of good collaborative partnerships and relationships it has built with several high-quality partners. It is very clear that IADT is very highly regarded and valued by these partners. Considering the size of IADT, the reach and impact of its collaborations deserve great credit. The review team notes that some of these collaborations have won substantial competitive funding, including FilmEU, CFA, and DRIC. All are good examples of effective collaboration and future-oriented education, with a focus on sustainable and adaptable skills, talent development, research, and innovation.

The review team had the opportunity to meet representatives of several of IADT's collaborators during the main review visit. As already noted, feedback on IADT as a respected collaborator was uniformly positive. Furthermore, industry stakeholders are keen to further develop their relationships with IADT, particularly at a strategic level, in areas of mutual interest such as curriculum, programme development (including microcredentials), work-based learning,

employability of graduates, and applied research.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT deepen its engagement with external stakeholders in regard to the development of its new strategy. This will better inform strategic decisions and choices across all areas of IADT's endeavour. Given IADT's status as a designated awarding body (DAB), it should explore the possibilities which this may present to accredit linked or collaborative partnerships.

SELF-EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

IADT has a continuous review schedule in place to ensure the quality of its programmes and services.

Programmatic Review is the quality review process through which IADT conducts a critical evaluation of its programmes, reviewing and assessing them under a defined set of criteria and allowing their further development to improve educational quality. Programmatic Review considers all aspects of the programme, including its educational objectives, programme concept and implementation, access and transfer issues, curriculum and module descriptors, staffing and physical resourcing. The process evaluates each area under specified criteria. Faculties and departments that own the programme are reviewed as part of the review process. A review may occur after three years, but no later than seven years, and typically every five years.

Programmatic Review initially entails self-evaluation of the relevant department or faculty. A self-evaluation report is produced in addition to the programme documents. An external peer review panel conducts a site visit and completes a Programmatic Review Report. Peer review panel reports and institutional responses are published on the public website.

Programmatic Reviews were carried out in 2015, 2018 and most recently in 2020, when all undergraduate programmes underwent review. The site visits for the four Programmatic Review panels

were confirmed in early 2020, and IADT was quick to adapt and pivot to online methodology when the institution underwent restrictions due to the pandemic, managing to proceed and complete its reviews as scheduled.

Programme boards play a key role in the on-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes. Their function is to monitor the implementation of programmes of study as defined in the Programme Document and Approved Programme Schedule. Each programme board is a subcommittee of, and reports annually to, Academic Council. Programme board membership consists of representation from students as well as academic staff.

The programme board prepares an annual report for the Academic Council focusing on items from agendas for the programme board and incorporates priorities, recommendations, and areas for improvement. These are then collated into a Composite Programme Board Report which is presented and responded to by Academic Council.

Regarding PMASS Departments, an internal self-assessment of each department is undertaken as part of the institution's external quality review process. All PMASS departments completed a self-assessment process and submitted reports to the CINNTE Steering Group, for collation with the ISER.

In the ISER, IADT sets out its work on the development of a schedule of internal reviews of PMASS Departments, commencing with Academic and Student Affairs, then the Library, with the review of other departments to follow.

As part of its self-evaluation process, IADT undertook a desk review of the AQRs for academic years 2018–19, 2019–20 and 2020–21. These were also provided to and considered by the review team which found that these reports provide a clear and comprehensive statement of IADT's quality assurance procedures and an informative account of its quality initiatives and enhancements during each academic year. Arising from the desk review undertaken, IADT intends to make the AQR content more evidence-based rather than descriptive and has also identified potential to further disseminate the report to IADT students and staff to promote a

quality culture.

It is evident to the review team that IADT has availed of the AQR process to prepare itself for institutional review. IADT has also leveraged the opportunities provided by the external review process to examine opportunities to enhance its own systems for self-evaluation, monitoring and internal review.

That said, IADT's ISER recommendations are not prioritised. An annual Quality Action Plan with deliverables needs to be developed and implemented. This should be cascaded down through the management structures and governance structures so that Quality Action Plans are developed for faculties, departments, central services units, and institution committees, including those of the Academic Council.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its rigorous and systematic approach to self-evaluation, monitoring and review. Examples of this approach in action include the effective functioning of the programme boards, the completion of the 2020 programmatic review during the pandemic, and the thorough and open approach to this institutional review, at all levels of the organisation.

Recommendation
- The review team recommends that IADT develop and implement an annual Quality Action Plan with clear deliverables which, in the first instance, can be mapped to the recommendations of this review. The annual Quality Action Plan should be cascaded down through the management structures and governance structures so that Quality Action Plans are developed for faculties, departments, central services units, and institution committees, including those of the Academic Council.

RESEARCH

IADT's research activity extends across the creative industries, management, entrepreneurship, marketing, applied psychology, cultural studies, and the humanities. Fundamental and applied research is undertaken in these disciplines, and there is a broad portfolio of industrial collaborations linked to its applied research. The review team heard that IADT considers practice-led and practice-based research to be an important component of its staff research activity and postgraduate programmes.

Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) were identified as a focus of strategic priority in the Strategic Plan (2019–2023) with specific commitments made in relation to research. IADT's research activities and plans are also informed by Impact 2030, Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategy.

In its ISER, IADT notes that key leadership roles in research were previously vacant for an extended period and that this resulted in limited progress on strategic priorities in this area. Over recent years, substantial investment has been made in research, including the filling of the posts of Vice President for Research, Development and Innovation and the Head of Research.

The Research Office is implementing an operational plan which is seeking to address deficiencies identified in the research environment at IADT. The plan comprises six workstreams: Data, Policy and Strategy, Capacity Building, Funding, FilmEU and Postgraduate Research Students. IADT has been successful in securing from the Technological Universities Transformation Fund (TUTF)[15] and there is evidence that research is already experiencing associated benefits. The number of research proposals submitted by IADT and its success rate in securing research funding have both grown significantly. A Staff Research Development Programme was piloted in 2022–23 will continue to be offered. Offered in two tracks – early stage and established – it includes one-to-one clinics and workshops covering writing, project development,

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15   The Technological Universities Transformation Fund (TUTF) is a €90 million fund (over 3 years) from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, allocated by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), to assist the development and progression of technological universities.

research integrity, gender dimension, data management, impact, engagement, finance and employment and leadership. Institutional support for early-stage project development is made available through an internally funded Seed Fund, while other opportunities are emerging and being progressed through FilmEU.

There is engagement with staff and students at faculty level through research seminars and symposia, both at undergraduate and post-graduate level. The review team finds that to further promote a research culture in IADT, this offering should be consolidated and extended across both faculties and in collaboration with the central function.

A new research information system is currently under development (Elsevier Pure) with associated process changes and a new public-facing research portal. Branded internally as CRIS (Current Research Information System), it is due to be rolled out in 2023. IADT became a member of IReL (Irish Research e-Library) in 2022. Access to this consortium of Irish research libraries has increased the number of online resources available to IADT staff and students, with eight new databases already on board. IADT is currently part of the Research@THEA Institutional Repository but at the time of the institutional review was planning to procure one for itself and thus enhance the identity and community of its researchers.

IADT's Procedures and Guidelines for Research Degrees, in conjunction with its Research Strategy, form the basis for research practice within IADT. The Procedures and Guidelines were adopted in 2017 and represent IADT's implementation of QQI's QA Guidelines for Providers of Research Degree Programmes. IADT currently has awarding powers for all awards up to and including NFQ Level 9, including research master's programmes. The guidelines describe the application and registration processes and set out supervision arrangements. The research strategy outlines the strategic objectives for research, development and innovation in IADT along with the rationale for this strategy, and the implementation plan. IADT's Ethics Policy applies to all staff and students undertaking research, and also to external

agencies or organisations wishing to carry out research on IADT or its staff or students. The document covers principles in ethics, when ethical approval of research is required, ethics in research at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels and the procedure for seeking ethical approval. The institution's Ethics Committee is chaired by a nominee of the Executive (independent of the Research Office). It oversees good practice in ethical research, develops the institution's ethics policies and procedures, and is responsible for reviewing and approving applications for ethical approval. Other IADT policies relevant to research include an Intellectual Property Policy, Staff Research Policy, Institutional Repository and Open Access to Research Policy.

IADT's Postgraduate Research Handbook is published annually and is also issued to new research students. It covers, inter alia, management of research, procedures and guidelines for research degrees, review of registration, ethical issues in research, and examination procedures.

The Research Office has a formal role in respect of admissions and onboarding to IADT master's by research programmes. Programme provision, including arrangements for progression and assessment, is the responsibility of the academic faculties in conjunction with Academic and Student Affairs. The Head of Research is generally the first port of call when issues arise.

The review team finds that IADT's suite of research policies is appropriate to its current provision and profile. However, IADT has stated its ambition to grow its research activity and outputs, and so the review team also finds that further work on policy and procedure development is necessary and will be beneficial. At this point, student policies are reasonably well-developed, but others need to be strengthened. Implementation of current and future policies and procedures should be supported by training for research supervisors.

The Research Office, Academic and Student Affairs and the two faculties are collaborating on planning the future of research programmes in IADT. This includes the development of a structured master's by research programme in the short term, and the exploration of potential Level 10 awards and joint activities across FilmEU in the future.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its investment in and work on developing a research culture over recent years.

Recommendation
- The review team recommends to IADT that it review all research policies. This is particularly important given IADT's stated ambition to grow its research activity and outputs. Implementation of current and future policies and procedures should be supported by training for research supervisors.

Postgraduate research student numbers have remained modest in IADT. As previously noted, postgraduate research programme provision is an area of focus for IADT as it moves into its next strategic phase. It is working to revise and increase provision. In particular, it is considering options regarding Level 10 provision, for which it does not have awarding powers. Cognisant of the current legislative provisions in this regard, IADT is exploring potential collaborations with other HEIs.

Observations made during the main review visit by current and recent postgraduate students of IADT on their research programmes, including supervision arrangements, were largely positive. However, similar to other areas referred to in previous sections of this report, IADT should consider how its feedback system can be implemented in a more formalised way so as to better quality assure the provision. While students were generally content with their progress and communication, some did express the view that a more structured and formal work schedule would be beneficial and provide clarity on notes of meetings and the adherence to progress review processes. As IADT aims to grow, including in

research programmes, it will need to enhance structures for formal feedback and record keeping. The review team is cognisant of the ongoing development of a structured master's by research programme and thinks that this will also help to enhance consistency in supervisory arrangements, feedback, progress monitoring, and recording.

A few postgraduate students expressed feelings of isolation. However, it is acknowledged that the term of study did overlap with the pandemic. IADT has allocated designated library space to research students. This and other measures such as providing more opportunities to attend relevant conferences and networking events will help to enhance a sense of community relevant to their studies. The structured master's programme, which is currently in development, should also foster collaboration and networking among students. The review team also suggests that a specific society for postgraduate students would be very beneficial in this regard.

The FilmEU initiative is already helping and is expected to enhance the internationalisation of the postgraduate experience.

From a strategic perspective, IADT is working to develop a number of research clusters defined by disciplines and built around areas of expertise. For example, future of creative industries, AR/VR, film, UI/UX, Humanities/Business, EDI. In both the ISER and discussions during the main review visit, IADT highlighted some challenges which impact on its progress in research. Some of these challenges arise from the nature of the academic disciplines involved. For example, it can be more difficult to identify opportunities to apply for and obtain funding in these areas. Furthermore, challenges also arise in relation to capturing, documenting, and disseminating research outputs in these disciplines.

However, there are also challenges in relation to staff workload which impact on this and other areas for future enhancement which surfaced in both the ISER and the main review visit. Some of these challenges are systemic. One such challenge is common to the Irish technological higher education sector, that being the current lecturing contract,

which is defined by contact teaching hours, at 16-18 contact hours per week, depending on grade.

On many occasions during the main review visit, staff referred to the lack of time available to undertake research due to the heavy teaching load in the current nationally agreed lecturing contract for the institutes of technology. At the time of writing, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has completed a review of the lecturing contract for the Irish technological higher education sector and has published its report.[16][17][18] However, the review team acknowledges that it is likely that the implementation of the recommendations of the OECD review will take time. Currently, the alleviation of contact hours for research is primarily facilitated through buy-out of teaching hours.

In the case of IADT, the review team finds that this situation is exacerbated by two factors. Firstly, and as observed by several non-management and management staff during the main review visit, IADT's current academic calendar model, being non-semesterised, is a significant constraint. With a total of 30 weeks of teaching over the academic year, staff who are or who wish to become research active have little if any space to progress their research. This includes becoming involved in innovation vouchers, writing grant applications, participating in research seminars internally and attending conferences externally. This is the matter of a formal recommendation later in this report.

Secondly, and as evident during the main review visit, it is apparent that IADT is not leveraging the potential of the current nationally agreed contract to incorporate supervision allowances for research students into supervisors' contractual workloads.

Recommendation
- The Review Team recommends that IADT ensure that the provision of the current lecturing contract in relation to supervision of research students is implemented consistently. This will not only safeguard quality supervision arrangements for research students, but it will also provide the staff involved with the opportunity to progress the institution's research agenda further. While acknowledging the challenges entailed in sourcing funding externally to buy out staff time, the review team finds that the academic calendar and workload allowances for supervisors of research students are matters which IADT can address in the shorter term. It will mean that strategic choices will have to be made in a broader institutional context, including in relation to undergraduate programmes.

