

The HEA welcomed the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT) to the meeting and gave an overview of the strategic dialogue process and the context in which the process operates. IADT was invited to provide an update on institutional progress.

The HEA welcomed a strong compact self-evaluation report. The report was evidence based demonstrating an excellent track record in setting and achieving targets. There was also careful analysis of any unachieved goals and detailed plans in place to address any such situations.

The Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun-Laoghaire reported that it had achieved significantly on its target areas noting a specific strength in interdisciplinary areas. In terms of stretch, while they have met many of their targets, indeed exceeded some, they don't feel they have undershot, rather they have been realistic in setting their goals. Like all HEI's they have challenges, such as with funding, staffing and progressing capital projects (they noted three PPP buildings on hold). Their institutional management philosophy is predicated on very tight spending controls, and on balancing income streams from exchequer and non-exchequer sources. On finances, they have requested a change to the RGAM weighting applied to Film and TV given the costs involved and are looking for a response to that. The HEA confirmed that a review has been commissioned. In measuring their performance they are benchmarking widely and have some good examples on this practice. On HR issues they have some difficulties with current contract restrictions and would welcome national progress in this area. As a modern HEI they, like others, have no flexibility to reward staff, to free up research time for them – IADT-DL would like to see modernised contracts with annualised hours and an opportunity to better reward high-performing staff.

On GRADcam and the regional cluster, progress has not been as good as in other areas as maintaining the various partnerships in the Dublin Region is challenging. On alliances, challenges and the future, IADT-DL were of the view that the continued expansion of HE is unsustainable given current resource allocations. IADT's cluster project on articulation from Further Education (FE) has shown that that sector also needs to be seen as a strong and viable with well-formed links to HE. In the current model some students are not well served by, or well suited to, a HE experience. This causes students to drop out, a national issue that we all need to address. For Ireland, FE needs to be seen as a viable option direct from school, it is internationally and should be here too.

Notwithstanding IADT's strong performance the HEA noted that they had missed their target on enrolling students with disabilities and that the Mature Student target looked as if it was being revised down. IADT responded that this might be a data issue rather than a policy change. They have a strong record on access and engagement and there might be a slight swing towards Springboard provision which is being counted in a different way. They also noted discrepancies, numbers being first year based whereas there is a significant direct entry cohort to second year and beyond (through FE articulation routes). They have also used the CAO direct entry system and this has increased both applications and entry to IADT-DL programmes by target cohorts. For clarity, IADT-DL confirmed that the targets were set on

the basis of IADT-DL numbers, not HEA numbers. IADT-DL undertook to revisit the recording of these numbers to better reflect their aspirations and performance. On mature student numbers, IADT-DL referenced national data on mature entry being affected by the economic upturn. On students with disabilities, the 2011-12 AHEAD report shows that national figure is 4.7, IADT is 9.9. The discrepancy with HEA and IADT data also arises around the timing when students declare, which can often be later in the year and this needs consideration. Overall there are a number of reasons for discrepancies or lower than expected outcomes (for example students might not have the €600 or so required to get the diagnosis they require so as to access supports they should get). The HEA noted that on the basis of the numbers in the equal access survey data it looks like IADT will meet their 13% target but is revising back to 11%. If this is the case they will need to justify or supplement this proposal as outlined in the discussion.

On other proposed changes to compact objectives/targets the HEA and IADT-DL discussed performance on research and with enterprise. IADT-DL noted minor changes proposed to reflect its position on engagement. Both performance to date and the targets set in more recent strategic plans suggest they are very well placed for this. They can report RDI funding per staff member of € 9,000 p/a. This was achieved by two actions in particular, first was restructuring in 2012 where a new directorate was developed. They have also had significant European success, working with IBM for example and clearly targeting industry partners and projects. They are looking at short courses, in user interface (UI) for example, to meet industry needs and then seeking to leverage research and other projects from that. Some challenges with staffing and contractual aspects have arisen but they are working hard to make progress. They have also been investing in a staff development fund, to go towards PhD training, which has helped.

On scaling the activity, the research from innovation vouchers towards spin-outs and such is happening at IADT-DL. They plan that progression could be to bigger projects, but could also be greater relations on other academic or design projects. Such ventures have also allowed technology and arts schools to build productive relationships. For industry partners, such as with IBM, they are learning from IADT-DL and are seeing the value of a blend of Arts and Tech, taking on students from each stream.

