

IADT

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2020 - 2024

Teaching and Learning Committee

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Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy IADT

Overview

This is the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2020-2024. It is an interim document pending the release of the new Strategic Plan (due January 2024). It supports and enhances learning, teaching and assessment across the Institute. This document considers IADT's mission as stated in the [current strategic plan](#), [Learner Charter](#) and the broader UNESCO context of [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG). The strategy places the Institute in the context of higher education in Ireland and internationally and embodies the values that are fundamental to IADT. Critically, the strategy reflects the three thematic pillars of 'Excellence, Growth and Community' from IADT's current [Strategic Plan](#) (2019-2023). The strategy has informed and been informed by the Institute's mission-based [performance compact](#) with the HEA (HEA & IADT, 2018), teaching focus groups and the Institute's Strategic Plan 2019 -2023. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) strategy outlines the philosophy of learning, student engagement, teaching and assessment in IADT, Creative Futures Academy (CFA), FilmEU and encompasses learners, teachers, management and other key stakeholders.

Context

Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) in IADT take place in the national and international context of higher education. LTA embodies principles of fairness, natural justice, equity and places the student at the centre of their learning. As a key stakeholder, the learner is the focus and purpose of the Institute. This strategy links to IADT's Strategic Plan and to national and European guidance. This strategy outlines expectations stated in the IADT [Learner Charter](#), the basis upon which the Institute's academic community lives.

IADT aims to be a research and evidence-led higher education institution and research is required to enable the Institute's teaching programmes to be excellent, progressive and relevant.

The national context for higher education is quality in teaching and learning, flexible provision, experience gain, enhancing social inclusion, engaging an inclusive learning environment, raising skills levels - particularly transferable skills - and promoting economic, regional and cultural development. The international context is one of mobility, international and Erasmus exchanges.

The LTA directly supports [The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030](#) and the vision that the higher education system will “play its part as a major agent of positive change & development for both the individual and wider society”. (Hunt & Higher Education Strategy Group, 2011) The balance between the rise of individualism and a strengthening societal and communal good is achieved through personal growth and communal consciousness; this is fostered through developing individual acumen through knowledge acquisition, skills development and empathy. The mission encompasses three interconnected core elements; teaching and learning, research, and engagement (with wider society and internationally). Critical thinking, adaptability and creativity will be key characteristics required of graduates in the future labour market. From the more recent [DFHRIS strategy document](#), innovation is placed at the centre of graduate attributes on a national and international level: ‘... whole-of-Government approach to agree the strategy, institutional framework, and investment needed to advance basic and applied research and innovation, grounded in collaboration between enterprise, educational institutions, and wider society, in Ireland and beyond.’ (Department of Further and Higher Education, 2021)

The legal obligations are those stated in the [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act](#) for programmes that meet the standards of the National Framework of Qualifications (QQI, 2003) and have ‘procedures which are fair and consistent for the assessment of . . . learners’. (Irish Government, 2019)

The emphases on programme learning outcomes, modular assessment and flexible modes of delivery for the learner have been reflected in the programmes through Programmatic Reviews undertaken by each Faculty.

‘Higher education is central to the economic renewal we need to support individual well-being and social development. But it also plays a fundamental role in fostering a spirit of inquiry and a strong sense of the value of learning among students; it is the positive engagement that students have with higher education that stimulates the imagination and makes innovation possible...Irish higher education has seen exceptional development in the recent past – moving from a system that was confined to a social elite to one of widespread participation.’ (Hunt & Higher Education Strategy Group, 2011)

Teaching and Learning Mission Statement

IADT is committed in principle and practice to the achievement of equity of access, increased participation and high retention and progression rates for all our learners. The Institute aims to help each student reach their potential through the provision of a supportive, vibrant, and challenging learning environment, both in person and online. All staff are involved in the construction of this learning environment, endeavoring to create an inclusive and safe place to learn. All students are valued equally during their learning journey with IADT. Accordingly, the curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment at IADT are centred on the student. Policies around learning and teaching promote and support the diversity of all studying at IADT. An emphasis on interdisciplinary alignment and collaborative learning is encouraged throughout the institute. Interdisciplinary approaches have been successfully delivered within each of the two faculties, independent of each other. A cross-institute interdisciplinary project was highlighted in our successful Delta Award submission, 2018; the 'Charette project'. This is run through the 'Design for Change' MA. This project includes Arts Management, Media Studies, Business as well as FFACT modules in 3rd year.