Implementation of this recommendation will be partly contingent on the institution's Management Information Systems and resource allocation model. Recommendations in subsequent sections of this report also refer.

3.2 OBJECTIVE 2 - QUALITY ENHANCEMENT
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

In the foreword to the ISER, IADT's President reflects on the self-evaluation process and on how it has allowed IADT to review its quality processes, evaluate its performance, reflect on enhancements achieved to date, and identify areas for further improvement over the coming years. Taken together, the documentation submitted by IADT as part of the review process, previous AQRs, policy and procedure framework, and contributions by several students, staff, governors, and external stakeholders in the course of the main review visit, confirm that IADT is indeed a 'quality-focused

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16   In 2022, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was asked to review relevant issues around academic career structures, academic contracts and senior management and leadership structures in Irish TUs. This was done by comparing similar benchmarked comparator institutions internationally. The Irish Government has published the report and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science is now considering the findings in conjunction with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

17   https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/9d329-oecd-review-of-technological-university-academic-career-structures-and-contracts-published-by-minister-harris/

18   https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/a-review-of-technological-university-academic-career-paths-contracts-and-organisation-in-ireland_2b7ee217-en

institution, responsive to the needs of our staff, students and stakeholders, where responsibility for quality is shared across all staff'.

The approach taken by IADT to the self-evaluation process, requiring all areas to undertake a self-assessment and formulate recommendations therefrom, demonstrates a whole of institution commitment to quality enhancement. It is clear to the review team that IADT sees the review not as an end in itself, but as a future-looking learning opportunity and catalyst for enhancement with impact as it enters the next phase of its strategic development.

IADT has found the AQR to be an effective reporting activity but has decided that some improvements could be made to ensure its usefulness not only in recording past activities but in planning activities to implement and monitor quality enhancements.

Governing Body conducts an annual internal review of its performance and effectiveness, the outcomes of which are noted in its meeting. Furthermore, an external review of Governing Body is commissioned at the middle and end of each Governing Body term, with the results of same being documented in the Governing Body meeting minutes. The most recent external review took place at the end of the term of the previous Governing Body (31 March 2021). Suggestions arising from that review, regarding timing of meetings and identifying areas of specialist expertise among members to enhance the work of Governing Body, have since been implemented.

It was clear to the review team from the discussion during the main review visit that Governing Body and Executive have a shared understanding of the learnings from the previous strategic plan. They agree that the future strategic direction of IADT needs to be agreed before other areas can be addressed. The link between Governing Body and Academic Council is also effective. A number of quality enhancements have been applied to the management of Academic Council and its subcommittees over recent years, which

have improved their operations and have been welcomed by members.

Governing Body, Academic Council and all of its committees include student membership, as do the programme boards. That indicates that the student voice is captured at the highest levels of the institution and is actively invited.

The Quality Enhancement Committee of Academic Council (QEC) facilitates an integrated approach to academic quality, including institutional policies, procedures and systems. It is the central forum for monitoring and improving standards of academic quality and is guided by the approach outlined in the institution's Quality Framework and by relevant policies and procedures.

Discussions with members of this committee during the main review visit confirmed the central role played by the committee in relation to academic quality and enhancement in IADT. While the institution has created and filled the Assistant Registrar role in recent years, the contribution of this committee remains particularly relevant in an institution of this size. The review team finds it to be very much a 'working' committee as well as being strategically driven. The committee works in parallel with Registrar's Office, the Assistant Registrar and Senior Quality Officer in particular, but it is also progressing issues which come in from the two faculties via their representation from both academic and PMAS staff.

In preparation for this review, a benchmarking exercise was carried out to review policies and procedures in place at other higher education institutions to identify any areas where IADT may wish to develop new policies. Some new policies currently under consideration for development include a Hybrid/ Blended Learning Policy, an Internal Quality Review Policy and Procedure, and policies relating to IADT's status as a designated awarding body (DAB).

The Programme Validation Committee (PVC) of the Academic Council ensures quality within the suite of programmes offered by the institution. It

reviews reports from programme boards, review recommendations for new programmes via an internal validation process, and also review proposals for minor changes to programmes.

During the main review visit, discussions revealed the supportive role played by the PVC in the programme approval process. Academic staff members of the committee see themselves as critical friends of programme proposers and are keen to support them in refining and enhancing programme proposals. As noted earlier in this report, the membership of the committee also draws from other areas including marketing and management information systems. This approach is to ensure that all necessary parties are involved so that issues are identified early and addressed in good time. As with the QEC, it is evident that the PVC works both strategically and operationally to support quality assurance enhancement in IADT.

Each programme of study in IADT has a programme board which is responsible for the

effective management, operation and review of the programme within the wider context of the academic plan of the faculty or institution. Throughout the main review visit, it was clear to the review team that the relationship between the programme boards and the Academic Council is both functional and effective. The introduction of a Programme Board Annual Report has been beneficial. However, the review team finds that Academic Council needs a higher-level view, and so has recommended the development of a synthesis report at department or faculty level.

Insights provided by the Heads of Department on the programme boards suggest that the programme chair plays a key role both in the operation of the programme board and in the wider context of the programme. This role is very highly valued by the Heads of Department. The suggestion of a forum for the programme chairs, with an annual schedule of meetings, is one of merit and will promote further collaboration and information sharing.
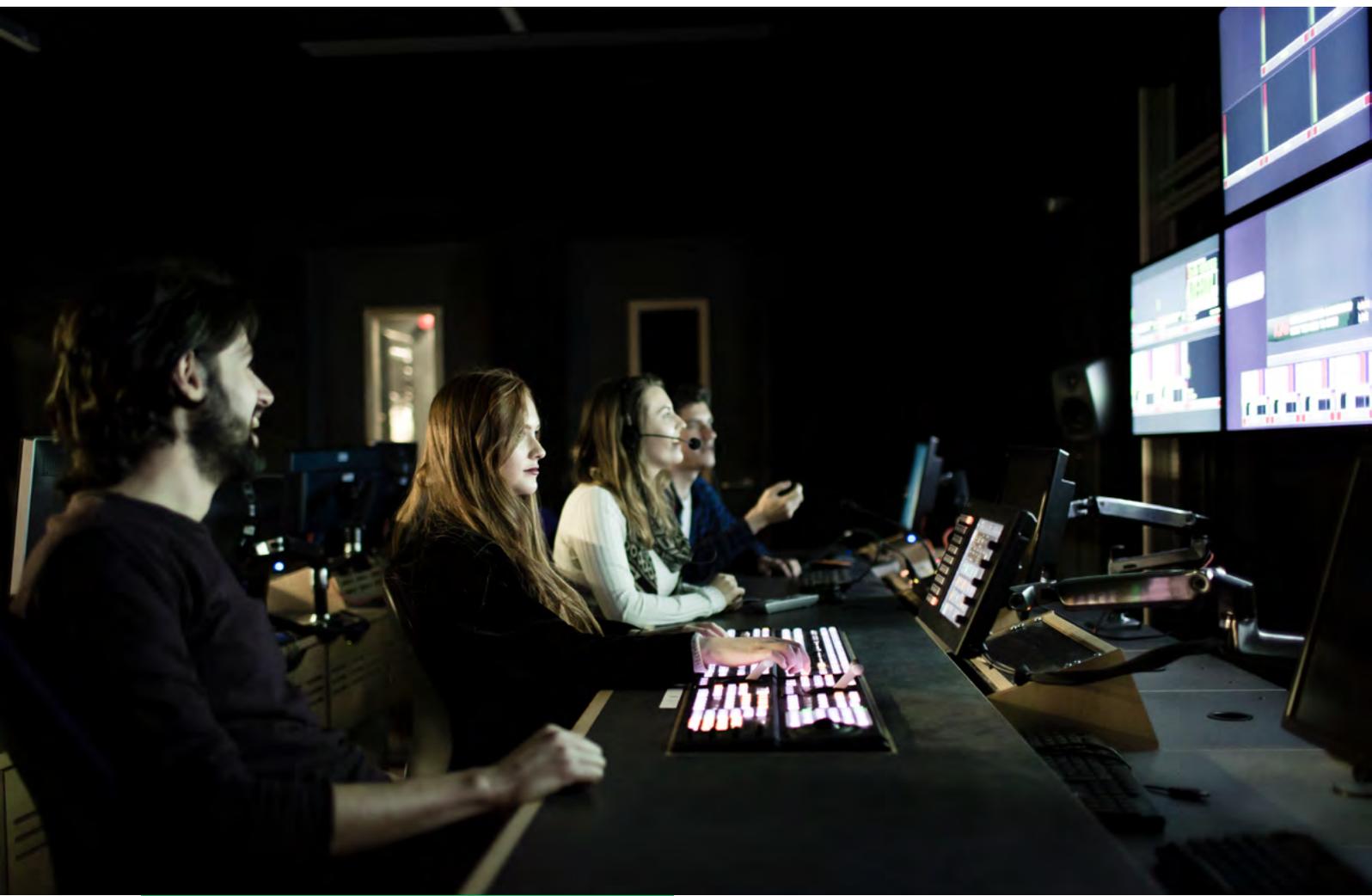
ALIGNMENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION AND TARGETS FOR QUALITY

As described later in this report, IADT also has an established track record in relation to access to higher education by under-represented cohorts.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are fundamental and core to IADT, from both student and staff perspectives. Its EDI Policy, approved and published in 2020, sets out its commitment to the principles and promotion of EDI, in conjunction with the legislative and sectoral context of equality in Ireland. Governing Body's EDI Committee, established in 2020, has overseen many positive institutional developments with respect to EDI, most notably the achievement of the Athena Swan Bronze Institution Award in September 2022. IADT was the first Irish HEI to achieve an institution award under the new Athena SWAN charter principles. The associated EDI Action Plan is currently being implemented. Enhancement of recruitment policies, procedures and practices has already proven to have had positive and real impact on the staff recruitment process.

IADT is also deeply committed to the Access and Disability agenda. Its commitment to a diverse student body is reflected in its long-established track record in relation to access to higher education. From the ISER, and input from staff and students during the review visit, the review team learned of many achievements by IADT students in under-represented cohorts. On many metrics, IADT is outperforming the national average in this area.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its demonstrated track record in EDI and Access and on how this is embedded in its quality assurance framework. IADT can be considered as a leader in its work and commitment to the EDI agenda. It is outperforming the national average on many Access metrics. These are significant achievements for an organisation of this scale. IADT's whole-of-institution approach to EDI and Access is evident through the collaboration between EDI and HR leads in relation to staff matters, and the collaboration between EDI and Access and Disability leads regarding student matters.

This review has come at a key time for IADT as it embarks on its next strategic phase. The institution has been operating under its inherited strategy during a period of rapid and significant change in the Irish higher education sector. In particular, the last five years have seen the establishment of five technological universities, with IADT being one of two remaining institutes of technology.

Previously, IADT took the view that the interests of IADT, its staff, and students were best served by remaining an independent institution, and therefore it did not seek to amalgamate with other institutes of technology or join a technological university. While IADT has not ruled out future partnerships or indeed the prospect of seeking university status, it has determined, for now, that its current strategy is to remain a specialist institution. The review team wishes to emphasise that this is a decision for IADT to make. Furthermore, as the merits or otherwise of this decision are not within the scope of this review, the review team does not propose to comment on it.

In the context of this quality review, however, the review team finds that if IADT truly wants to be a specialist institution, it will have to make some strategic choices related to the three stated themes of this review:

- building research capacity,
- internationalisation and collaboration, and
- growth.

These strategic choices should also be reflected and support increased efficiency and effectiveness in many other aspects of IADT's endeavour, including academic planning, programme provision, staffing, resource allocation, management information systems, and communication. As such, they will also surface in other sections of this report.

Recommendation
- The review team recommends that IADT apply the learnings of the previous strategic plan

to realise a strategy which is implementable, and which informs and drives strategic decision making. The review team further recommends that, following development and approval of its new strategy, IADT implement a strategic planning function closely linked to resourcing and develop clear prioritised plans to implement the new strategy. As part of the implementation of the strategy, there should be a whole-of-institution review of allocation of resources and a more proactive, strategic, structured and evidence-based approach to increase efficiency and effectiveness, particularly in the areas of programme development, academic planning, and national and international student recruitment strategy.

There are two further overarching issues which need to be addressed in this context, the academic calendar and the curriculum framework.

While some references were made during the main review visit to a semesterisation project, the review team understands from discussion with both management and non-management members of academic staff that the current position is that programmes are not semesterised.

On many occasions during the main review visit, staff referred to the lack of time available to undertake research or to avail of staff development opportunities including Teaching and Learning programmes, PhDs, or CPD, due to the heavy teaching load in the current nationally agreed lecturing contract for the institutes of technology. As mentioned earlier in this report, the OECD has completed a review of the lecturing contract for the Irish technological higher education sector and published its report. However, as already acknowledged, it is likely that the implementation of the recommendations of the OECD review will take time.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the current lecturing contract, however, the review team finds that IADT can take positive action in the short term through addressing its own academic calendar. The current academic calendar, with 35 weeks

of teaching per year, is not conducive to growing research capacity. The non-teaching weeks of a semesterised year would provide some opportunity for staff to focus on research and engage in CPD. A semesterised model would also support IADT's ambitions, as stated in the ISER and reiterated by IADT during the review visit, in relation to growth of student numbers, including international, and would better support a more efficient academic delivery model. This could free up some resources from undergraduate provision for research, including supervision of doctoral students.

