

# Institute of Art, Design & Technology (IADT)

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## Assessment findings

In assessing performance, we have relied upon the self-evaluation report submitted by your institution, the “Reflections on Performance” document prepared by the HEA and the discussion at our recent strategic dialogue meeting, a minute of which has now been prepared. The aforementioned documentation is now attached.

The self-evaluation report, and subsequent discussion at the bilateral meeting, have shown that progress can be demonstrated across all domains.

There are areas of significant progress, including the development of links with further education colleges locally, and the benchmarking of the institute against international comparators.

Overall, IADT has demonstrated very good progress against mission-coherent objectives through an analytical and probing self-evaluation report and other data sources. The institute is commended for its use of benchmarking. The HEA would expect that the institution would continue to expand its use of benchmarking to set priorities and undertake self-evaluation.

This places IADT in Funding Performance Category 1, and it is therefore proposed to release performance funding in full in respect of the 2017 budget allocation. IADT should have regard to the specific institutional feedback provided in this document and in the “Reflections on Performance”. In advance of, and in preparation for, the next round of compact evaluations the HEA will also provide more generic feedback to all institutions as part of the formal and final communication of cycle 3 outcomes.

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Minutes of Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3 bilateral meeting, 14 September 2016

### **In attendance**

Members of the Senior Management Team and HEA Executive, along with two external advisers (Dr Andrée Sursock and Dr John Hegarty), met with the institutional representatives as set out below. The meeting was chaired by HEA Interim Chief Executive, Dr Anne Looney. A process auditor was also present at the meeting.

### **IADT representatives**

- Dr Annie Doona, President
- Mr Bernard Mullarkey, Secretary/Financial Controller
- Dr Andrew Power, Registrar
- Mr David Smith, Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies
- Ms Jessica Fuller, Head of Creative Engagement
- Dr Josephine Browne, Head of Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities

The HEA welcomed the Institute of Art, Design & Technology, Dún Laoghaire, (IADT) to the meeting and gave an overview of the strategic dialogue process and the context in which it operates. IADT was commended on its strong progress and for its self-evaluation report that provides evidence of reflection on performance and identification of issues arising. The HEA is aware that all higher education institutions are operating in a challenging financial environment, while continuing to respond to increasing student demand. The system has demonstrated that it continues to provide high-quality higher education and to respond to national priorities. The HEA made the following observations on the institute's performance:

- IADT is an institute that performs well. IADT has made very good progress against all KPIs; has achieved its 2015 goals, and is well on the way to achieving its goals for 2016.
- The institute's continuing focus on the creative, cultural and technological sectors is welcomed and provides a very strong foundation for continued institutional development.
- The HEA would like to see more progress on the Dublin I cluster. The HEA notes the strong linkages between IADT and its neighbouring FE colleges, and considers that this could serve as a model more widely in the cluster.

### **IADT opening remarks**

IADT stated that it enjoyed the process of completing the compacts and self-evaluation reports. IADT had had a good year in 2015 and 2016 also looks good, both in terms of student numbers and in meeting industry needs. It considers itself very strong on specialist programmes. Only 40 per cent of students enter directly through the CAO – this reflects the importance of the institute's relationships with FE. Given that there are successful pathways which allow student to transfer from further education to level 7 or 8 in the institute, the institute will not seek to put in place new level 6

programmes, but will continue to increase its L8/9 provision. The institute noted its work with industry.

### **Future institutional configuration/structure**

The institute considers that it has considered potential merger configurations since 2009, particularly with the National College of Art & Design. While the institute remains open to these configurations, it recognises that this is not a simple process, and for the time being remains an independent entity.

Looking ahead ten years, as an autonomous institute, the challenges for IADT are funding and size. The term 'university' has a certain cachet that 'institute' does not have, and this affects its ability to attract funding and relationships. There is also competition from areas such as liberal arts. IADT would appreciate having more control – for example, over term dates and contract flexibility. More autonomy would allow it to expand its stock of student accommodation.

There is a risk that the supply of graduates will not meet demands from industry. The institute faces huge demand from students and employers, and an autonomous institute could continue to grow, but to meet demand it will need something more radical in terms of its physical capacity.

There are obstacles to progressing capital issues, and the institute's 2014-18 strategy reflects its ambition to develop in this area.

### **Dublin I cluster**

IADT is of the view that the cluster probably cannot progress in its current configuration. There is already significant engagement with NCAD – for example in the institutions' joint masters and research projects.

### **Further education links**

IADT has good access and FE routes, which are all mapped in the region. IADT offers portfolio supports, and has formalised relationships with FE colleges. IADT also has a strong relationship with Gorey School of Art and a relationship with Ballyfermot College.

### **Engagement**

The institute considers that it demonstrates good engagement within its region. It wants to maximise the student experience through their engagement with society. In research programmes, IADT noted its Erasmus programmes throughout Europe, and its links back to Youthreach and student journalism. IADT is conducting its activity with industry in the context of national policy, such as by looking at the gender equality agenda, and seeks to provide feedback to inform national policy.

IADT also runs FIS, one of the largest youth film networks in Ireland, which provides a path from primary through to higher education and on to industry.

### **International benchmarking**

IADT considers itself comparable to institutions such as Goldsmiths, RCA, and Aalto University, but is looking further afield. The institute is trying to establish a brand that is nationally and internationally unique; therefore, it needs to identify partners that are strategic both for the institute and for Ireland. IADT has a strong representation of international external examiners.

The institute considers that it has a strong traditional research and practice tradition, with a strong track record in publications such as in cyber-psychology.

### **Funding and resourcing of higher education**

The institute expressed a desire for security in its structure and funding. It stated that it also needs flexibility on contractual arrangements, particularly given the changing nature of higher education.

### **Future development of the compact process**

The institute is open to strategic dialogue meetings being held biennially, given that IADT is in a strong position, strategically and financially.