"Students are full partners in higher education governance." (Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, 2003)

Learning, Teaching and Assessment at IADT – Principles and Practices

Learning, teaching and assessment at IADT is guided by the following principles and practices.

Programme Development – Designing the curriculum

Curriculum development is based on the following principles:

- Programme development is research-informed and research-based. It is based on collaboration, relevant industry feedback and review of practice
- The principle of constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003) where learning outcomes are matched with appropriate learning and teaching strategies and assessed appropriately
- Learning outcomes (at programme level) are related to the appropriate level on the National Framework of Qualifications and meet the required award standards
- Student workload is within the ECTS guidelines

- Programmes meet the demands of students, industry and society and fit with the Institute's mission as outlined in the strategic plan
- Programmes may anticipate future demands of students, industry and society
- Programmes are supported by discipline/practice expertise in staff and supporting organisations
- Programmes have elements of practice e.g. work-based learning, community learning, projects as appropriate to the discipline/practice
- Programme structure is modular
- Programmes provide a level of choice for students in relation to learning and assessment. This could be through electives in the programme or through negotiated assessment, particularly projects.

Implementing the curriculum

Learning, teaching, assessing and management of learning, teaching and assessment is:

- Student-centred, enquiry-based, relevant to the curriculum and to the discipline/practice
- Programme teams work to implement the curriculum and manage learning
- Programmes link to industry, society and community and professional bodies through consultation on graduate attributes during Programmatic Review
- Assessment is part of the learning experience and communicated through the programme assessment strategy
- Formative assessment is provided appropriately to enable student learning
- Summative assessment is fair, consistent, fit for purpose and is criterion-referenced
- There is an appropriate cycle for summative assessment from assignment/project issue to feedback and grades in a timely fashion
- Student workload is within the ECTS guidelines via NFQ and QQI
- Assessment methods range from continuous assessment tasks through assignments and research projects to formal examinations as appropriate to the discipline and practice.
- Staff assessment practice is such that the principles of this document can be put in place through the module assessment strategies
- External examiners play a vital part in the enhancement of the quality of the assessment process
- External examiners are involved in assessment processes to ensure that standards maintain parity with best practice nationally and internationally.

Academic integrity

In line with the guidelines issued by the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN), IADT actively promotes a learning environment that develops values in line with honesty, ownership, excellence, and trust. Contract cheating and AI through LLM's and tools like 'Dall-E' pose challenges to both academics and students. We are taking instruction from NAIN regarding best practice in this forum. Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting. (National Academic Integrity Network, 2021) This also extends to research integrity. (Research Integrity National Forum, 2019) IADT has an active [Plagiarism Policy](#) which outlines types and penalties for Academic dishonesty. Central to IADT's mission in Teaching is the design of authentic assessment practices which strive for uniqueness and experience-centred assessment, thereby alleviating the occurrences of academic misconduct. However, the responsibility lies ultimately with the student on the work they submit. The use of formative assessment can further support Academic Integrity as 'low-stakes' assessment help to build student confidence in their work. (Leung, Chung, & Cheng, 2017)

Institutional Autonomy and Academic Freedom

'There is a positive relationship between the performance and innovation capacity of higher education institutions and the extent of their autonomy'. (Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, & Arnal, 2008)

The high level of legal autonomy enjoyed by higher education institutions is a major strength of the Irish higher education system. This principle is enshrined in the [Universities Act of 1997](#), and the [Institutes of Technology Act of 2006](#) grants limited autonomy to the institutes of technology. Academic freedom of individual staff is central to higher education and is supported throughout the Institute.

Evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment

Learning, teaching and assessment is reviewed in various ways including:

- Evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment strategies, and programme through external examiners
- Implementation by staff at module level and programme teams at programme level
- Programmatic review.

- Programme Boards held each quarter enabling programme evaluation, curriculum development and student feedback.
- Institutional, Faculty and Departmental review on a regular five-year cycle (programmatic review as above). This review the curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, students' experience, the facilities that support learning and industry partners.