As part of the 2018–20 Programmatic Review in IADT, a Common Curriculum Framework was approved by Academic Council. Aspects of this framework, highlighted by IADT in its ISER, include the inclusion of work-based learning/professional placement modules in most undergraduate programmes and the introduction of 1st year and 2nd year electives, allowing students a chance to step outside of their own discipline and build connections beyond it. While this is noted in the ISER as a key development, it became evident to the review team during the main review visit that issues have been identified during implementation, both by staff and students. This may be because of the way the framework has been implemented, with significant variance in approaches across the institution. It is evident to the review team, from both the ISER and main review visit, that the common curriculum framework has been implemented in FFACT but not in FEH. Also, FFACT has rolled out the 'Connect' module which provides 1st years with an introduction to the faculty, but this initiative has not been implemented institution wide. In summary, the review team finds that the Common Curriculum Framework is only partly in place which leads to undue complexity in academic operations, with adverse impact on efficiency and effectiveness.

The review team suggests that a semesterised academic calendar, if implemented, will be a key enabler of a successful common curriculum framework.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT implement a unified semesterised academic calendar and common curriculum framework in the interests of increasing its efficiency and effectiveness and thus progress its stated strategic goals and objectives, including those pertaining to research, industry engagement, staff development, student number growth, and internationalisation. This should be done in consultation with all key stakeholders – students, staff and external. The common curriculum framework should be fit for purpose, aligned with IADT's strategic plan and academic strategy, and supportive of interdisciplinarity and collaboration between departments, faculties and programmes.

Additionally, feedback from industry stakeholders during the main review visit highlighted the importance of work-based learning, including placement and internships, to help meet industry demand for students who are able to think, contribute, and understand the commercial world. They favour a more strategic approach, with a longer time in the workplace, to realise a richer learning experience.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT undertake a review of the work-placement/work-based learning component of its curriculum. If this is to be a central feature of IADT's curriculum going forward, consultation with industry partners should be deepened. A whole of institution approach should be taken to ensuring a consistent approach in practice, including preparation for placement and learner supports, placement handbooks included.

INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

A Programme Master List has been developed using MS SharePoint. This incorporates all aspects of IADT's suite of programmes, including validation details, reports and programme documents, and will provide a centralised, user-friendly reference point for staff as well as a streamlined programme status monitoring tool for the Quality Office.

As with other Academic Council subcommittees referenced in previous sections of this report, the Teaching and Learning Committee is very much involved in the day-to-day operations of teaching, learning and assessment in IADT. In the words of one member of the committee, it is effective at 'tapping into good practice and sharing it'. Innovations in pedagogy are informed by the diverse needs of its student and staff cohorts and by an ambition to ensure excellence, equality, inclusion and innovation in the resulting learning experience, for all students. If, as it has stated in the context of this review, IADT has an ambition to grow, then it may need to consider a more formal central teaching and learning function in the future. Feedback from the committee during the main review visit suggests that it would welcome more resources and authority.

As stated previously in this report, a review of the effectiveness of Academic Council and its subcommittees was undertaken across academic years 2020–21, 2021–22 and 2022–23 (Oct to Jan). Suggestions for enhancement were made in the areas of communication and raising awareness of the roles and activities of Academic Council and its subcommittees among students and staff, scheduled meetings between Academic Council and subcommittee Chairs, increasing student participation on Academic Council and subcommittees, induction for new members of Academic Council and subcommittees, reporting, timelines regarding the recruitment of Academic Council and subcommittee members and the development of annual meeting schedules.

Several quality enhancements have been implemented since 2021 to help improve the administration of the external examining system, including the creation of an external examiner tracker list, for improved recording and reporting on examiners. A revised nomination form was introduced to help streamline the nomination process. Some more recent issues for improvement include timeliness of getting some reports returned, recording actions, and reporting updates back

to external examiners. An apparent variance in approaches between the two faculties regarding interactions with external examiners will be further explored as part of the recommended Quality Action Plan (3.1 Objective 1 Current Quality Assurance Procedures, Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review Recommendation – page 47).

3.3 OBJECTIVE 3 – PROCEDURES FOR ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION

IADT's Access, Transfer and Progression Policy sets out the requirements and arrangements for all access and transfer routes. Access is available through the standard routes of CAO and direct entry, as well as non-standard routes such as the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR),[19] Disability Access Route to Education (DARE),[20] international students, mature students and FE pathways. Details are published on the IADT website and prospectus.

Applications and entry to IADT programmes are managed by the Admissions Office. Entry to Year 1 of all full-time undergraduate programmes is through the Central Applications Office (CAO) for EU applicants. Applications for postgraduate and part-time programmes are made via direct application and are processed by the Admissions Office.

Transfer and progression are managed in accordance with national policy. Opportunities are available to IADT and other students to progress from programmes at one award level to another across a broad range of programmes, including postgraduate and certificate programmes.

Access to IADT has widened substantially since IADT joined the HEAR and DARE schemes in 2017. HEAR- and DARE-eligible students now account for approximately 14% of new undergraduate entrants

each year. Other non-standard entry routes, including mature applications and pathways from further education, are consistent at approximately 18% of new undergraduate entrants annually.

Since its establishment, IADT has fostered links with institutes of further education, both on a local and on a sectoral level. The institution reserves up to 10% of places on undergraduate programmes for entrants from the FE sector. While the numbers of such entrants vary from year to year and from programme to programme, the overall intake from the FE sector remains steadily above 15%. Locally, there are strong links with six individual FE providers – Blackrock Further Education Institute (BFEI), Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE), Dundrum College of Further Education (DCFE), Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute (DFEI), Sallynoggin College of Further Education (SCFE), and Stillorgan College of Further Education – which have been formalised via memoranda of understanding (MOU).

As previously mentioned, IADT, in collaboration with two local FE providers, Bray Institute of Further Education (BIFE) and Ballyfermot College of Further Education (BCFE), is participating in a national pilot of tertiary programmes, following the recent establishment of the National Tertiary Office (NTO). At the time of the main review visit, the proposed new programme was progressing with a view to commencement in September 2023.

A number of programmes offered by IADT are "restricted" programmes in that they have special application requirements alongside the standard admissions procedures. Typically, applicants to such programmes are required to submit a portfolio and/or a project as part of the pre-entry assessment process.

The review and assessment process for portfolios/reviews is coordinated by the Admissions Office, working in collaboration with the Programme Chairs in the academic departments. The process

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19 The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a higher education admissions scheme for Leaving Certificate students (under 23) whose economic or social background are underrepresented in higher education.

20 The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a third level alternative admissions scheme for school-leavers whose disabilities have had a negative impact on their second level education. DARE offers reduced points places to school leavers who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education.

is managed through a central platform. There is a minimum of two assessors per application, each working independently, and an average score is determined.

As might be expected for IADT's academic profile, the number of portfolios assessed is relatively large for this size of institution. For example, 1626 portfolios were submitted for September 2022 entry. That said, IADT regularly communicates with all applicants, contacting them multiple times before the deadline, and applications are turned around in a timely manner. Applicants may appeal a decision on their portfolio.

IADT's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy sets out the requirements and procedures regarding RPL at IADT. The policy covers advanced entry and module exemption, and includes recognition of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The Admissions Office has been working alongside the RPL Steering Group to increase awareness of RPL in IADT, promote the potential for RPL among potential students and increase the number of RPL applications received and processed.

The number of IADT students entering IADT programmes using RPL routes has increased over recent years. During the main review visit, the review team met with a number of students who had availed of RPL. They spoke of their positive experience with accessing the institution's programmes via RPL pathways. However, feedback and commentary on the application process suggests that the RPL application procedure would benefit from a review in order to ensure consistency across the institution. In particular, the focus should be on supporting applicants to document their prior learning and to map it to learning outcomes of modules or programmes as appropriate to the application.

The review team notes that IADT has already indicated that its RPL policy is currently under review, to ensure it aligns with the work of the internal RPL Steering Group established in 2022. That work in turn is informed by the work of the national RPL in Higher Education project, of which

IADT is a member and which aims to build a consistent and coherent approach to RPL within and across the Irish public higher education sector in Ireland.

Recommendation

- The review team recommends that IADT review its RPL policy and procedure to ensure a consistent approach across the institution. In particular, the focus should be on supporting applicants to document their prior learning and to map it to learning outcomes of modules and programmes as appropriate to the application. The work of the national RPL in Higher Education project, of which IADT is a member, should inform the revised policy and procedure.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCESS, TRANSFER AND PROGRESSION

The mission of IADT's Access Service is to support the participation of non-typical students at IADT and to promote a teaching and learning environment suitable for diverse learners. IADT's Access Service provides a range of pre-entry and post-entry supports in IADT to assist applicants and students from underrepresented cohorts in preparation for, and integration into, higher education.

These include:

- Scholarships: The purpose of the 1916 Bursary Scheme is to encourage participation and success by students from the most socio-economically disadvantaged groups and those most underrepresented in higher education. Two College of Sanctuary Scholarships per annum are made available to international protection applicants or refugees wishing to pursue an undergraduate degree course in IADT.

- Outreach: The Access Service runs an outreach programme targeted at students attending post-primary schools (including DEIS schools) in the local area and at mature students. The programmes on offer include a Creative Arts Summer School, Community Mentoring, and Traveller Outreach Projects.

The Access Service also supports students who may have concerns or queries for advice on financial support. HEAR- and DARE-eligible students now account for approximately 14% of new undergraduate entrants each year. Other non-standard entry routes, including mature applications and pathways from further education, are consistent at approximately 18% of new undergraduate entrants annually.

IADT has one of the highest rates of students registered with the Disability Support Service (DSS) representing about 11% of the student population, versus 7% nationally. IADT is part of the DARE (Disability Access Route to Education) scheme, welcoming applications from all disabled students. In the ISER, IADT notes that it has a high number of neurodiverse students and suggests that this may be in part because of the variety and nature of the disciplines offered and resultant variety of learning and assessment styles used or also due to the reputation for supporting such students that IADT has gained in recent years.

The DSS aims to promote inclusion, advocacy, and active participation in college life for students with disabilities and mental health conditions. To register with the Disability Support Service, students must provide evidence of their disability. A needs assessment is conducted by the Disability Officer to determine necessary supports and accommodations. Accommodations may include exam accommodations, assistive technology, sign language interpreters, personal assistants, notetakers, and holistic one-to-one support sessions.

The Student Learning Centre is an academic support service led by psychology professionals. The team consists of a chartered psychologist, an assistant psychologist, and a maths tutor, all from the National Learning Network Educational Support Service, which is part of the Rehab Group. Its primary goal is to empower students and equip them with the necessary tools to become independent learners. Additionally, the centre provides specialised support for students with neuro-diverse learning profiles such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism spectrum disorder, and ADD/

ADHD. Support is provided to students through one-on-one sessions, workshops, and tutorials.

The Assistive Technology Service works with the Disability Support Service, the Student Learning Centre, and the Access office to support students with disabilities in IADT. Outside of student services, the AT service works with ICT, Academic Schools and Teaching and Learning to facilitate delivery of its supports.

During this institutional review, many students spoke very favourably of their experience as service users of Access and Disability Support Services in IADT. It was clear that the supports offered, both pre- and post-entry, were impactful for the students. This was all the more important given other challenges facing this cohort. In particular, the costs of childcare, travel, and accommodation, the impact of Covid-19, both in terms of the initial pivot online and the return to campus, and general anxiety about embarking on a programme of study, particularly after a gap in education. Students spoke of IADT as being a 'second home' and its staff being a 'second family'. IADT has expanded its lifelong learning opportunities through additional postgraduate programmes, Springboard+, Professional Certificates and Microcredentials.

Commendation
- The review team commends IADT on its commitment to and track record in relation to access routes to higher education. Access to IADT has widened substantially since IADT joined the HEAR and DARE schemes in 2017. IADT has also expanded its lifelong learning opportunities through additional postgraduate programmes, Springboard+, professional certificates, and microcredentials.

3.4 OBJECTIVE 4 – PROVISION OF PROGRAMMES TO INTERNATIONAL LEARNERS
INTERNATIONALISATION

The development of an international institution was established as one of IADT's strategic priorities under the Strategic Plan (2019–2023). This includes both supporting international learners to integrate into IADT and its learning environment and Irish culture as well as the encouragement and support of outward mobility of IADT staff and students.

IADT's International Office was established in 2021. It is currently building its services for international learners. The International Officer also manages all tasks relating to the management, development and reporting responsibilities of the Erasmus+ programme (incoming and outgoing) and traineeships. Individual guidance and assistance and academic/pedagogic supports are provided to every international student. The International and Admissions Offices work very well together and international student numbers are growing.

