

# Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT)

---

## Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 Reflections on Performance

### Prerequisites

A cycle 2 self-evaluation report has been received from IADT.

All sections have been completed, and they report progress against the 2014 targets as set out in the published Compact.

Appendices for two domains were provided: Regional Clusters; and Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning. Also, supporting information is provided in relation to benchmarking at IADT.

### Overview

- By way of overview, the introduction to the IADT progress report to the HEA (June 2015) asserts that IADT has made 'very good progress against all KPIs', and that IADT is 'well on the way to achieving' its goals for 2016 (p. 2). A close reading of the Progress Report indicates that, in general, these are well-founded statements.
- The report alerts the HEA to the fact that reasons have been identified for any failures to achieve IADT's goals and that plans are in place to address such situations.
- Shortcomings in progress are highlighted as being 'due to factors that may be outside IADT's direct control or that arise out of changes in the Institute's direction post-Strategic Plan publication' (p. 25). It is noted in the report that, at the time of signing the Compact Agreement, IADT was developing its Strategic Plan (p. 25).
- In the report, IADT declares its wish 'to discuss amendments to Compact targets which may be necessary as a result of internal strategic changes' (p. 2). Such changes include a strategic shift from provision of Level 7 to Level 8 courses, and the development of formal links with Further Education (p. 2). Also, some new KPIs are proposed (further information below); these are likely to require further discussion between the HEA and IADT.

## Self-evaluation report - domain level review

### 1. Regional clusters:

Within this domain, 4 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 4 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets.

Three objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. Work in relation to the development of a Dublin/Leinster Pillar 1 cluster, a thematic cluster and the DHREA widening-participation proposal appears to be progressing in line with the IADT Compact's targets. Regarding participation, IADT is to be commended for its progress in relation to new entrants from diverse groups: the report states that 23% of entrants across all programmes belong to such groups (target for 2014 was 22%); this aligns well with the 2016 target of 25%.

It is worth noting that while progress is apparent, the self-evaluation does not provide a lot of detail. There are references to "a number of projects" or "ongoing liaison" and specific updates/examples will be sought at the meeting.

The fourth objective in this domain – extension of IADT's involvement in GradCAM – is highlighted in yellow, indicating that while some progress has been made, they are alerting HEA to a potential issue with this strategic goal. As a result IADT provides supporting information in order to propose an amendment to this objective: that GradCAM could form a cross-Dublin Leinster 1 and 2 cluster, with greater emphasis on the promotion of Level 9 and 10 research and development within the creative arts and media (p. 25) as opposed to the original proposal around a cross-institutional structured programme. A new KPI is proposed, involving the removal of numerically defined targets; the proposed KPI is the finalisation of the strategic direction of GradCAM and IADT's involvement in same to be agreed. It is not stated how progress towards this goal would be measured at end 2015 and this proposed amendment requires further discussion with IADT and possibly the wider cluster also.

### 2. Participation, equal access and lifelong learning:

Within this domain, 4 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 4 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets.

Two objectives are marked in yellow, suggesting that while some progress has been made, they are alerting HEA to a potential issue with these strategic goals. Specifically, the objectives concern IADT's targeted increase in (a) the number of mature-student new entrants and (b) new-entrant students with disabilities. In both cases, the targeted 2014 figures have not been achieved.

Supporting information is supplied to address the yellow-highlighted objectives (p. 26). In relation to (a) IADT note that participation by mature students is decreasing in the IOT sector (and to corroborate this, HEA data indicates it is decreasing across the entire sector). In relation to (b) IADT state they will not meet the proposed 13% participation target; however no definitive reason is provided as to why. As a result reduced, revised KPIs are now proposed for targets relating to mature students and to students with disabilities. It would appear that IADT measure participation of people

with disabilities differently to the HEA method. Discussions on this are taking place. IADT do state that they have the highest percentage of students with disabilities in the IOT sector but in light of the proposed revised target for this target group this is an issue to be discussed at the meeting.

Two objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. It is noteworthy that, while progression of level 8 students into year 2 is slightly below target (87%, as opposed to the 2014 target of 88%), progression of level 7 students into year 2 in 2014 already exceeds the 2016 final target. IADT is to be commended for the latter achievement. Furthermore, IADT's growing links with Further Education colleges indicate that it is likely to meet (or, perhaps, exceed) the final target by end 2016.

IADT missed their target in enrolling students with disabilities, but state that they enrol the highest number of these students in the IoT sector; however, HEA data would indicate that they are below average in this. IADT should consider this discrepancy and update the HEA at the meeting.

Increasing part-time/flexible provision does not appear high on IADT's agenda. Is there an opportunity to enhance IADT's offering?

### **3. Excellent teaching and learning and quality of student experience:**

Within this domain, 8 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 8 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Succinct bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets.

All objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. Inspection of IADT's progress and comparison of this data with the agreed Compact reveal that substantial progress has been made.

For example, IADT has greatly exceeded its aim to increase the number of staff taking Learning Innovation Network (LIN) Accredited Professional Development programmes: 58 LIN certificates are reported as having been achieved; this is more than double the 2014 target of 22 LIN certificates. However, it should be noted that in some of the updates provided, elements of the progress referenced relates to 2015, as opposed to 2014. Overall, significant progress has been made under this heading. Some discussion on plans to set appropriately bench-marked successor targets for 2016 and beyond might be useful.

