

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 Reflections on Performance

Prerequisites

NCAD have submitted a complete self-evaluation report for Cycle 2.

All sections have been completed and the college report on progress made on the twenty objectives set out in the original compact. While many sections are complete or on target, a number are not on track, or are revised, and these are noted below.

One appendix is provided for innovation and engagement.

In terms of corporate governance and statutory requirements, NCAD were subject to a detailed audit by the C&AG in 2014 and on foot of issues raised, the HEA executive continues to work with the college on these matters.

Overview

NCAD have made progress up to 2014 in all domains of the self-evaluation report. However, the college indicates that going forward that six of the twenty original compact objectives are status red and a further eight are yellow. This indicates that the majority of targets for 2016 will not be achieved within the timeframe for this compact. The main reasons provided by the college for this are: in the domain of clusters and consolidation, the reconsideration of the merger progress with UCD; in the teaching and learning domain, the introduction of a new 3+ 2 degree structure; and in the area of research, student funding, limited progress on GradCAM and limitations on staff and other resources have constricted plans for development.

On the positive side, the objectives for access and for engagement are reported to be fully achieved. There is a sense that capacity within NCAD is limiting the potential for increased innovation and industry engagement. An objective around new collaborative programmes with the community sector has been relocated from the access section of the original compact to the engagement section and is progressing very well. While NCAD report on their objectives to with reference to their own mission objectives, there is limited consideration of how this compares to experience of peer institutions in the D1 cluster (e.g. IADT) or elsewhere. There is also limited self-reflection on how factors internal to the college (e.g. degree re-structuring) have had an impact on the performance that is being reported on.

While the merger process with UCD is under review the UCD report indicates there are areas where collaboration is going well (research, enterprise engagement, internationalisation). There is less sense from the NCAD and IADT reports of a developing collaboration between those two colleges, particularly in GradCAM. NCAD report that this initiative has not progressed due to lack of funding/students. By contrast, IADT report positive participation while indicating that funding is an issue and that a proposal to involve both Dublin Pillar I and II in the future of GradCAM is to be considered shortly.

Self-evaluation report - domain level review

1. Regional clusters:

Three objectives are identified in the compact and while progress was made, it is clear that target of full merger by NCAD with UCD will not occur by 2016. Progress has been made with other partners in the alliance and on the establishment of the Institute of Education.

1. (a) *Negotiate a closer relationship with UCD up to merger*

The original compact stated that by early 2014 negotiations about a possible merger and 300k was allocated by the HEA to support this. The self-evaluation report states that the merger process is not being considered in the short term due to the absence of sectoral resources. SIDF funded exploration is ongoing with an emphasis on deepening the alliance with UCD.

(b) *Alliances with other Dublin partners, including IADT*

Initiation of collaborative project with IADT on spatial art and visualisation, summer school to be held in NCAD in 2015.

2. *Establish NCAD as a college of UCD*

A full exploration of merger has been done up to 2014. However, the process has been reconsidered as funding is not available.

3. *Constitute and establish a new Institute of Education with UCD, TCD and MIE*

Course programme agreed, working groups active, first intake of students will be 2016 rather than 2015.

2. Participation, equal access and lifelong learning:

Three objectives were agreed as part of the original compact and are reported on. Two are status yellow and one green.

1. *Introduction of a part time degree programme*

Objective was by 2014 to have established a part time degree programme as a route from cert and diploma programmes. While an outline plan has been developed, implementation has been deferred until 2016.

2. *Increase in number of Access students*

The 2014 target was 17, the outcome was 22 students. The interim target for 2015 was 18 students has been revised to 25.

Additional note:

NCAD report that there are 72 students registered with Access Service who entered through the supplementary admissions scheme = 7% of UG students. Disability Service 101 students are registered, 90 of whom are undergraduates representing 9% of undergraduate enrolments. The college indicate that 10% of year 2 students are transferring in based on a pathway

from further education. HEA profile analysis indicates that 13% of entrants are mature students, 19% indicate they have a disability and 24% are from a target socio-economic group.

Overall, the updated 2016 profile targets for access enrolments are rather unambitious, however the college actually performs very well in enrolments from the access target groups, much higher than the updated 2016 profile targets.