Based on self-declared nationality, the student population includes 65 different nationalities, up from 37 in 2010. At the time of the review, 54 countries are represented in the current total student population. IADT partners on international mobility programmes and academic exchanges globally in more than 20 countries in Europe, Canada, USA, Asia and Africa.

IADT has had significant growth in international partnerships and alliances. In particular, and as previously noted, it is a member of the European University Alliance (EUA) and FilmEU. Through Film EU, a joint BA international programme has been developed and validated, being jointly awarded by IADT and three other institutions.

ERASMUS+ is also an area of significant achievement for IADT. IADT offers student and staff exchanges as part of the Erasmus+ Programme, and it has expanded those Erasmus+ engagements to approximately 53 partners across a wide range of countries. Much of the work and achievements in ERASMUS+, for example, academic and pastoral support, can feed into the wider non- EU context.

For the future, IADT is endeavouring to build profile and numbers, but in a measured way given current accommodation constraints in the Dublin area. IADT is currently considering appointing an Accommodation Officer for the general student body. The review team heard that target areas have been identified and include North America and Canada. This should build on the success of existing collaborations. Focus groups carried out as part of the self-evaluation process indicated that students choose to study in IADT because of the specific discipline profile and IADT's reputation. That said, implementation of the review team's recommendation on the adoption of a semesterised academic calendar would better support inward and outward student mobility, particularly in relation to the accumulation of credits.

Feedback from international learners was quite positive, notwithstanding accommodation challenges which made adjustment difficult. Students reported that staff were very helpful and expressed satisfaction with the induction and supports provided.

At the conclusion of the main review visit, the review team found that IADT's approach to internationalisation is still dispersed and mainly focussed on mobility and international collaborations, most notably FilmEU. While much has been achieved, and is commended elsewhere in this report, it does not automatically result in an international institution. Therefore, after the launch of the new IADT strategy, an international strategy will need to be developed and implemented. While not wishing to pre-empt the outcome of the current strategic development process, the review team suggests that the development of the new international strategy should consider integration of international and intercultural learning outcomes into programme goals and outcomes so as to promote internationalisation at home and thus accommodate students staying in Ireland.

Section 4

Conclusions
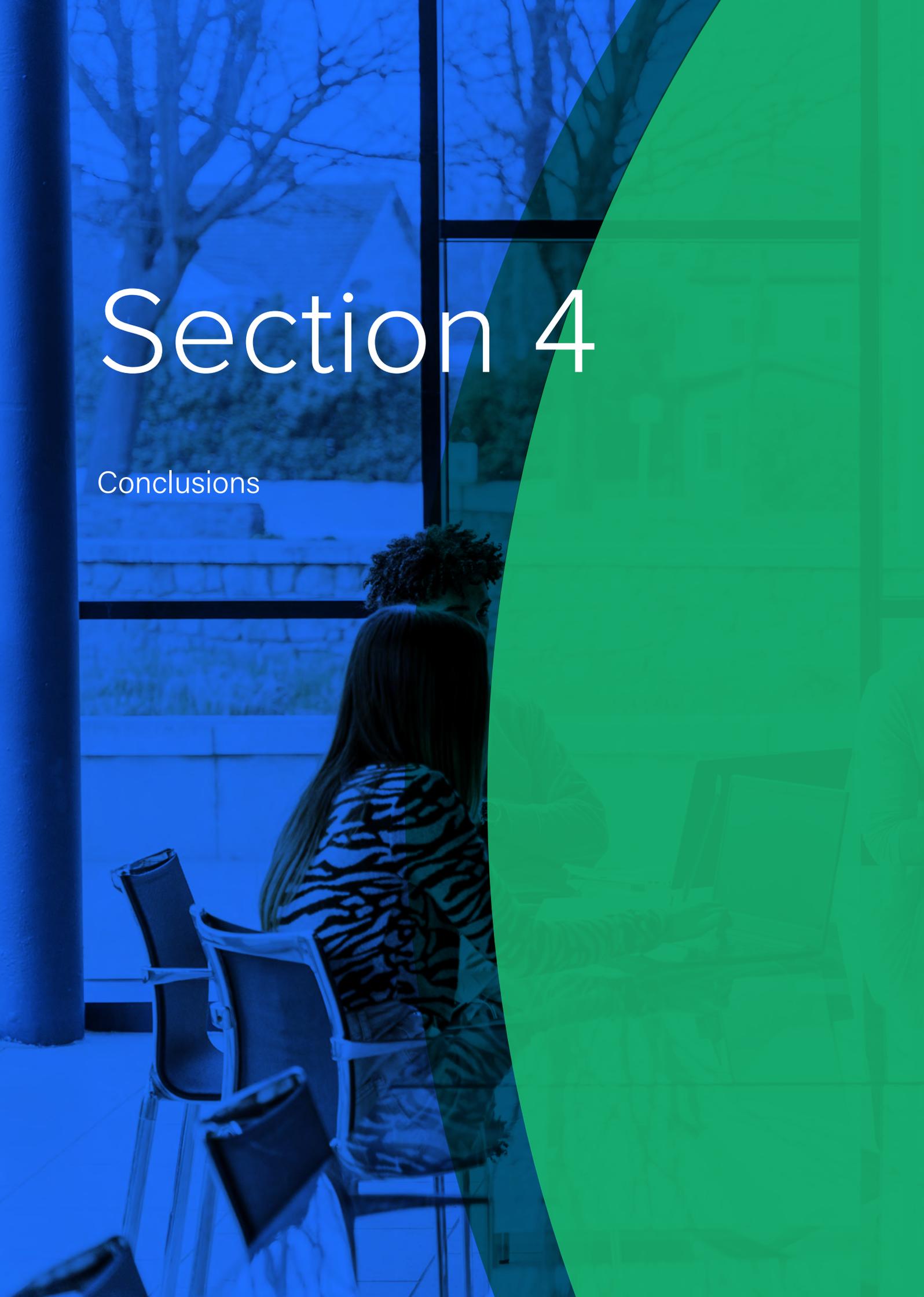
Conclusions

OVERALL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The review team found that IADT has undertaken a comprehensive and authentic self-evaluation throughout this institutional review. IADT perceives the review as an opportunity for learning and improvement across the organisation. The open and involved style of engagement in the process was set from the start by the President and Executive Team, working in connection with the Governing Body, and from there percolated through staff and students of the institution. It was also evident to the review team that IADT has already benefitted from its self-evaluation process.

IADT is committed to providing a high-quality teaching and learning experience. Staff, across all categories, have students' best interests at heart, and are very committed to student success. IADT's responsiveness to student needs is notable, particularly considering the increasing number of service users and its diverse student profile. The Students' Union, at all levels, also works proactively with institution management to represent the student body in an effective and collegiate manner and in this context.

The review team commends IADT on its strong commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and its embedding in its quality assurance framework. IADT's achievement of the Athena Swan institutional bronze award is concrete recognition of its track record and achievements in this area.

Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive of IADT are working and interacting effectively in what is a coherent and rigorous approach to governance. There is a whole-of-institution approach to quality assurance at all levels of the organisation including Governing Body, Academic Council, its committees and programme boards.

The review team also acknowledges IADT's deep commitment to and long-established, impactful record in access and disability matters. IADT's commitment to a diverse student body is reflected in its achievements, with percentages higher than the national average for HEAR/DARE applicants and applicants from the FE sector. Since the last institutional review[21], it has expanded its lifelong learning opportunities through additional postgraduate programmes, Springboard+, Professional Certificates and Microcredentials.

IADT has built up a wealth of collaborations with several high-quality partners with a significant impact, internally and externally. It is very clear that IADT is very highly regarded and valued by these partners. Considering the size of IADT, the reach and impact which its collaborations have in Ireland and beyond deserve great credit.

This institutional review comes at a pivotal time for IADT. The review team notes IADT's decision to end its previous strategic plan ahead of time and develop a new strategy. The institution has stated ambitions to grow student numbers, develop its research capacity, and enhance internationalisation, all in the context of an Irish higher educational landscape which has changed significantly and irrevocably over recent years. Given that this is a quality review, the review team has not commented on the appropriateness of IADT's proposed strategic trajectory. However, given the ambitions set out by IADT and the strategic choices which will need to be made for these to be realised, the review team makes some recommendations in that context. These cover a range of areas including approach to quality assurance and enhancement, staff development, appraisal, and workload allocation, internal and external communication, management information systems, strategic planning, resource planning and academic planning, including the academic calendar and curriculum framework.

21   Institutional Review of Providers of Higher Education and Training, HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AWARDS COUNCIL, IRELAND, (2011)

The review team emphasises that its recommendations are made to support IADT in its already demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement and its potential and ambition to grow and build on its success in the future.

FINDINGS

Commendations

1. The review team commends IADT on the quality and openness of its self-evaluation and the detailed and robust analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which was clearly articulated in the ISER and during the review visit. The review team finds clear evidence of a professional culture, led by the Executive with strong staff engagement and commitment. Throughout the review visit, all the staff who participated demonstrated high awareness of the purpose of institutional review and were clearly engaged with a culture of continuous improvement. The open and engaged style of engagement was set from the start by the President and Executive Team, working in connection with the Governing Body, and percolating through staff and students of the institution. It was also evident to the review team that IADT has already benefitted from its self-evaluation process.

2. The review team commends IADT on its system of policies and procedures. Notwithstanding the relatively small size of the institution, the policy and procedure framework is well-elaborated and comprehensive. The language and format used are clear and easy to understand, and easy access is provided on the institution's public website.

3. The review team commends IADT on its whole-of-institution approach to quality assurance at all levels of the organisation including Governing Body, Academic Council, its committees, and programme boards. IADT's Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive of IADT are working and interacting effectively in what is a coherent and rigorous approach to governance of the institution. While noting that academic quality assurance and enhancement is the business of everyone in the institution, the review team notes that the committees of the Academic Council play a significant role in academic affairs in IADT, both strategically and operationally. The work done by those committees on the more operational quality assurance matters is particularly important for IADT, given its relatively small size. Furthermore, it is clear that the introduction and implementation of an annual report by the Programme Board to the Academic Council has been well-implemented and is beneficial and worthwhile.

4. The review team commends IADT on its policy and procedure for approval of new programmes. Approval mechanisms are clear at all levels, with supports for proposers through internal peer review and helpful documentation.

5. The review team commends IADT on its consideration to date of the implications of DAB status, including the potential for the development of new awards unique to IADT.

6. The review team commends IADT on the development and commencement of a number of career-focused and industry-informed taught postgraduate programmes.

7. The review team commends IADT on its revised recruitment policy and practices. It was clear from discussions during the main review visit that IADT has invested significant effort in enhancing its recruitment practices, benchmarking them with best practice, and that this has had a very positive impact on its reputation and on recruitment outcomes.

8. The review team commends the proactive and inclusive approach being taken by IADT to staff development. It was impressed with how the HR Department and the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Academic Council collaborate with each other and with other departments and functions in a collegiate and effective manner to ensure that a broad range of offerings is made available to staff.

9. The review team commends IADT on its commitment to an inclusive and high-quality teaching and learning experience for all students. The review team received positive feedback from students on their teaching and learning experience in IADT, with many students speaking highly of their experience with lecturers.

10. The review team commends IADT on its clear commitment to a high-quality student experience. It is apparent that staff across all categories have students' best interests at heart and are very committed to student success. The Students' Union also works proactively with IADT's management to represent the student body in an effective and collegiate manner. The review team commends IADT on the quality, strength and drive of its student services. The Student Services Team is responsive to student needs, both individually and collectively, and collaborates with and is supported by the academic departments and faculties in which those students are based. This is particularly commendable given the current rate of increase in the number of service users.

11. The review team commends IADT on the effective network of good collaborative partnerships and relationships it has built with several high-quality partners. It is very clear that IADT is very highly regarded and valued by these partners. Considering the size of IADT, the reach and impact of its collaborations deserve great credit. The review team notes that some of these collaborations have won substantial competitive funding, including FilmEU, CFA, and DRIC. All are good examples of effective collaboration and future-oriented education, with a focus on sustainable and adaptable skills, talent development, research, and innovation.

12. The review team commends IADT on its rigorous and systematic approach to self-evaluation, monitoring and review. Examples of this approach in action include the effective functioning of the programme boards, the completion of the 2020 programmatic review during the pandemic, and the thorough and open approach to this institutional review, at all levels of the organisation.

13. The review team commends IADT on its investment in and work on developing a research culture over recent years.

14. The review team commends IADT on its demonstrated track record in EDI and Access and on how this is embedded in its quality assurance framework. IADT can be considered as a leader in its work and commitment to the EDI agenda. It is outperforming the national average on many Access metrics. These are significant achievements for an organisation of this scale. IADT's whole-of-institution approach to EDI and Access is evident through the collaboration between EDI and HR leads in relation to staff matters, and the collaboration between EDI and Access and Disability leads regarding student matters.

15. The review team commends IADT on its commitment to and track record in relation to access routes to higher education. Access to IADT has widened substantially since IADT joined the HEAR and DARE schemes in 2017. IADT has also expanded its lifelong learning opportunities through additional postgraduate programmes, Springboard+, professional certificates, and microcredentials.

Recommendations

1. The review team recommends that, given the key role played by the Students' Union as a 'bridge' between the students and the institution, IADT consider how it might better engage its Students' Union in future institutional reviews and strategic planning.

2. The review team recommends that IADT complete the development of a schedule for review of policies and procedures. As part of this review, policies and procedures should first be systemised in a way that supports easy conformation and practice, and then checked for completeness, consistency, and alignment. This can be a particularly complex task for a smaller institution. However, the recently developed Policy and Procedure tracker list, as referenced in the ISER, should provide a more efficient means of monitoring, alerting and tracking.

3. The review team recommends that IADT

put in place a system for the synthesis of the annual programme board reports at department/faculty level so as to provide both faculty and Academic Council with a higher level and strategic view of issues arising and being addressed. In turn, feedback from the Academic Council to programme boards would be useful. This work should be supported through training for Programme Chairs and student representatives on programme boards.

4. The review team recommends that IADT establish a more structured framework for staff development, appraisal and workload allocation. While cognisant of current contractual arrangements, the review team recommends IADT to consider how staff engagement in research and collaboration with industry and other external stakeholders might be further enhanced and more effectively recognised.

5. The review team recommends that IADT enhance its system for internal and external communication and feedback, so as to ensure a more systemic approach. This should include the development and implementation of a plan to improve awareness of policies and procedures and of support services available to students, including those offered by services such as Student Experience and Library. Information relevant to students which is presented on the main IADT website and other institution websites should be reviewed to ensure that it is easy to navigate, streamlined and targeted appropriately. The review team further recommends that IADT put the necessary training in place for staff to increase awareness and enhance consistency of implementation and experience for both current and prospective students. Informal communication methods, though effective, do need to have a formal counterpart to guarantee the sustainability of the existing quality culture, particularly if IADT adheres to its ambition to grow in the future.

6. The review team strongly recommends that IADT review and invest in its management information systems with a view to achieving and implementing a system that better

captures, records, monitors and analyses data in a secure and reliable manner. This is particularly important if IADT continues in its aim to grow. In that context, an effective management information system is key to strategic decision making. Improved use of data and management information will help to expose issues, drive improvement and inform decision making.

7. The review team recommends that IADT further enhance its external communications through the development of a formal alumni network. This would be beneficial through highlighting student success stories, generating useful data, promoting various career pathways, and also encouraging collaboration between current students and alumni. Looking externally, alumni could be ambassadors for the institution.

8. The review team recommends that IADT deepen its engagement with external stakeholders in regard to the development of its new strategy. This will better inform strategic decisions and choices across all areas of IADT's endeavour. Given IADT's status as a Designated Awarding Body (DAB), it should explore the possibilities which this may present to accredit linked or collaborative partnerships.

9. The review team recommends that IADT develop and implement an annual Quality Action Plan with clear deliverables which, in the first instance, can be mapped to the recommendations of this review. The annual Quality Action Plan should be cascaded down through the management structures and governance structures so that Quality Action Plans are developed for faculties, departments, central services units, and institution committees, including those of the Academic Council.

10. The review team recommends to IADT that it review all research policies. This is particularly important given IADT's stated ambition to grow its research activity and outputs. Implementation of current and future policies and procedures should be supported by training for research supervisors.

11. The review team recommends that IADT

ensure that the provision of the current lecturing contract in relation to supervision of research students is implemented consistently. This will not only safeguard quality supervision arrangements for research students, but it will also provide the staff involved with the opportunity to progress the institution's research agenda further. While acknowledging the challenges entailed in sourcing funding externally to buy out staff time, the review team finds that the academic calendar and workload allowances for supervisors of research students are matters which IADT can address in the shorter term. It will mean that strategic choices will have to be made in a broader institutional context, including in relation to undergraduate programmes.

12. The review team recommends that IADT apply the learnings of the previous strategic plan to realise a strategy which is implementable, and which informs and drives strategic decision making. The review team further recommends that, following development and approval of its new strategy, IADT implement a strategic planning function closely linked to resourcing and develop clear prioritised plans to implement the new strategy. As part of the implementation of the strategy, there should be a whole-of-institution review of allocation of resources and a more proactive, strategic, structured and evidence-based approach to increase efficiency and effectiveness, particularly in the areas of programme development, academic planning, and national and international student recruitment strategy.

13. The review team recommends that IADT implement a unified semesterised academic calendar and common curriculum framework in the interests of increasing its efficiency and effectiveness and thus progress its stated strategic goals and objectives, including those pertaining to research, industry engagement, staff development, student number growth, and Internationalisation. This should be done in consultation with all key stakeholders – students, staff and external. The common curriculum framework should be fit for purpose, aligned with IADT's strategic plan and academic strategy, and supportive of interdisciplinarity and collaboration between departments, faculties and programmes.

14. The review team recommends that IADT undertake a review of the work-placement/work-based learning component of its curriculum. If this is to be a central feature of IADT's curriculum going forward, consultation with industry partners should be deepened. A whole of institution approach should be taken to ensuring a consistent approach in practice, including preparation for placement and learner supports, placement handbooks included.

15. The review team recommends that IADT review its RPL policy and procedure to ensure a consistent approach across the institution. In particular, the focus should be on supporting applicants to document their prior learning and to map it to learning outcomes of modules and programmes as appropriate to the application. The work of the national RPL in Higher Education project, of which IADT is a member, should inform the revised policy and procedure.

Section 5

Top 5 Commendations and
Recommendations
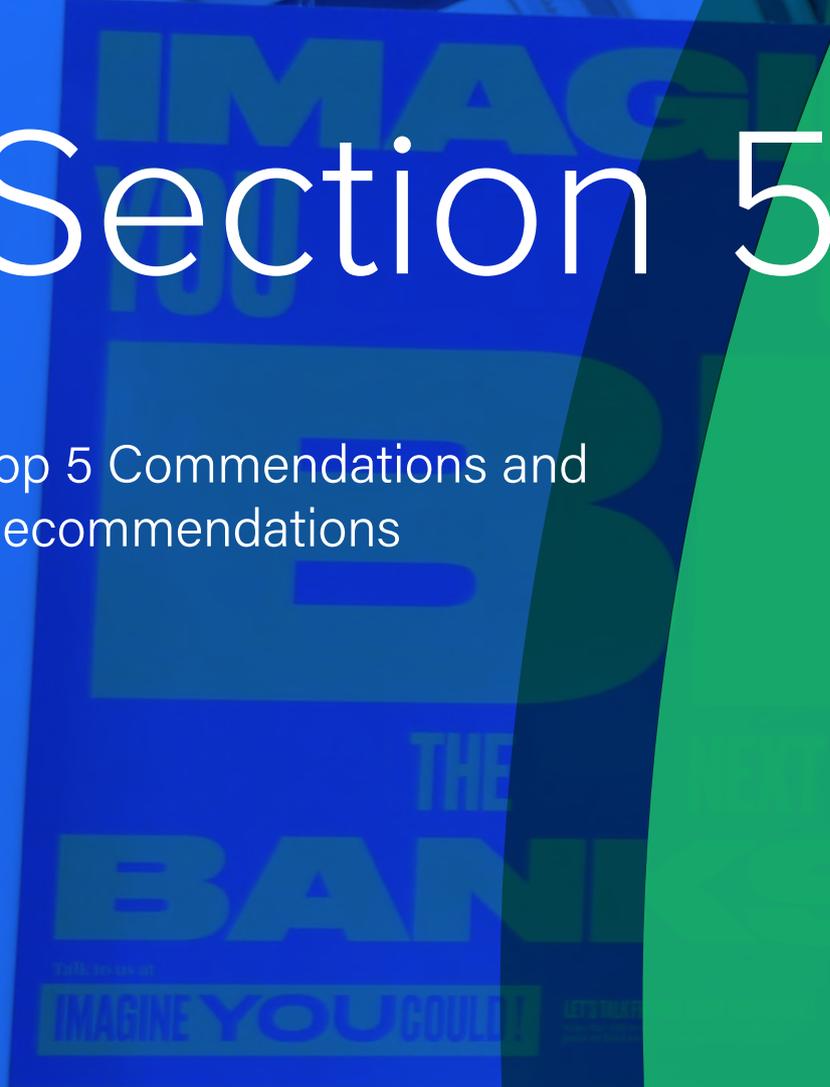
Top 5 Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The review team commends IADT on the quality and openness of its self-evaluation and the detailed and robust analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which was clearly articulated in the ISER and during the review visit. The review team finds clear evidence of a professional culture, led by the Executive with strong staff engagement and commitment. Throughout the review visit, all the staff who participated demonstrated high awareness of the purpose of institutional review and were clearly engaged with a culture of continuous improvement. The open and engaged style of engagement was set from the start by the President and Executive Team, working in connection with the Governing Body, and percolated through staff and students of the institution. It was also evident to the review team that IADT has already benefitted from its self-evaluation process.

2. The review team commends IADT on its whole-of-institution approach to quality assurance at all levels of the organisation including Governing Body, Academic Council, its committees, and programme boards. IADT's Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive of IADT are working and interacting effectively in what is a coherent and rigorous approach to governance of the institution. While noting that academic quality assurance and enhancement is the business of everyone in the institution, the review team notes that the committees of the Academic Council play a significant role in academic affairs in IADT, both strategically and operationally. The work done by those committees on the more operational quality assurance matters is particularly important for IADT given its relatively small size. Furthermore, it is clear that the introduction and implementation of a Programme Board Annual Report to Academic Council has been well-implemented and is beneficial and worthwhile.

3. The review team commends IADT on its clear commitment to a high-quality student experience. It is apparent that staff across all categories have students' best interests at heart and are very committed to student success. The Students' Union also works proactively with IADT's management to represent the student body in an effective and collegiate manner. The review team commends IADT on the quality, strength and drive of its student services. The Student Services Team is responsive to student needs, both individually and collectively, and collaborates with and is supported by the academic departments and faculties in which those students are based. This is particularly commendable given the current rate of increase in the number of service users.

4. The review team commends IADT on its demonstrated track record in EDI and Access and on how this is embedded in its quality assurance framework. IADT can be considered as a leader in its work and commitment to the EDI agenda. It is outperforming the national average on many Access metrics. These are significant achievements for an organisation of this scale. IADT's whole-of-institution approach to EDI and Access is evident through the collaboration between EDI and HR leads in relation to staff matters, and the collaboration between EDI and Access and Disability leads regarding student matters.

5. The review team commends IADT on the effective network of good collaborative partnerships and relationships it has built with several high-quality partners. It is very clear that IADT is very highly regarded and valued

by these partners. Considering the size of IADT, the reach and impact of its collaborations deserve great credit. The review team notes that some of these collaborations have won substantial competitive funding, including FilmEU, CFA, and DRIC. All are good examples of effective collaboration and future-oriented education, with a focus on sustainable and adaptable skills, talent development, research, and innovation.

Recommendations

1. The review team recommends that IADT apply the learnings of the previous strategic plan to realise a strategy which is implementable, and which informs and drives strategic decision making. The review team further recommends that, following development and approval of its new strategy, IADT implement a strategic planning function closely linked to resourcing and develop clear prioritised plans to implement the new strategy. As part of the implementation of the strategy, there should be a whole-of-institution review of allocation of resources and a more proactive, strategic, structured and evidence-based approach to increase efficiency and effectiveness, particularly in the areas of programme development, academic planning, and national and international student recruitment strategy.

2. The review team recommends that IADT enhance its system for internal and external communication and feedback, so as to ensure a more systemic approach. This should include the development and implementation of a plan to improve awareness of policies and procedures and of support services available to students including those offered by services such as Student Experience and Library. Information relevant to students which is presented on the main IADT website and other institution websites should be reviewed to ensure that it is easy to navigate, streamlined and targeted appropriately. The review team further recommends that IADT put the necessary training in place for staff to increase awareness and enhance consistency of implementation and experience for both current and prospective students. Informal communication methods, though effective,

do need to have a formal counterpart to guarantee the sustainability of the existing quality culture, particularly if IADT adheres to its ambition to grow in the future.

3. The review team strongly recommends that IADT review and invest in its management information systems with a view to achieving and implementing a system that better captures, records, monitors and analyses data in a secure and reliable manner. This is particularly important if IADT continues in its aim to grow. In that context, an effective management information system is key to strategic decision making. Improved use of data and management information will help to expose issues, drive improvement and inform decision making.

4. The review team recommends that IADT implement a unified semesterised academic calendar and common curriculum framework in the interests of increasing its efficiency and effectiveness and thus progress its stated strategic goals and objectives, including those pertaining to research, industry engagement, staff development, student number growth, and internationalisation. This should be done in consultation with all key stakeholders – students, staff and external. The common curriculum framework should be fit for purpose, aligned with IADT's strategic plan and academic strategy, and supportive of interdisciplinarity and collaboration between departments, faculties and programmes.

5. The review team recommends that IADT establish a more structured framework for staff development, appraisal and workload allocation. While cognisant of current contractual arrangements, the review team recommends IADT to consider how staff engagement in research and collaboration with industry and other external stakeholders might be further enhanced and more effectively recognised.

OVERARCHING STATEMENTS ABOUT QA

The effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the institution and the extent of their implementation

Notwithstanding the relatively small size of IADT, its policy and procedure framework is well-elaborated and comprehensive. The language and format used are clear and easy to understand, and easy to access on the institution's public website. However, the review team finds that the process for monitoring and revising policies and procedures could be improved to ensure a more systematic and consistent approach, and to prevent anomalies. Policies and procedures should be systemised in a way that supports easy conformation and practice. The review team acknowledges that this may be a particularly complex task for a smaller institution but also is of the view that IADT's recently developed Policy and Procedure tracker list should provide a more efficient means of monitoring, alerting and tracking.

A whole-of-institution commitment to a quality assurance culture was evident at all levels of IADT in advance of and during the review visit. Led by Governing Body, the Executive, and the Academic Council, this culture percolates through staff and students of the institution and has been commended by the review team.

The committees of the Academic Council play a significant role in quality assurance in IADT, both strategically and operationally. The work done by those committees on the more operational quality assurance matters is particularly important for IADT given its relatively small size. The Quality Enhancement subcommittee (QEC) of the Academic Council provides guidance to the Academic Council on issues of quality and an advisory audit function of the academic quality system. It works effectively with the Quality Office team, including the relatively new role of Assistant Registrar, a role which has already had positive impact on day-to-day quality assurance operations and on the self-evaluation process.

Students are represented on Governing Body, Academic Council, its committees and on programme boards. IADT and its Students' Union work together in a partnership approach that is effective in ensuring that the student voice is heard, and issues are satisfactorily addressed.

While the relatively small size of IADT promotes open communication and an engaged quality culture, the review team finds that the approach to communication and feedback tends to be balanced towards the informal and therefore recommends that IADT enhance its system for internal and external communication and feedback, so as to ensure a more systemic approach.

The extent to which the quality assurance procedures can be considered compliant with the ESG and having regard to QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG)

The review team concluded that there was sufficient evidence to confirm that IADT's quality assurance procedures are effective and appropriate and cover teaching, learning and assessment in a comprehensive manner.

IADT's recommendations from its self-evaluation, as listed at the end of the ISER, were also mapped against the objectives of the CINNTE Institutional Review, as set out in the CINNTE Terms of Reference. This mapping was extended to demonstrate compliance with relevant QQI guidelines and ESG. This was helpful to the review team by indicating compliance and identifying issues for enhancement. It also provided visibility to the review team of the quality assurance framework and its compliance with national and international regulations and guidelines. The review team finds that, overall, the quality assurance mechanisms adopted by IADT are compliant with the requirements of the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) and had regard to the QQI core Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG).

The enhancement of quality by the institution through governance, policy, and procedures

IADT has effective policies and procedures in place to identify improvements required to, and potential

enhancements resulting from, its quality assurance processes.

The review team finds that the introduction and implementation of a Programme Board Annual Report to the Academic Council has been well-implemented and is beneficial and worthwhile but recommends that IADT develop a system to synthesise these reports at department/faculty so that Academic Council is provided with a more high-level view, therefore facilitating a more strategic approach to quality enhancement.

The review team also commends IADT for its maintenance of a schedule for cyclical review through the programmatic review, including the completion of its 2020 review after pivoting to online methodology during the pandemic. The review team now recommends that IADT develop and implement an annual Quality Action Plan with clear deliverables which, in the first instance, can be mapped to the recommendations of this review. The plan should be cascaded down through the management structures and governance structures so that Quality Action Plans are developed for faculties, departments, central services units, and institution committees, including those of the Academic Council.

IADT has a demonstrated track record in EDI, which is at the heart of its mission. The review team was impressed at how it has embedded EDI in its staff recruitment process. During the review visit, there was much evidence of commitment to staff development, but the review team finds that a more structured approach to staff development and appraisal will need to be adopted to achieve its ambitions in research.

Like other committees of the Academic Council, the Teaching and Learning Committee plays an important role in IADT quality assurance and enhancement, both operationally and strategically. The review team was impressed by the committee's readiness, enthusiasm and insight in identifying, disseminating and mainstreaming instances of good practice.

This review has come at a key time for IADT as it brings its current strategy to a conclusion, considers its future position on the Irish higher education landscape, and embarks on its next strategic phase. IADT has set out ambitions in this regard. While a judgement on the appropriateness of IADT's identified trajectory is not within the scope of this quality review, the review team finds that strategic choices will need to be made by IADT should it wish to proceed on this basis. These include the implementation of a semesterised academic calendar and institute-wide implementation of the Common Curriculum Framework. Supported by a better management information system, also the subject of a recommendation of this report, these measures, if adopted, would support a more efficient use of resources for increased effectiveness.

The extent to which the procedures are in keeping with QQI policy for Access, Transfer and Progression

IADT procedures for access, transfer and progression are in keeping with the QQI Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression. The review team commends the long-established record of IADT in relation to access, transfer and progression. All staff work together to achieve a more diverse student profile and to support learners from pre-entry to graduation. IADT outperforms the national average on many metrics in this area.

The extent to which the procedures are compliant with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners

Th review team finds that IADT's approach to the provision of education to international learners is consistent with the QQI's Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners. ERASMUS+ is an area of significant achievement for IADT, and much of the work done here will be transferable to the non-EU context. IADT's success in building international collaborations and partnerships, including FilmEU, has already led to development of joint programmes.

The degree to which enhancement can be achieved in this area will significantly depend on

IADT's decisions and actions on key overarching issues including its academic calendar, strategic planning, and curriculum framework, issues which are the subject of recommendations in this report.

Section 6

Institutional Response

Institutional Response

CINNTE REVIEW - IADT INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2023

Established in 1997 as an Institute of Art, Design and Technology, IADT is the only uniquely mandated HEI in the technological higher education sector, with a specific mission to "drive and inform the creative, cultural and technological industries through teaching, learning, research and innovation".

Today, with our distinct position, we remain mission-focused and are a leading provider of programmes for the technological, creative and cultural industries. We have proudly created an interdisciplinary environment drawing on our core strengths in visual arts, media arts, enterprise, technology and human factors.

We are still growing and evolving our specialist offer as we strive to further distinguish ourselves within an increasingly competitive higher education sector while charting a future pathway for IADT as a specialist and autonomous institution and the national campus for Ireland's creative industries.

In seeking to fulfil our ambitions, the Institute is steadfastly committed to quality assurance and quality enhancement across all aspects of our organisation. We welcome all opportunities provided to evolve and improve in these mission-critical areas.

From the outset of this review, IADT sought to capitalise on the learning opportunity the CINNTE Review process presented to us. In doing so, we endeavoured to synchronise the outcomes of the CINNTE self-evaluation and review processes with several concurrent key Institute activities, including the development of a new Strategic Plan (2024 – 2029) and the development of the forthcoming HEA System Performance Framework, so that resulting actions and activities would be consistent, measurable and time-bound. The CINNTE review process allowed us to critically reflect and appraise the effectiveness of the Institute's quality assurance processes and procedures and identify areas for improvement. In implementing a whole of Institution approach, the vast majority of our community was involved, consulted and contributed to the review, making it a thorough, comprehensive and authentic process. The Institute is grateful that this approach was both endorsed and acknowledged by the Review Team in their report –

"*It is evident to the review team that IADT, at all levels of the Institution and throughout the review process, perceives institutional review as a learning and enhancement opportunity. This, and the collective commitment to continuous improvement, was clear in the discussions during the main review visit.*"

IADT appreciates the advice and expertise provided by the Review Team and welcomes its comprehensive and insightful review report. We are heartened that the Review Team were assured regarding the Institute's quality assurance and enhancement culture and environment and issued 15 strong commendations to the Institute. In particular, we are proud that the Review Team recognised the open and engaged style of interaction, our professionalism and our positive culture, which underpinned the IADT review and acknowledged this in stating, "*the review team finds clear evidence of a professional culture, led by the Executive with strong staff engagement and commitment*". The Review Team noted that "*the policy and procedures framework is well-elaborated and comprehensive*". The Institute is committed to excellence in teaching and learning for all students, providing a high-quality student experience and

extensive access routes to education, all of which were also commended by the Review Team.

IADT acknowledges and welcomes the 15 recommendations made by the Review Team. Encouragingly, the Institute self-identified many of the recommendations as part of the self-evaluation process, and the Institute is already advanced in the implementation of several of them. For example, the Institute's new Strategic Plan will comprise a systematised and agreed whole-of-institution approach to its effective implementation. Other areas are under development, such as achieving increased effectiveness across the Institute's management information systems, implementing semesterisation with a supporting common curriculum framework, and improving business intelligence to support strategic development. We will use the recommendations made by the Review Team to further cement and enhance our quality culture and ensure the timely implementation of all recommendations.

While the strategic direction and future ambitions of the Institute are not in the purview of this quality review, the Institute welcomes the considered and nuanced guidance in support of our ambitions provided by the expert Review Team.

IADT would like to extend its sincere gratitude to all members of the Review Team, particularly the Chair, Mr Andy Cook, Vice Chancellor of Ravensbourne University and the Review Team Co-ordinator, Dr Áine Ní Shé, Registrar and Vice-President of Munster Technological University, for their positive and constructive engagement with the process and with the staff and students of the Institute.

In conclusion, I wish to sincerely thank all those who contributed to the review process, including our dedicated staff and students, our incredible alums, supportive stakeholders, the CINNTE Steering Group, IADT's Committee and working group members, and all who met the Review Team for their committed, enthusiastic and proactive engagement with the process. IADT will be better because of their contributions.

Finally, IADT acknowledges and appreciates the assistance of the Tertiary Education Monitoring and Review Unit at QQI in supporting the successful completion of the CINNTE review.

David Smith
President, October 2023

Appendices

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REVIEW OF INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY
Section 1 Background and Context for the Review

1.1   CONTEXT AND LEGISLATIVE UNDERPINNING

These are the Terms of Reference for the Review of an Institute of Technology (non-Designated Awarding Bodies) and encompass the following institutions:

Athlone Institute of Technology	Institute of Technology Carlow
Cork Institute of Technology	Institute of Technology Sligo
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Institute of Technology Tralee
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Limerick Institute of Technology
	Waterford Institute of Technology

In 2016, QQI adopted a policy on cyclical review in higher education which sets out in greater detail the scope, purposes, criteria, model and procedures for review. These are represented in the Terms of Reference and the Handbook for the Review of Institutes of Technology. QQI has introduced an annual reporting process for institutions whereby institutions are required to submit an Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR). The aim of the AIQR is to provide a contemporary account of quality assurance (QA) within an institution. Information is provided through an online template and it is published. Collated annual reports are provided to periodical Review Teams. Annual reporting allows institutions and QQI to engage on a regular basis. Published annual reports assist with documentation management for institutions in reviews and lessen the burden on institutions in the lead-up to a review.

This review cycle is being conducted in a very changed context for higher education. The landscape for higher education has been significantly reshaped since the last cycle of reviews commenced. Smaller colleges have been merged with universities and many institutes of technology are reorganising and preparing mergers as part of the Technological University process. New alliances and partnerships envisaged by Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape have commenced. A new approach to public funding has been introduced and operated by the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Initiatives for enhancement such as the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (NFETL) have been formalised at a national level. These developments mean that there are new sources of information and external benchmarks available to institutions that can be used to inform self-evaluation in this review cycle. Key measurements such as

entry profiles, student retention, graduate profiles and staff and student satisfaction rates can provide a quantitative source of information for institutions to assist in internal decision-making and to help demonstrate evidence of the quality of an institution's offer.

The 2012 Act states that QQI shall consult with the HEA in carrying out the review. QQI has agreed with HEA that this will take the form of engagement with QQI on the Terms of Reference and confirmation of the status of the institution within the higher education system, sharing individual institutional profiles and data with the Review Team. Further details of the agreement can be accessed here.

Institutes of technology completed a statutory review cycle from 2009–2012. Prior to this, IoTs were reviewed for the purpose of granting delegation of authority. This review cycle commences in 2017 and will terminate in 2022.

The 2017–2022 Review Cycle Schedule is as follows:

Institution	Completion Dates			
	ISER	Planning Visit	Main Review Visit	Report
Institute of Technology, Sligo	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018
Dundalk Institute of Technology	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	Q1 2019
Waterford Institute of Technology	Q3 2019	Q3 2020	Q4 2020	Q1 2021
Institute of Technology, Carlow	Q4 2019	Q1 2020	Q2 2020	Q3 2020
Limerick Institute of Technology	Q4 2020	Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021	Q1 2022
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023
Athlone Institute of Technology	Q2 2022	Q3 2022	Q4 2022	Q1 2023

1.2   PURPOSES

The Policy for the Cyclical Review of Higher Education Institutions highlights four purposes for individual institutional reviews. These are set out in the table below.

Purpose	Achieved and measured through:
1. To encourage a QA culture and the enhancement of the student learning environment and experience across and within an institution	- emphasising the student and the student learning experience in the review - providing a source of evidence of areas for enhancement and areas for revision of policy and change and basing follow-up upon them - exploring innovative and effective practices and procedures - exploring quality as well as quality assurance within the institution
2. To provide feedback to institutions about institution-wide quality and the impact of mission, strategy, governance and management on quality and the overall effectiveness of their quality assurance.	- emphasising the governance of quality and quality assurance at the level of the institution - pitching the review at a comprehensive institution-wide level - evaluating compliance with legislation, policy and standards - evaluating how the institution has identified and measured itself against its own benchmarks and metrics to support quality assurance governance and procedures - emphasising the enhancement of quality assurance procedures
3. To contribute to public confidence in the quality of institutions by promoting transparency and public awareness.	- adhering to purposes, criteria and outcomes that are clear and transparent - publishing the reports and outcomes of reviews in accessible locations and formats for different audiences - evaluating, as part of the review, institutional reporting on quality and quality assurance, to ensure that it is transparent and accessible
4. To encourage quality by using evidence-based, objective methods and advice	- using the expertise of international, national and student peer reviewers who are independent of the institution - ensuring that findings are based on stated evidence - facilitating institutions to identify measurement, comparison and analytic techniques, based on quantitative data relevant to their own mission and context, to support quality assurance - promoting the identification and dissemination of examples of good practice and innovation

Section 2 Objectives and Criteria

2.1 REVIEW OBJECTIVES

Objective 1

To review the effectiveness and implementation of the QA procedures of the institution. through consideration of the procedures set out, primarily, in the AIQR. Where necessary, the information provided by the AIQR is supplemented by additional information provided through documentation requests and interviews. The scope of this includes reporting procedures, governance and publication. This also incorporates an analysis of the ways in which the institution uses measurement, comparisons and analytic techniques, based on quantitative data, to support quality assurance governance and procedures. Progress on the development of quality assurance since the last review of the institution will be evaluated. Consideration will also be given to the effectiveness of the AIQR and Institutional Self-Evaluation Reports (ISER) procedures within the institution.

The scope of this objective also extends to the overarching approach of the institution to assuring itself of the quality of its research degree programmes and research activities.

This objective also encompasses the effectiveness of the procedures established by the institution for the assurance of the quality of alliances, partnerships and overseas provision, including TU clusters, mergers, transnational provision, joint awarding, joint provision and regional fora.

Objective 2

To review the procedures established by the institution for the governance and management of its functions that comprise its role as an awarding body. The team will focus on evidence of a governance system to oversee the education and training, research and related activity of the institution and evidence of a culture that supports quality within the institution. Considerations will centre upon the effectiveness of decision-making across the institution.

Objective 3

To review the enhancement of quality by the institution through governance, policy, and procedures.

To review the congruency of quality assurance procedures and enhancements with the institution's own mission and goals or targets for quality.

To identify innovative and effective practices for quality enhancement.

Objective 4

To review the effectiveness and implementation of procedures for access, transfer and progression.

Objective 5

Following the introduction of a statutory international education quality assurance scheme, to determine compliance with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners.

2.2   REVIEW CRITERIA

Criteria for Objective 1

The Review Report will include a specific qualitative statement on the effectiveness of the quality assurance procedures of the institution and the extent of their implementation. The report will also include a specific statement on the extent to which the quality assurance procedures can be considered as compliant with the ESG and as having regard to QQI's statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (QAG). These statements will be highlighted in the report of the review.

The statements may be accompanied by a range of ancillary statements, recommendations and possibly recommendations for directions in reference to this objective.

The criteria to be used by the team in reaching conclusions for this objective are:

- ESG
- QQI Core Quality Assurance (QA) Guidelines
- QQI Sector Specific QA Guidelines for Institutes of Technology
- Section 28 of the 2012 Act
- QQI Policy and Criteria for Making Awards (including FET provision)

Where appropriate and actioned by the institution, additional QQI guidelines will be incorporated:

- For Apprenticeship, QA Guidelines for Apprenticeship Programmes
- Sectoral Protocols for Research
- Sectoral Protocols for Joint Awards
- The institution's own objectives and goals for quality assurance

Criteria for Objective 2

The Review Report will include a specific qualitative statement on the effectiveness of the procedures established for the overall operation and management of the institution as an awarding body.

 The statements may be accompanied by a range of ancillary statements, recommendations and possibly recommendations for conditions in reference to this objective.

The criteria to be used by the team in reaching conclusions for this objective are ESG (Parts 1.1 and 1.4 in particular), QQI Core QAG, QQI Sector-Specific Institute of Technology QAG and QQI Policy and Criteria for Delegation of Authority.

Criteria for Objective 3

The Review Report will include a specific qualitative statement on the enhancement of quality by the institution through governance, policy, and procedures.

This statement may be accompanied by a range of ancillary statements and recommendations in reference to this objective. If identified, innovative and effective practices for quality enhancement will be highlighted in the report.

The criteria to be used by the team in reaching conclusions for this objective are:

- The institution's own mission and vision
- The goals or targets for quality identified by the institution
- Additional sources of reference identified by the institution.
-

Criteria for Objective 4

The report will include a qualitative statement on the extent to which the procedures are in keeping with QQI policy for Access, Transfer and Progression.

This statement may be accompanied by a range of ancillary statements and recommendations and possibly recommendations for conditions in reference to this objective.

The criterion to be used by the team in reaching conclusions for this objective is QQI Policy and Criteria for Access, Transfer and Progression

Criteria for Objective 5

When the statutory international education quality assurance scheme is in place, the report will include a qualitative statement on the extent to which the procedures are compliant with the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners.

This statement may be accompanied by a range of ancillary statements and recommendations and possibly recommendations for conditions in reference to this objective.

The criterion to be used by the team in reaching conclusions for this objective is the Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners.

Key questions to be addressed by the review for each objective

- How have quality assurance procedures and reviews been implemented within the institution?
- How effective are the internal quality assurance procedures and reviews of the institution?
- Are the quality assurance procedures in keeping with European Standards and Guidelines?
- Are the quality assurance procedures in keeping with QQI policy and guidelines, or their equivalent?
- Who takes responsibility for quality and quality assurance across the institution?
- How transparent, accessible and comprehensive is reporting on quality assurance and quality?
- How is quality promoted and enhanced?
- Are there effective innovations in quality enhancement and assurance?
- Is the student experience in keeping with the institution's own stated mission and strategy?
- Are achievements in quality and quality assurance in keeping with the institution's own stated mission and strategy?
- How do achievements in quality and quality assurance measure up against the institution's own goals or targets for quality?

Section 3 The Review Process

3.1 PROCESS

The primary basis for the review process is this handbook.

3.2 REVIEW TEAM PROFILE

QQI will appoint the Review Team to conduct the institutional review. Review Teams are composed of peer reviewers who are students and senior institutional leaders and staff from comparable institutions as well as external representatives. The size of the Team and the duration of their visit will depend on the size and complexity of the institution but in general the Review Team for an institute of technology will consist of five or six persons. Each Review Team includes a chairperson and coordinating reviewer, and may be supported by a rapporteur, who is not a member of the team, to take and collate notes of meetings. A single team may undertake the review of two different institutions.

Reviewers are not QQI employees, but rather peers of the institution. The institution will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed composition of their Review Team to ensure there are no conflicts of interest, and QQI will ensure an appropriate and entirely independent team of reviewers is selected for the institution. QQI has final approval over the composition of each Review Team.

There will be appropriate gender representation on the Review Team. The team will consist of carefully selected and trained and briefed reviewers who have appropriate skills and are competent to perform their tasks. The team will operate under the leadership of the Review Chairperson.

The Review Team will be appointed in keeping with the following profile:

1. A Review Chairperson

The role of the chairperson is to act as leader of the Review Team. This is an international reviewer who is a (serving or recently former) senior third-level institution leader – usually a head of institution or deputy head of institution or a senior policy advisor who:

- possesses a wide range of higher education experience
- demonstrates a deep understanding of the complexities of the higher education system
- understands often unique QA governance arrangements
- has proven experience in the management of innovation and change.

2. A Coordinating Reviewer

The role of the coordinating reviewer is to act as secretary to the Team as well as to be a full Review Team member. This is usually a person with expertise in the Higher Education system and prior experience in participating in external reviews. As the coordinating reviewer is responsible for drafting the report, he or she will possess proven excellent writing abilities.

3. A Student Reviewer

The role of the student reviewer is to represent the student voice in the Review Team. The student reviewer will be typically a student with significant experience of higher education or an undergraduate student who has completed a quality assurance training programme and can represent the viewpoint of students.

4. An Industry Representative

The role of the industry representative is to bring an industry perspective to the Review Team. This representative should understand that their role in the review is to represent industry as a whole and not any particular industrial sector. QQI may seek guidance on the suitability of a particular profile for an industry representative from the institution.

In addition to the specific roles above, the full Team complement will include a range of experts with the following knowledge and experience:

- Experience of higher education quality assurance processes
- Experience of postgraduate research programmes
- Experience and proven ability in the advancement of teaching and learning

Details of Review Team roles and responsibilities can be found in Appendix B of the Cyclical Reviews Handbook.

3.3   PROCEDURE AND TIMELINES

The outline set out in the policy (below) will be elaborated further and timelines will be set out to accompany it, through discussion and consultation.

Step	Action	Dates	Outcome
Terms of Reference (ToR)	Completion of an institutional information profile by QQI Confirmation of ToR with institution and HEA	9 months before the main review visit (MRV)	Terms of Reference published
Preparation	Appointment of an expert Review Team Consultation with the institution on any possible conflicts of interest	6-9 months before the MRV	Review Team appointed
Self-evaluation	Forwarding to QQI of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)	12 weeks before the MRV	ISER published (optional)
Desk Review	Desk review of the ISER by the Team	Before the initial meeting	ISER initial response provided

Step	Action	Dates	Outcome
Initial Meeting	An initial meeting of the Review Team, including reviewer training and briefing	5 weeks after the ISER, 7 weeks before the MRV	Team training and briefing is complete and Team identify key themes and additional documents required
Planning visit	A visit to the institution by the Chair and Coordinating Reviewer to receive information about the ISER process, discuss the schedule for the main review visit and discuss additional documentation requests	5 weeks after the ISER, 7 weeks before the MRV	An agreed note of the Planning Visit
Main Review Visit	To receive and consider evidence on the ways in which the institution has performed in respect of the objectives and criteria set out in the ToR	12 weeks after the receipt of ISER	A short preliminary oral report to the institution
Report	Preparation of a draft report by the Team	6-8 weeks after the MRV	
	Draft report sent to the institution for a check of factual accuracy	12 weeks after the MRV	
	Institution responds with any factual accuracy corrections	2 weeks after receipt of draft report	
	Preparation of a final report by QQI	2 weeks after factual accuracy response	QQI Review Report
	Preparation of an institutional response	2 weeks after final report	Institutional response

Step	Action	Dates	Outcome
Outcomes	Consideration of the Review Report and findings by QQI together with the institutional response and the plan for implementation	Next available meeting of QQI committee	Formal decision about the effectiveness of QA procedures *In some cases, directions to the institution and a schedule for their implementation*
	Preparation of QQI quality profile	2 weeks after decision	Quality profile published
Follow-up	*The form of follow-up will be determined by whether or not 'directions' are issued to the institution. In general, where directions are issued the follow-up period will be shorter and more specific actions may be required as part of the direction*		
	Preparation of an institutional implementation plan	1 month after decision	Publication of the institutional implementation plan by the institution
	One-year follow-up report to QQI for noting. This and subsequent follow-up may be integrated into annual reports to QQI	1 year after the MRV	Publication of the follow-up report by QQI and the institution
	Continuous reporting and dialogue on follow-up through the annual institutional reporting and dialogue process	Continuous	Annual Institutional Quality Report Dialogue Meeting notes

Note: The total period from start to finish is approximately 15 months but will depend on QQI committee meeting dates.

Appendix B: Main Review Visit Schedule

DATE 22/05/2023

Time (GMT)	Group	Role	Purpose
09.00-09.30	Institutional Coordinator	Assistant Registrar	Meeting with Institutional Coordinator
09.30-10.00	Private Review Team Meeting		
10.00-10.30	1. President & Registrar	President Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar	Private Meeting with President and Registrar. To discuss institutional mission, strategic plan. Roles and responsibilities for QA and enhancement.
10.30-11.30	2. Institute Executive	President Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation Secretary/Financial Controller Head of Strategic Projects	Discuss institutional mission, strategic plan. Roles and responsibilities for QA and Enhancement.
11.30-12.00	Private Review Team Meeting. Tea / Coffee		
12.00-12.25	3. Academic Council	Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Head of Department of Film and Media and National Film School Head of Department of Humanities and Arts Management Academic - FEH Institute Librarian Student Experience Manager	Discuss mechanisms employed by the Academic Council for monitoring QA & QE and how it ensures effectiveness

12.30-12:55	4. Governing Body Representatives	Governing Body Chairperson Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)	Discuss mechanisms employed by the Governing Body for monitoring QA & QE and how it ensures effectiveness
13.00-14:00	Review Team Lunch/ Break		
14.00-14.40	5. Heads of Faculty	Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities	Discuss how the Institution monitors the effectiveness of its QA/ QE processes and structures and how it ensures the outcomes are enacted in an appropriate, consistent and timely manner.
14.45-15:10	6. Student Union Officers	President Elect 2023/24 Education Officer 2022/23 and 2023/24 Education Officer 2020/21 and 2021/22 Welfare Officer 2021/22 and 2022/23 Welfare Officer Elect 2023/24	Discuss student engagement and student role in the Institute in QA, Strategic Planning and decision-making processes.
15.15-15.45	Private Review Team Meeting		
15.45-16:25	7. Student Representatives: Undergraduates	FEH - Digital Marketing, Year 3 FEH - Applied Entrepreneurship, Year 1 FFACT, Photography, Year 3 FFACT, Creative Computing, Year 4 FFACT, Creative Music Production, Year 3 FFACT, Applied Psychology, Year 4 FEH, Applied Entrepreneurship, Year 1 FFACT, Applied Psychology, Year 4 FFACT, Modelmaking, Year 4	Discussion with students from all Faculties, to include representation from different years, disciplines and service users.

| 16.30-17.10 | 8. Student Representatives: Postgraduates | FFACT, MA ARC
FFACT, MSc UX Design
FFACT, MSc Cyberpsychology
FFACT, MA Screenwriting
FFACT (CFA) Certificate in Design Thinking
FFACT (CFA) Certificate in Design Thinking
FEH - PgDip, EDI
FEH - PgDip, EDI | Discussion with students from all Faculties, to include representation from different years, disciplines and service users. To include taught postgraduates. |
| 17.15-17.30 | Private Review Team Meeting | | |

DATE 23/05/2023

Time (GMT)	Group	Role	Purpose
09.00-09.15	Institutional Coordinator	Assistant Registrar	Meeting with Institutional Coordinator to clarify issues from previous day and review today.
09.15-09.55	9. QE Sub-Committee / Quality Assurance	Head of Department Humanities and Arts Management (Chair) Senior Quality Officer Assistant Registrar Administrator, FEH Administrator, FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FEH Education Officer, Students' Union	Discussion on experience of implementing quality assurance throughout the institution.
10.00-10.40	10. Members of Programme Validation Sub-Committee	Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar (Chair) Academic - FFACT Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT CFA Project Co-ordinator Academic and Student Affairs Coordinator Marketing Manager Education Officer, Students' Union	Discuss role of committee in governance of QA procedures for approval of new programmes and modifications to current programmes
10.45-11.00	Private Review Team Meeting		

11.00 -11.40	11. Members of Research and Development Sub-Committee	Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation (Chair) Former Head of Research Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FEH Enterprise and Development Manager EDI Manager Research Student Representative	Discuss role of committee in governance of QA procedures for research and innovation
11.45-12.25	12. Members of the Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee	Head of Department of Entrepreneurship (Chair) Deputy Librarian Educational Technologist Academic - FEH Academic - FEH Learning and Development Officer Head of Teaching and Learning Academic - FFACT Education Officer, Students' Union	Discuss role of committee in governance of QA procedures for Teaching and Learning
12.30-12.55	13. Demand Generation Presentation, Marketing, Web etc.	Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar Marketing Manager Marketing Executive Head of Department of Entrepreneurship	To discuss management of public information and communication regarding programmes, demand generation, promotional activities etc.
13.00-14.00	Review Team Lunch/ Break		

14.00-14.40	14. Heads of Departments	Head of Department of Entrepreneurship Head of Department of Humanities and Arts Management Head of Department of Design and Visual Arts Head of Department of Film and Media - National Film School Head of Department of Technology and Psychology Head of European Projects - National Film School	To discuss Quality Management Processes at the Department Level, implementation & how their effectiveness is ensured.
14.45-15.25	15. Academic staff from various Faculties Faculties	Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FEH Academic - FEH Academic - FFACT	To discuss involvement in QA and enhancement
15.30-16.00	Private Review Team Meeting		
16.00-16.40	16. Staff supporting implementation of undergraduate curriculum	Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FFACT Academic - FEH Academic - FEH Academic - FEH	To discuss involvement in QA and enhancement
16:45-17:25	17. Staff from Student Support Services	Student Experience Manager Student Learning Centre Careers Officer Assistive Technology Administrator, Student Experience Team Counsellor Health Centre Nurse Fees and Grants Officer	To discuss involvement in QA and enhancement
17.30-18.00	Private Review Team Meeting		

DATE 24/05/2023

Time (GMT)	Group	Role	Purpose
09.00-09.15	Institutional Coordinator		Meeting with Institutional Coordinator
09.15-09.45	18. Directorate of Research, Development and Innovation	Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation Enterprise and Development Manager Former Head of Research Head of Department of Design and Visual Arts/Principal Investigator Public Design Lab SoPHIA Project (Horizon 2020) Head of European Projects - FilmEU	To discuss the implementation of QA procedures for research
09.50-10.20	19. Academic Staff and post-doctoral researchers	Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Academic - FFACT Post-doctoral Researcher Post-doctoral Researcher Academic - FFACT Academic - FEH Academic - FFACT Researcher	Staff experience of research management and supervision, the relationship between teaching, research and innovation, QA and enhancements and the impacts on the research student experience.
10:25-10.55	Private Review Team Meeting		
10.55-11.25	20. Graduate Students	FFACT, Masters by Research FFACT, Masters by Research FFACT, Masters by Research Graduate (November 2022) FFACT, Masters by Research	To discuss QA & QE procedures with postgraduates with current and recently graduated Research students

11.30-12.10	21. External Stakeholders	Head of Enterprise and Economics, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	To discuss engagement of external stakeholders in strategic management and QA structures (IADT's engagement function.)
		National Programme Manager - New Frontiers Programme, Enterprise Ireland	
		Director, Young Irish Filmmakers	
		Arts Officer, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council	
		National Network of Learning Cities (including Dublin Learning City)	
		CEO, Screen Producers Ireland	
12.15-12.55	22. Industry Stakeholders	Creative and Cultural Industries, Skillnet	To discuss engagement of IADT with industry stakeholders with regard to programme development, industry placement and employment.
		Managing Director, EGG VFX	
		Head of Studio Operations, Virgin Media	
		Head of RTÉ Learn and Access	
		Designer & Strategist, Wove	
		Owner, Good As Gold	
13.00-14.00	Review Team Lunch/ Break		
14.00-14.40	23. Access and Widening Participation: Staff	Assistant Registrar	To discuss QA aspects of student recruitment, admission, progression with particular reference to entrants via Access routes
		Student Experience Manager	
		School Liaison Officer	
		Admissions Officer	
		Disability Officer	
		Access Officer	
		Admissions Officer	
14.40-15.30	24. Access and Widening Participation: Students	FEH, New Media Studies, Year 4	To discuss quality of student experience for those admitted via Access routes
		FEH, New Media Studies, Year 2	
		FFACT, Creative Music Production, Year 2	
		FFACT, Art (Graduate)	
		FEH, Digital Content Creation, Year 4	
		FEH, Digital Marketing & Sales, Year 4	
		FFACT, Graphic Design, Year 1	
		FFACT, MSc Cyberpsychology	
15.30-16.00	Private Review Team Meeting		

16.00-16.25	25. International Office: Staff	Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation International Officer Assistant Registrar Admissions Officer FFACT/George Brown - MA Design for Change Projects Co-ordinator - FilmEU and Tertiary	To discuss involvement in QA and enhancement in International Education.
16.30-17.10	26. International Students - incoming & outgoing	FFACT, MA - Filmmaking FFACT, Graphic Design, Year 2	To discuss international student engagement in the Institute, particularly the student learning experience
17.15-17.30	Private Review Team Meeting		

DATE 25/05/2023

Time (GMT)	Group	Role	Purpose
09.00-09.15	Institutional Coordinator		Meeting with Institutional Coordinator
09.15-09.55	27. Staff from collaborative providers, partners and/or PRSBs	Head of Innovation and Knowledge Transfer, TU Dublin and Head of the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium Director, UCD Creative Futures Academy Lead, Tertiary Project, IADT Tertiary project Partner, Kildare Wicklow Education and Training Board Principal, Blackrock Further Education Institute Engagement Manager, NovaUCD IADT Lead, Creative Futures Academy	To discuss arrangements re QA with collaborative providers
10.00-10.40	28. Staff from Human Resources incl. staff development	Human Resources Manager Staff Training, Learning + Development Officer Human Resources Administrator Human Resources Administrator HR - Tearmann Project Human Resources Officer Head of Teaching + Learning EDI Manager	To discuss HR procedures that support QA & QE among all staff
10.45-11.25	29. Staff from Finance and Campus Infrastructure	Secretary/Financial Controller Finance Manager Financial Accountant Finance Officer Campus Developments Manager Estates and Campus Services Manager Assistant Estates and Campus Services Manager	To consider funding prospects and opportunities to further develop the campus facilities to support teaching, research and the wider student experience
11.30-11.45	Private Review Team Meeting		

11.45-12.25	30. Staff from IT, Library Services, Academic and Student Affairs	Institute Librarian Deputy Librarian Educational Technologist Senior Technical Officer Systems Librarian Institutional Research and Data Analysis Officer (A+SA) Academic + Student Affairs Co-ordinator Senior Quality Officer	
12.30- 12.55, 25 mins available for extra session			
13.00-14.00	Review Team Lunch/ Break		
14..00-16.30	Private Review Team Meeting		
16.30-17.30	31. Campus tour to review facilities		

DATE 26/05/2023

Time (GMT)	Group	Role	Purpose
09.00-10.30	Private Review Team Meeting		
10.30-11.00	QQI Meets with Institutional Coordinator	Assistant Registrar	To gather feedback
11.00-11.30	QQI meets with Review Team		To discuss Review Team's key findings
11.30-12.00	Private Review Team Meeting		
12.00-12.30	Meeting with President	President Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar Assistant Registrar	
12.30-13.00	Oral Report	President Vice President, Academic Affairs and Registrar Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation Secretary/Financial Controller Head of Strategic Projects Assistant Registrar Senior Quality Officer	
13.00-14.00	Lunch		
14.00-17.00	Private Review Team Meeting		Report drafting

Glossary

Term	Meaning/Definition
2012 / 2019 Act	Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 / 2019 Amendment to the Act
ADD/ADHD	Attention Deficit (and Hyperactivity/ Impulsiveness) Disorder
ADG	Academic Development Group
AI	Artificial Intelligence
APCR	Academic Planning, Coordination and Review Committee
AQR/AIQRs	Annual Quality Reports/ Annual Institutional Quality Reports
AR/VR	Augmented Reality / Virtual Reality
AT	Assistive Technology
ATP	Access, Transfer and Progression
BCFE	Ballyfermot College of Further Education
BFEI	Blackrock Further Education Institute
BIFE	Bray Institute of Further Education
CAO	Central Applications Office
CDETB	City of Dublin Education and Training Board
CFA	Creative Futures Academy
CINNTE	The name given to QQI's first higher education review cycle
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DAB	Designated Awarding Body
DARE	Disability Access Route to Education
DCFE	Dundrum College of Further Education
DDLETB	Dublin & Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DELTA	Disciplinary Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment
DFEI	Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute
DFHERIS	Department for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DIAS	Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies
DLR	Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown
DRIC	Dublin Region Innovation Consortium

DSS	Disability Support Service
ECF	(Ireland's) Employment Control Framework (to manage and regulate the recruitment and hiring of public servants)
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
EdTEch	Educational Technology
ERASMUS+	The EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe
ESG (2015)	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
EUA	European University Alliance
FE	Further Education
FEH	Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities
FFA	Framework for Action
FFACT	The Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies
FilmEU	A proposed European universities in the broad fields of the creative arts and industries
FYF	First Year Focus
FYFMO	First Year Matters – Moving On
GP	General Practitioner
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HCI(3)	Human Capital Initiative (Pillar 3 funding)
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEAR	Higher Education Access Route
HPAL	Hourly Paid Associate Lecturers
HR	Human Resources
IADT	Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dún Laoghaire
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IP	Institutional Profile/Intellectual Property
ISER	Institutional Self-Evaluation Report
IoTs	Institutes of Technology
IReL	Irish Research e-Library
IT	Information Technology
IUA	Irish Universities Association
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

MS	Microsoft
NAIN	National Academic Integrity Network
NCAD	National College of Art and Design
NFETL(I)	National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (in Ireland)
NFS	National Film School
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NStEP	National Student Engagement Programme
NTO	National Tertiary Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PATH4	(A HEA funded initiative) Programmes for Access to Higher Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PMASS	Professional, Managerial, Administration and Support Staff
POC	Prorgamme Oversight Committee
PPP	Public private partnership
PVC	Programme Validation Committee
QA/E	Quality Assurance/Enhancement
QAG	(QQI's Statutory) Quality Assurance Guidelines
QDM	Quality Dialogue Meeting
QEC	Quality Enhancement Committee
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
R+D	Research and Development Committee
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SCFE	Sallynoggin College of Further Education
SDGs	(The United Nations) Sustainable Development Goals
SEC	Student Experience Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
Springboard(+)	Government initiative offering free/heavily subsidised qualifications at various levels in areas where there are employment opportunities
STC	Sound Training College
SU	Students' Union
T+L	Teaching and Learning Committee
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
THEA	Technological Higher Education Association

TU	Technological Universities
TUTF	Technological Universities Transformation Fund
UCD	University College Dublin
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
USI	Union of Students in Ireland
UI/UX	User Experience/Interface Design
VC	Venture Capital
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard – IADT's VLE)