Flexible modes of assessment

- Various methods of student feedback
- Evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment
- Programme Boards held three times a year enabling programme evaluation, curriculum development and student feedback
- Institutional, Faculty and programme review
- Teaching and Learning Committee; a sub-committee of Academic Council.

Reasonable Accommodation

'All students, including students with disabilities, need to develop key learning skills and strategies to support their academic progress. It is particularly important that students have access to support in first year to assist with the transition to higher education and to promote independent learning. This includes note taking strategies, study techniques, research skills, time management, critical thinking, academic writing, and proofreading and editing written work.' (AHEAD & DAWN, 2019)

Reasonable accommodation is available to all students and is supported by IADT Disability Service as part of Student Supports Services. Reasonable accommodation incorporates Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and ensures no student is at a disadvantage due to disability. In practice this means alternative assessment methods, inclusive teaching methods and assistive technology can be utilized by both lecturers and learners to create a supportive learning environment. 'The adoption of Inclusive Learning principles in HEI Teaching & Learning Strategies ensures an inclusive teaching, learning, and assessment environment for all students.' (AHEAD & DAWN, 2019) IADT is committed to inclusive learning strategies in all its provisions and for all users.

Evaluating our Impact – Measuring Success

We see our success in our graduates, their impact on the world and their destinations.

Developments in scholarship, collaboration with other higher education providers both nationally and internationally and funding of innovative research are also important metrics.

- Recognition of our programmes from outside stakeholders and professional bodies
- Achievements of our staff and students through research, scholarship, entrepreneurship, further study, the world of work and creative excellence
- Witnessing the development personally, professionally and academically of our students across their time in IADT

Teaching and Learning Committee

As a sub-committee of Academic Council, the Teaching and Learning Committee enhances the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the Institute by providing academic leadership for the continued development of excellence in academic practice. IADT representation on the T&L Committee:

Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities

Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies

Creative Futures Academy (CFA)

Public Design Lab

FilmEU

Student Experience and Student Supports (Access Officer)

SU Vice-President for Education

Staff Training Learning and Development Officer

Student Associate for the National Forum

Staff Associate(s) for the National Forum

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, Ireland

As members of the NFETLI, IADT contributes to the vast store of research and resources housed on the NFETLI [website](#). This body has supported research and growth throughout the nation in teaching and learning and IADT has been a proud recipient of funding. The National Forum has been folded into the HEA and will continue as a research partner and innovator within Higher Education.

Conclusion

This is the revised Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for 2020 - 2024.

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Appendix 1 - Glossary

Term	Meaning
Academic Integrity	Academic integrity is the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting and extends to embody ethical research.
Assessment	Assessment is any process that aims to measure the extent of students' learning. It is usually based on the evidence of student's work. All assessment is capable of reasonable accommodation.
CFA	Creative Futures Academy In collaboration with UCD and NCAD, The CFA provides microcredial courses to industry professionals and others who are interested in upskilling and developing acumen within the creative industries.
CFE	Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (CFE) (Kamal-Chaoui & Gurria, 2019).

Community or Service Learning	Learning in a communal setting, usually outside of educational institutions. Usually, voluntary work and can be assessed for further accreditation and access to higher education under the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy .
Competencies	Appropriate knowledge or skills for a purpose.
Constructive alignment	Alignment of teaching and learning of assessment tasks to learning outcomes (LO's) and programme learning outcomes (PLO's).
Employability	A set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy. (Yorke, 2006) (Advanced HE, 2019)
Enquiry-based Learning	Approaches to learning driven by enquiry. The term covers projects and research, small scale investigations as well as problem-based learning (PBL).
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of individuals to turn ideas into action. (GEM, 2019). Entrepreneurship can be a positive choice for disadvantaged groups, providing routes to employment and an opportunity to bring their ideas to market. (OECD, 2021) (Advanced HE, 2019)
Feedback	Feedback is an integral part of the teaching and learning strategy and requires the allocation of time to this process throughout the year as required. Rubrics or assessment criteria and weighting are given to the students in advance of submission. Feedback by the team or Panel can take place at module, stage, or