It is notable that NCAD has a good access enrolment programme targeting the local community. It was reported in the interim stage strategic dialogue that the institution may join the HEAR scheme. Perhaps this might be a negative development though, if its own access programme was ended as a result.

3. Academic accreditation of CPD participants in Education

Objective was by 2014 to design a credit bearing course at level 9 for 550 primary and second teachers undertaking in-service training in NCAD each year. Course has not started and college indicate approach to be developed and implemented by the Institute for Teacher Education by 2016.

3. Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience:

Three objectives were identified in compact, one achieved and two deferred due to capacity issues and new structures. It is not clear that these will be implemented within the timeframe of this compact.

1. Establish NCAD as a college of engaged learning

Establish new degree course. The MA in Socially Engaged Art and BA in Visual Arts has now been launched, targets are reported to have been achieved on recruitment although these are not quantified.

2. Identify and reward excellence in teaching

The original KPI was to implement/reward excellence in teaching through establishing and awards process and pathways to professional development. This measure has been deferred due to internal capacity issues and new teaching and learning structures. NCAD are requested to provide further details on these challenges at the meeting.

3. For NCAD to be recognised internationally as a centre of excellence of learning and teaching practice and research in teaching

Original objective was to increase international applications, in particular from the UK. This measure has been deferred due to new teaching and learning structures. It is not clear that this will be achieved within the lifetime of this compact. On the positive side NCAD report that they are working with UCD in the recruitment of EU and international students and that in 2015 they were ranked in the top 100 Art and Design colleges in the world.

4. High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation:

Six objectives were identified, one is reported to be fully achieved, two progressed but not to the extent projected, three are reported as status red on basis that while targets for 2014 were achieved, the final objectives have been revised or postponed due to resource issues.

1. *To grow the number of PhD students*

NCAD had a target of 32 PhD students by 2014, the outcome was 21 students, which tallies with HEA profile analysis. The college indicate that it is unlikely target figures will be met and the reason for this is the postgraduate funding environment. It is noted from the profile analysis that there has been a sharp drop in masters research students and a rise in masters taught.

In a commentary on these trends the college advise that the original projection was based on NCAD being further along with the +2 element of the overall degree restructuring. The delivery of the 2 year MFA in Design has been affected by the lack of a Head of Design. The delivery of some programmes is now bi-annual. The launch of a new MA Interaction Design in 2015 has only been possible with HEA funding for the UCD NCAD merger. Wider economic factors are reported to have also had an impact, chiefly the reduction in grant-aid for postgraduates and the lack of credit for students to fund PG study. GradCAM is reported not to have progressed due to lack of funding/students. However and note IADT report on this initiative and that a proposal to broaden the initiative to include other partners in Dublin is to be considered shortly.

2. *To scope and develop a professional doctorate route*

The Professional Doctorate validation target for 2014 has been achieved. However the college also reports a status red as they are unlikely to achieve 2015-16 targets for full time recruits. This is reported to be due to absence of PhD funding. Indicate there may be scope for part-time recruitment.

3. *To establish the Research Institute in Art and Design at NCAD as an international centre of research through a visiting fellow programme and other measures to enhance the international profile of the Institute and research productivity for NCAD staff.*

The target for 2014 was for 30 Fellows, the outcome was 27. Resource limitations led to the withdrawal of funding from the Research Institute which had an impact on membership.

4. *Research Grant Support scheme for individual researchers*

The research leave and grant scheme has been approved by the Academic Council. However, the college indicate that full implementation is unlikely in current funding climate.

5. *To grow income from research Innovation Activities*

This objective is closely linked with that for industry engagement and innovation. There would seem to be good progress but clarification of outcomes against the original baseline and intended targets should be provided at the meeting.

- 6. To create an international research project in the area of design innovation and the built environment in collaboration with UCD school of architecture*

A feasibility study has been completed however the project has been postponed pending the appointment of new Head of Design.

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

There are two objectives under this domain, both have progressed well. A third, new community engagement objective has been added and very positive outcomes are reported for this.

- 1. To be actively engaged in knowledge exchange partnerships with a wide range of organisations to share NCAD's knowledge and expertise to benefit the culture, society and the economy.*

Good progress is reported to have been made on this objective on the basis of some revision of original figures. The number of live projects with external partners has doubled to 51 (target was 22) and the number of students engaged in real world learning projects was 60% and is reported to be 50% but overall status green is well deserved.