### **4. High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation:**

Within this domain, 4 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 4 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets. All objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. Inspection of IADT's progress and comparison of this data with the agreed Compact reveal that progress has been made.

It should be noted that, as IADT point out in their Compact, they do not provide level 10 (Doctorate) education. For example one objective is to increase the number of postgraduate research students. More specifically the aim is increase from 15 students in 2014 to 17 students in 2016. So while progress has been made in this objective the scale should be borne in mind.

More generally, there is an overarching strategic aim in the Compact on innovation, research and enterprise/industry engagement and the four objectives relate to this strategic aim.

The four objectives have numerical targets and progress is clear. For example, IADT has already achieved its 2014 and 2015 targets for RDI funding per academic staff member. Also, IADT's level of collaboration with industry partners is growing and this should be recognised.

#### **5. Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange:**

Within this domain, 4 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 4 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets. All objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. Inspection of IADT's progress and comparison of this data with the agreed Compact reveal that progress has been made.

It would have been desirable to have been provided with more detail on some of the progress under this heading. For example an objective for 2014 is to extend enterprise and community engagement to new markets and communities. IADT describe active participation and active engagement but specific detail as to the nature of this engagement would have been desirable, e.g. any positive outcomes such as changes in curriculum based on industry input.

Incidentally, figures for student placements/internships are listed as 'approximate' (pp. 15-16); it would be preferable to have precise figures in the report. Also, there appear to be typographical errors in the third column on p. 15 in relation to the 2016 registration and completion targets.

Some specific information on the nature and outcomes of engagement with industry would be useful and should be a discussion point at the meeting.

#### **6. Enhanced internationalisation:**

Within this domain, 3 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 3 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets. All objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved. Inspection of IADT's progress and comparison of this data with the agreed Compact reveal that substantial progress has been made.

For example, the end 2016 target for increased overseas and EU student recruitment has already been exceeded; in so doing, the actual number of international student recruitments is more than double the 2014 target figure. Likewise, the end 2016 target for development of formal links with international HEIs has already been surpassed dramatically.

In the context of future planning and discussions at the next meeting, it might be useful to discuss further expansion of targets; perhaps ones that are more ambitious, on the basis of progress to-date.

## **7. Institutional consolidation:**

Within this domain, 3 objectives are identified in the IADT Compact. All 3 objectives are duly discussed in the progress report. Bullet points are provided as evidence of IADT's progression towards 2014 targets. All objectives are marked in green and listed as achieved.

Inspection of IADT's progress and comparison of this data with the agreed Compact indicate that while some progress has been made around specific tasks, there is evidence that progress on larger strategic planning (e.g. Memo of agreement for teaching and research) have not been achieved as planned in 2014. Similarly, a framework agreement for module sharing was an objective, but while a number of tasks completed are listed the submission does not explicitly state that this framework was in fact agreed.

Institutional consolidation for IADT is strongly focussed on the relationship with UCD. A 2014 objective was completion of a plan of action for a strategic relationship. It does not appear that this objective has been completed. Reference is made to 'on-going discussions' therefore it is not accurate to describe this target as 'achieved'.

Nonetheless, it is evident that IADT's partnership with UCD is evolving and includes a range of projects (from conferences, to shared course offerings, to research and publishing collaboration). But progress within this important domain (particularly the second and third objectives) appears to be somewhat less precisely defined than in other areas. For example, joint publications are mentioned as having been actioned; it would be very informative to view a sample list of same (i.e. an Appendix). Likewise, examples of modules that will be included in the shared teaching pilot would be elucidatory.

## **8. Additional Notes:**

- As stated above, IADT has proposed two revised (reduced) KPIs in the area of participation, equal access and lifelong learning. These are discussed in greater detail within the relevant domain's commentary.
- Where IADT is the sole 'owner' of progress, much has been achieved. However, where progress involves other institutions or is related to cross-institutional projects, progress is a little less clearly defined.
- IADT is well ahead of target in some areas. On this basis, considering their significant progress to-date, it may be worth considering if revised (increased) KPIs are required in certain domains. Further information is below.

## **Proposed changes to compact:**

### *Regional Clusters*

IADT proposes that GradCAM could form a cross-Dublin Leinster 1 and 2 cluster, with greater emphasis on the promotion of Level 9 and 10 research and development within the creative arts and media. A new KPI is proposed, involving the removal of numerically defined targets; the proposed KPI is the finalisation of the strategic direction of GradCAM and IADT's involvement in same to be agreed. Notably, it is not stated how progress towards this goal would be measured at end 2015.

### *Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning*

IADT has proposed two revised (reduced) KPIs in this area

- (a) the number of mature-student new entrants and
- (b) new-entrant students with disabilities. In both cases, the targeted 2014 figures have not been achieved.

In relation to (a), IADT note that participation by mature students is decreasing in the IOT sector (and, corroborating this, HEA data indicates it is decreasing across the entire sector). In relation to (b), IADT state they will not meet the proposed 13% participation target; however, no definitive reason is provided. Reduced, revised KPIs are now proposed for targets relating to mature students and to students with disabilities.

### *Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience*

Substantial progress has been made within this domain. Discussion may well be required on setting appropriately bench-marked successor targets for 2016 and beyond for IADT.

### *Enhanced Internationalisation*

Two out of the three targets for 2016 in the area of internationalisation have been achieved in full by end 2014.

It may be worth discussing with IADT if further expansion of targets are required: that is, ones that are more ambitious, on the basis of progress to date.