	programme level.
FILMEU	European Universities Alliance for Film and Media Arts IADT is one of 4 partner European industries developing a recognized undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral research and educational institution with an emphasis on excellence and mobility.
Formative assessment/feedback	Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become self-directed learners. Examples include peer assessment, submission of first draft work, verbal feedback on works in process and others. Formative assessment or feedback are not a final or summative mark for the work.
Interdisciplinary	Project/module/programme design utilising the insights from two or more academic, technological, or artistic disciplines in union.
Knowledge	The facts, principles, truths of a subject, discipline, or practice.
Learning	Developing knowledge, skills, or competence through study, teaching, or experience.
Learning Environment	The physical or virtual space and resources in which students learning. It includes classrooms, studios, laboratories and libraries as well as the Institute virtual learning environments. Also pertaining to the attitudes and ethos within these spaces.
Learning Outcomes	A statement of student performance/learning at the end of a programme, module and/or lesson e.g. 'On successful completion of the programme

	<p>graduates/students will be able to':</p> <p>'On successful completion of the module students will be able to':</p>
LTA	Learning, Teaching and Assessment
Natural Justice	<p>The principle of Natural Justice guarantees the fairness of procedures. It applies to employers and employees and the strategy extends this to learners and teachers.</p> <p>'The principles of natural justice represent the basic requirements of fair procedure. The minimum requirements are: • Notice to the person of the specific allegation to which they must answer and of the likely consequences if the allegation is established. • An opportunity which must be real as opposed to a nominal one, for the person to attempt to refute the allegation or to explain or mitigate their conduct. • An unbiased consideration of the person's explanation in the sense that consideration must be free from pre-determination and uninfluenced by irrelevant considerations' (HSE, 2017)</p>
OECD	<p>The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. Our goal is to shape policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity, and well-being for all. (Kamal-Chaoui & Gurria, 2019)</p>
Programmatic Review	<p>All programmes are interrogated and reviewed every 5 years, considering input from current and past students, enterprise and industry stakeholders, academic leaders and the HEA.</p>

Programme Assessment Strategy	A document for teachers, learners and assessors that outlines the principles and practices of assessment in the programme The programme assessment strategy is developed through programme validation/review and revised regularly.
Programme Document	Each programme has a programme document that is available to all students and staff. The programme document is reviewed during Programmatic Review.
Programme Handbook	Available for each programme and is accessible by learners and staff.
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland QQI is the state agency responsible for promoting the quality, integrity and reputation of Ireland's further and higher education system. They provide information on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and ensure integrity in the awarding of degrees. Read their recent statement of Strategy, 2022 – 2024 here .
Research-informed	What is taught/learned is informed by enquiry into the discipline/practice and the process of teaching and learning. (Hunt & Higher Education Strategy Group, 2011)
Reasonable Accommodation	The adaptation of assessment means and modes to ensure every student can demonstrate their learning. (AHEAD & DAWN, 2019)
Skills	Proficiency or dexterity acquired through training or experience.
Student-Centred Learning	Student-centred learning is focused on the student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning.

Summative assessment	Assessment that counts towards or constitutes a final grade or qualification.
Teaching	Teaching is contact with students where something of value takes place. It can be considered the act, process of imparting knowledge, reflection, developing skills and enabling student learning.
Teaching, learning and assessment strategies	The strategies used in teaching, learning and assessment.
Universal Design	Universal design refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size or disability. (Irish Government, 2005) (AHEAD & DAWN, 2019)
Work-based Learning	Work-based learning is learning at higher education level derived from undertaking paid or unpaid work. It includes learning for work (e.g. work placements), learning at work (e.g. company in-house training programmes) and learning through work, linked to formally accredited further or higher education programmes. Many programmes in IADT have opportunities for Work-based Learning in the 2nd or 3rd year of undergraduate study.

Appendix 2: Supporting documents

[Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities](#)

[IADT Learner Charter](#)

[IADT Quality Framework](#)

[IADT Mutual Respect Policy](#)

[IADT Complaints Procedure](#)

[Policy and Strategy for Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning](#)

[IADT External Examiners Policy](#) 2021

[IADT Marks and Standards 2018](#)

[IADT Assessment Appeals Policy Procedure](#)

Appendix 3 Teaching and Assessment Goals

Teaching...

- Student engagement is tantamount to learning
- Facilitation of learning for all students – one size does not fit all
- Employs innovative pedagogy that is related directly to discipline, appropriate and considered
- Encourages innovation and creativity at all stages
- Relates directly to the NFQ and is stage appropriate
- Is relevant and applicable to lived experience
- Model real-world considerations
- Manages class size appropriate to the learning strategy e.g. class size varies to allow for active learning or combined lectures, electives, charettes, masterclasses and seminars to explore cross and inter-disciplinary areas
- Feedback, delivered in a timely fashion, is a vital part of the student learning experience
- Equality and diversity are celebrated through the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment
- Resources and accommodation for learning are appropriate to both student need and programme requirements
- Identifies that student support is multi-faceted

Assessment...

- Is fair, consistent, and appropriate to learning outcomes
- Formative and summative assessment modes are employed throughout the Institute, including continuous assessment, project-based work, collaborative work, presentations, critique, exhibitions, examinations etc.
- Students are informed of assessments in a timely and clear manner
- Modes, means and date of submission are outlined when assigned
- Reasonable Accommodation i.e. the means of adapting assessment to enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes (HETAC, 2009, p. 54) is applied throughout the institute and is learner-centred
- Wide ranging modes of assessment exist throughout the Institute and are aligned with teaching, programme design and discipline

Appendix 4: Teaching and Learning Enablers IADT – Key Pillars of Collaboration

Office of the Registrar and Academic Staff

Office of the Registry comprised of Registrar, Deputy Registrar and administrative team.
Academic staff in two separate Faculties across the institute: Faculty of Humanities and Enterprise and Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies.

ICT – Educational Technologist and staff

IADT has 2 main platforms for remote delivery of Teaching and Learning; the primary VLE is Blackboard Ultra (updated 2021) and Microsoft Teams.

Student Support Services – Student Experience Team

Support staff including Health, Careers, Counselling, Learning Services, and administration

Administrators

Both the Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities and Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies have dedicated administrators

Students' Union

Autonomous advocates for student affairs, including Vice-President for Education

Library

Including virtual and traditional source materials for study and academic excellence

Management

Office of the Registrar, President, EDI, Heads of Department and Programme Chairs

Estates

Supports the physical space available for teaching, learning and community.

Appendix 5: Comparison between Teaching Excellence and Learner Experience in IADT

Teaching Excellence

IADT Academic Staff:

- ...encourage development, entrepreneurship and excellence in their prescribed discipline
- ...engage in scholarship and learning throughout their tenure
- ...use enquiry-based and student-centred pedagogic practices to engage students in their learning
- ...ensure academic excellence through discipline-specific reflective practice
- ...avail of CPD in teaching and learning as well as discipline specific training opportunities to insure consistent excellence in consultation with their managers
- ...develop relevant and transparent assessment criteria linked to modular and programme learning outcomes

Learner Experience

IADT learners:

- ...are the heart of the Institution
- ...are proactive in their learning
- ...are equally responsible for and have ownership of their learning
- ...undertake a journey to develop critically, emotionally and as a global citizen
- ...have a central voice in their experience
- ...embrace challenges and incorporate a 'growth mindset' (Dweck, 2016) throughout their studies
- ...experience teaching which promotes innovation, creative exploration, curiosity, collegiality, entrepreneurship, critical thinking and problem solving
- ... Students are enabled to develop the skills of independent, self-directed study to engage in the responsibility for their present and future lifelong learning

Appendix 6: Communication Channels for Learners

Programme Boards

Programme boards integrate the elected Student Representatives from each year of each course and the course team for quarterly minuted board meetings.

Student Representatives

Each course and year group have elected student representatives that sit on the Programme Board and are trained by the Students' Union. Issues within a year cohort can be discussed and documented during these meetings.

Year Tutors

Each course and year group have a Year Tutor who can be contacted for guidance and discussion.

Tutorials

Tutorials, either individual or small group, are utilized in many courses throughout the Institute.

By Appointment with lecturer

Through email or teams, as per module procedure.

Informal conversations

Encouraged as per Lecture/Student on a case-by-case basis.

Study Groups

Initiated by students, these informal groups can enhance social connection and learning.