- 2. To develop effective commercialisation of its research and innovation, in close collaboration with Nova UCD and Enterprise Ireland.*

Some clarification required on this section in line with target presented in original compact, however there would seem to be good progress made, with 2 spin out companies and 5 funded projects in 2014 and further growth predicted. Staff capacity in NCAD Origin8 office was cited as a limitation on ambitions.

- 3. Note that a third, objective has been transferred from the access domain: To develop a community based model of teaching and learning for young adolescents within a digital learning programme.*

It is reported that a new programme 'future creators' has been designed through a partnership by NCAD school of education and access programme with the Digital hub and H2.

6. Enhanced internationalisation:

There is one objective in this domain. The college reports that the target for 2014, was to develop and agree an internationalisation strategy, has progressed. Delivery is to occur with support from UCD International Office.

NCAD aims to have a world presence in art and design education through diversification of students, internationally recognised research and knowledge

exchange partnerships. A strategy was approved by the board which represents achievement of the target for 2014. International programmes such as Science without borders and Horizon 2020 are not referenced. The implementation of this strategy and the achievement of targets are stated to be contingent on the future relationship with UCD and resources. NCAD indicate that their target is 35 international full-time, students by 2016, 15 of which will be non-EU nationals. Currently there are 29 international students, 9 of which are non-EU. This represents a growth of international students from 3% to 9% of FT enrolments.

Collaboration with UCD seems positive but there is a risk inherent here and NCAD is asked to expand on their consideration of these challenges at the meeting with the HEA.

7. Institutional consolidation:

There are two objectives under this domain, both of which the college indicate are incomplete due to the reconsideration of the merger.

1. Deepen relationship with UCD up to a merger.

While an analysis of academic structures and governance arrangements have been explored, the future of the merger is being reconsidered in view of new strategy in UCD and absence of funding for mergers. A new validation process for the alliance (MOU and MOA) is to emerge as the outcome of a SIFD project by autumn 2015.

2. Trilateral cluster NCAD/UCD/IADT for provision of art, design and creative media education in the Dublin region.

An operational model has been agreed and a framework programme has been agreed, however the project is stated to be incomplete due to reconsideration of NCAD/UCD merger process and capacity issues.

8. Additional Notes:

There has been ongoing contact in 2015 between the HEA Executive and NCAD further to issues arising from the C&AG report. NCAD are producing an action plan setting out the measures to be taken to address shortcomings, and the timelines. The HEA have also agreed with NCAD that Mr. John Cosgrove, former Financial Controller of IT Sligo, be appointed to review the NCAD plan and actions and to report to both NCAD and the HEA on the adequacy and success of those measures. Recently a new Board has been appointed to the National College of Art and Design.

Proposed changes to the compact:

Six of the twenty original compact objectives and related targets are status red and eight are yellow. The narrative in the self-evaluation report indicates that these will not be achieved within the period of this compact.

In summary the objectives that are under review, paused or that have been changed are as follows:

Regional Clusters

- 1(a) – Merger with UCD is not being considered in the short-term
- 2 – Establishment of NCAD as a college of UCD is being reconsidered
- 3 – First intake of students to ITE deferred until 2016 (was 2015)

Participation, Access and Lifelong Learning

- 1 – Introduction of a part-time degree programme deferred until 2016 (was 2015)
Note second element of this objective, collaboration with community, transferred to engagement section.
- 3 – Academic accreditation of CPD participants deferred until 2016

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

- 2 – Establishment of teaching award deferred. Process to restart in 2016.
- 3 – Increase international recognition as centre of TL excellence – deferred.

Research

- 1 – Grow doctoral students. Target not achieved. While no change college state unlikely to achieve targets
- 2 – Professional doctoral route. Programme validated but there no intake likely.
- 3 – Establish Research Institute – unclear whether institute has or will be established. NCAD should clarify.
- 4 – Research Grant Scheme – report states target will not be achieved
- 6 – Research Project with UCD on Design postponed

Engagement

- 3 – Develop a community based learning model, note this objective has been transferred from access domain

Institutional Consolidation

- 1 - Merger with UCD under reconsideration
- 2 - Trilateral cluster governance plan is not agreed