In their Media Cube, IADT-DL have 16 start-ups and a strong through flow of enterprise ideas but the challenge is where they go next. It is in everyone's interest to see them scaling through Media Cube and out into the wider commercial environment. Companies might not want to move on but IADT-DL want to see them progress and succeed. They are usefully located on site too as students can get involved in these companies through internships and so on.

On the future delivery and development of the compact, IADT-DL and HEA discussed ambition, stretch goals and future target setting. As an example, the HEA raised part-time/flexible provision and if this was on IADT's agenda or if the ambitions were appropriately ambitious given their demonstrated ability of strong performance (are the compact targets set and being delivered adequately challenging for the institution, is there a chance that strong progress risks a suggestion of poor level of ambition).

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IADT-DL responded that there was absolutely no complacency. They are very ambitious but also have to be realistic in terms of the constraints they face, such as resources, as discussed earlier. Many of these challenges are outside the control of Irish HEIs, so they have to be somewhat cautious that stretch goals won't impact the quality of the student experience. IADT-DL won't make such a compromise and that's a strategic discussion they can and will robustly defend. Beyond this, they know they are good – they are winning awards internationally, their staff and students are winning prizes, they are getting their students into excellent jobs. They are also benchmarking, constantly looking at performance across all areas of activity. Programmatic review documents capture some of this, in other cases the evidence is that they are invited to participate in European projects as valued partners. Beyond this, demonstrated growth in interdisciplinarity, in the cross-development of programmes, is evidence of growth, change and of ambition.

All their programmes are full, all their programmes have been internationally validated in last 18 months. Their new masters' level programmes are well-subscribed and all programmes have excellent industry partnerships.

The HEA agreed that both progress and IADT-DL self-analysis of that progress was excellent. Of the issues arising in the report, the only remaining significant concern was on the regional cluster. The HEA acknowledged that the FE widening-participation project was progressing well and in line with IADT-DL compact targets. The HEA and IADT-DL discussed future perspectives on GRADcam. It is the case that the PRTL programme was intended to bring structure and it did that, but that's being done elsewhere now. GRADcam is not in a situation where everyone has different agendas, IADT for their part would like to see it as a cluster for promotion of the creative arts agenda. But there isn't common agreement or alignment on that.

On institutional consolidation and the IADT-DL position in the higher education landscape, they note some change of atmosphere around the consolidation with UCD. There is not necessarily the same level of interest as in the past, but there are good relations and a strong underlying project. Both HEIs are continuing to look at how they can combine interests, for example in some areas of cross-disciplinary PhD work that they couldn't manage by themselves. The new administration may be less interested in the recognised college model than hitherto fore. The broader Dublin regional arts education question also remains. There are questions of price versus prize for all participants, so it probably can't be a TU, but a Creative Arts University with Colleges of the Universities of the Arts could be of interest and a possible solution. Again the conversation here hasn't necessarily progressed as well as it might, but it's because they have all been doing different things – IADT restructuring, DIT with the TU, Grangegorman, NCAD with its own legitimate concerns and so on.

As a close out, IADT-DL was offered the opportunity to raise other items or areas of the HEA analysis that they saw fit.

They noted that the ECF remains a real problem as they have real ambition and plans but can't activate these. On the Arts side they have seen at film board that it has been lifted or relaxed somewhat, but HEIs need a similar flexibility. The HEA noted that there was no further

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ECF type number cut likely but equally there was no evidence that a relaxation of the ECF rules was imminent.

On PPP and capital projects IADT-DL raised their concerns that they have never been in a position to finish their 2001 capital development plan. In that regard they are constrained and can't grow as a HEI unless this can be addressed. There is also a broader underlying funding issue here on full-time versus part time definitions, they can't necessarily run the programmes that they want with the flexibility they'd like, but IADT-DL are creative and are looking forward.

Finally, on students with disabilities, the point on identifying the cohort or 'finding out' is interesting. If they find out later then how can they tie back to recruitment or success is recruiting if they don't get them until later. In some ways this was not a good measure of their capacity to recruit and would be something they would like to return to with the HEA.

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### **Appendix**

Members of the Senior Management Team and HEA Executive, along with an External Advisor, met with the institutional representatives as set out below. The meeting was chaired by HEA Chief Executive, Tom Boland. A process auditor was also present at the meeting.

### **IADT-DL representatives**

Dr Annie Doona	President
Bernard Mullarkey	Secretary/Financial Controller
Dr Marian O'Sullivan	Registrar
Dr Andrew Power	Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies
Dr Josephine Browne	Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities.