University College Dublin

**Institutional Quality Review Report for
the National College of Art and Design, a UCD Recognised College**

Review Panel Report

February 2022

Accepted by the UCD Governing Authority at its meeting of 23 June 2022

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Executive Summary

This institutional quality review of the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) was undertaken as part of the University College Dublin (UCD/the University) Quality Review Framework and to meet the statutory requirements for Designated Awarding Bodies (such as UCD) and Linked Providers (such as NCAD) as set out under the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. UCD first conducted an institutional quality review of NCAD in March 2017, and the site visit for the current review took place from 18-21 October 2021.

Key Findings of the Review Panel

The Review Panel had several commendations in relation to areas of good practice and positive development within NCAD; and it also makes several recommendations in relation to areas in need of improvement. The list below includes the key commendations, and the key recommendations, from the Review Panel. The main body of the Report provides all the observations, commendations and recommendations of the Review Panel in specific detail, and the full list of all commendations and recommendations is included in **Appendix 1**.

Please note that the numbers below refer to the relevant paragraph in the body of the report.

Commendations

1.33   The Review Panel commends the NCAD on its new strategy and the key staff appointments which have been made who led its development and will lead its implementation. The new NCAD Director was appointed since the 2017 institutional quality review and is supported by a number of new posts. The Director reports to a newly re-constituted An Bord. These developments have resulted in enhanced 'connectedness' and evidence of a confident, ambitious and significant new leadership. Further meetings are planned with key staff to evaluate the most appropriate structures to implement, suitable to the size and nature of the institution. NCAD is now undertaking a strategic implementation phase, following the pre-COVID completion of its ISAR (August 2019), much of which was beginning or underway during the quality review. The success of the implementation phase will be central to the management and enhancement of learning opportunities, and more broadly to NCAD as a premier art and design education institution in Ireland and with a high international reputation.

2.15   There are numerous instances of good practice in the management of academic standards. The assessment process, in particular, is robust and is a source of institutional integrity. Extern Examiners, who visit twice during each academic year, are appointed for a three-year period to review and provide feedback on the assessment process. Feedback was observed to be helpful, instructive and consistent with student learning. Extern Examiners commented positively on the good elements of assessed work and indicated where improvements could be made and how such improvements could be effected. NCAD is therefore effective at using external moderation to assure academic standards.

3.54   The Review Panel was provided with evidence of student-centred learning and teaching. Tutors were excellent and helped to push the self-directed learning approach.

3.56   Meetings of the Review Panel with Alumni and external stakeholders were particularly valuable in enabling the Review Panel to better understand how the developing and often positive influence NCAD has on the lives of its graduates and non-HEI partners. There is evidence of good employability outcomes, examples of knowledge exchange and of longer-term partnering.

3.58   UCD and NCAD seek to collaborate through strategic projects and strategic collaborations. The Review Panel commends both UCD and NCAD on the development of the Creative Futures Academy, which provides an opportunity for programme innovation, including also streamlining the process for programme development. NCAD, IADT and UCD's Creative Futures Academy is receiving €10 million in funding to innovate in the delivery of creative education for learners at all stages of their careers.

4.28   Information for prospective students is comprehensive and includes a dedicated site for detailed guidance, with exemplar materials, to undergraduate applicants on preparing portfolios.

Recommendations

2.16   The Review Panel recommends that the next milestones for NCAD should be focussed on the development of the managerial tools that can be used to support and drive the aims and objectives of the new NCAD Strategic Plan and the work of the NCAD Director. These developments would support the enhancement of the overall quality of management processes and would help to establish performance indicators for the quality of academic outputs, direct the workload and performance of staff, as well as support overall workplace satisfaction.

2.17   The Review Panel recommends that there should be more transparency and communication between the management team and all staff on a regular basis, including through informal meetings, to ensure ongoing alignment with, and commitment to, the new vision for NCAD, and to also ensure contributions and buy-in from all staff members within the College (see also 3.60).

2.18   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD should consider developing and implementing a set of practical management tools and applications, in order to:

- Evaluate and manage staff workload time allocations, including research, as staff represent the most important resource, including in relation to cost;
- Develop pedagogic models that can create efficiency in distribution of teaching hours and independent student work;
- Develop staff career paths;
- Develop and engage with individual staff performance assessments; and
- Develop a set of performance indicators per school, study programme and for individual staff members.

2.19   The Review Panel observed that there is a need to create a development plan for organisational change and its implementation, to accompany the new strategic plan. This development plan should include clearly indicated milestones, priorities, responsibilities and a realistic timeframe for implementation. It should include a mechanism to evaluate progress and create incentives for achieving the milestones. As there are financial constraints it is important to prioritise the development processes and have clear responsibilities, timelines and accountabilities. The Review

Panel recommends that there should be one or more checklists which could be used to monitor implementation of the strategic plan and its key performance indicators (KPIs).

3.59   As highlighted previously under Chapter 2 of this report and in the 2017 Review Group Report, the Review Panel recommends that NCAD re-establishes and implements its regular cycle of quality reviews, including reviews of academic programmes, and that these reviews should overtly relate to the objectives of the new NCAD strategy.

4.30   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses the fact that, whilst the student facing (marketing) orientated content on the website has been maintained and kept up-to-date, the College appears to fall short of fulfilling its obligations in ensuring other information (e.g. Quality Improvement Plans and Annual and Financial Reports) is available.

1. Introduction and Context

Institutional Quality Review of NCAD

1.1 Institutional quality review of NCAD is undertaken as part of UCD's Quality Review Framework and to meet the statutory requirements for Designated Awarding Bodies (UCD) and Linked Providers (NCAD), as set out under the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*; namely 'to review the effectiveness of the Linked Provider's quality assurance procedures at least once every seven years' (Section 37). The purpose of such reviews is to provide public information about how NCAD discharges its stated responsibilities for the management and delivery of academic standards, and the quality of learning opportunities available to students, by evaluating the effectiveness of its quality assurance arrangements.

1.2 The review was conducted in accordance with UCD's Recognised College Quality Review Handbook and agreed Terms of Reference.

1.3 The key stages of the quality review process consist of the following elements:

- Institutional Self-Assessment, which includes the preparation of an analytical and reflective Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR), which involves an internal consultation process within NCAD and externally with its stakeholders;
- Review Site Visit(s) by a Review Panel, which includes external experts;
- Production of a Review Panel Report, which includes general findings, commendations and recommendations to enhance and improve the effectiveness of its Quality Assurance arrangements
- Production by NCAD of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which addresses all recommendations and includes a timeline in respect of their implementation;
- Publication of the Review Panel Report (including NCAD's institutional response to the report), the QIP and, where applicable, any decisions by UCD as the Designated Awarding Body (DAB);
- Establishment and implementation of a clear and timely follow-up process in respect of any quality improvement recommendations, which will include publication of regular updates on progress.

1.4 The first institutional quality review of the NCAD by UCD took place in 2017. The 2017 Review Panel Report:

- Issued one Directive in respect of Health and Safety;
- Listed 46 Recommendations;
- Offered a number of commendations in relation to NCAD's Access programme; relationship with external stakeholders and their esteem of NCAD alumni; and NCAD's progress in respect of financial governance;
- Determined that the next review should take place in 2019.

1.5 Following the 2017 review, the NCAD was required to develop a Quality Improvement Plan to address the recommendations of the review. The 2017 Quality Improvement Plan:

- Lists 152 Actions drawn from the main body of the 2017 Review Panel Report;
- Lists 58 Actions from the previous Self-Assessment Report (SAR) which were still in the process of being addressed.

Oversight by UCD on the implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan recommendations was provided by NCAD in their six-monthly progress updates to the University.

1.6   The NCAD provided an Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR) in August 2019 in preparation for the current review. The 2019 ISAR indicates that 132 of the 152 Actions outlined in the 2017 Review Panel Report have been addressed, with work to be done to address the remaining 20 (2019 ISAR 2.13). Furthermore, the 2019 ISAR indicates that 45 of the 58 previous ISAR Actions have been completed, with further work to be done to address the remaining 13 (2019 ISAR 2.13).

1.7   Due to various delays - including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic - the quality review planned for 2019 was postponed to 2021. An Addendum to the 2019 ISAR was provided by the NCAD, with updates across the following headings:

- Context
- Progress Against the 2017 Quality Improvement Plan
- Update on Executive Summary of 2019 ISAR in Respect of QQI Core Guidelines
- Management of Academic Standards
- Management and Enhancement of Learning Opportunities
- Public Information

1.8   The composition of the Review Panel for the 2021 institutional quality review of the NCAD was as follows:

- **Chair**: Professor Alan Baird, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine
- **Extern**: Amanda Jenkins, Associate Dean, Design School, University of the Arts London, UK
- **Extern**: Professor Craig Richardson, Professor of Fine Art, Loughborough University, UK
- **Extern**: Professor Satu Miettinen, Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland, Finland

1.9   Due to restrictions introduced in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Review Panel undertook a virtual site visit of the NCAD from 18-21 October 2021 and held meetings with the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs; NCAD Director; NCAD Interim Head of Academic Affairs and Research; NCAD Senior Management Team; NCAD Programmes Board; An Bord Chair; Chair of An Bord's Audit and Risk Committee; Committee Chairs; Facilities Manager; Staff and Student Support; Teaching and Learning Support; Research Support; Students' Union; Undergraduate and Postgraduate (Taught and Research, and Part-Time and Full-Time) Students; Heads of Departments/Schools; Academic Staff, including new Academic Staff (appointed within the last five years); Alumni; and External Stakeholders.

1.10   In addition to the ISAR, the Review Panel considered documentation provided by the NCAD during the site visit. The Review Panel was also provided with a virtual tour of the facilities of NCAD. The Chair of the Review Panel also undertook an in-person tour, guided by the NCAD Director and NCAD Facilities Manager, which took place on 5 November 2021.

1.11   This Review Panel Report has been read and approved by all members of the Review Panel.

Summary profile of the National College of Art and Design

1.12   The National College of Art and Design (NCAD) was founded in 1746, and was established under the *National College of Art and Design Act, 1971*. NCAD has been a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland (NUI) since 1996, and in 2011 it became a Recognised College of University College Dublin (UCD), which is the Designated Awarding Body (DAB).

1.13   The key role of a Recognised College is to provide and promote education, to undertake and facilitate research, and to engage and support the wider community it serves. The academic activities of the College include:

- Research, scholarship, teaching and learning;
- The education and training of undergraduates, postgraduates, and professionals; and
- Such other academic and academic-related activities as deemed appropriate.

1.14   The current Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between NCAD and UCD covers the period 2020-2025. Through this and previous agreements, NCAD has a working relationship with UCD. Being a Recognised College provides a mechanism for NCAD and UCD to collaborate in specific areas, and for UCD to accredit programmes provided by NCAD, confer awards on students who successfully complete those programmes, and assure the quality of teaching and learning, academic programmes, and research and scholarship conducted through NCAD.

1.15   NCAD is governed by An Bord, appointed by the Minister of Education. While An Bord's functions, as prescribed under Section 5 of the *National College of Art and Design Act, 1971*, are substantial, it delegates the day to day management of the College, including the organisation and administration of its affairs, to the Director, in accordance with Section 18 of the *1971 Act*, and in line with the strategic direction as approved by An Bord.

1.16   The Director of NCAD is supported in managing the College by the College Management Team, acting under the Director. The members of the College Management Team each have a specific area of responsibility, and this includes the Head of Academic Affairs, the Head of Corporate Services/Registrar, the Heads of Schools, the Head of First Year Studies, the Head of Innovation and Engagement, the Head of Human Resources and Staff Development, the Student Services and Admissions Officer, and the Librarian.

1.17   An Bord delegates to the Academic Council the role of planning, co-ordination, development and overseeing of the academic work of the College, and to protect, maintain and develop the academic standards of the courses and activities of the College.

1.18   Attendance of the NCAD Director at meetings of the UCD Governing Authority is pursuant to (and conditional upon) there being an appropriate resolution by the Governing Authority to invite such attendance. The UCD Governing Authority passed such a resolution at its meeting on 27 June 2017, however, the Review Panel was informed that there is a single representative from all of the Recognised Colleges on the UCD Governing Authority (as approved at its meeting of 21 February

2019) and that representative, who is not from NCAD, will fulfil that role for the full term of the current Governing Authority, which is 1 February 2019 – 31 January 2024. There is, therefore, no direct representation by NCAD on the current UCD Governing Authority.

1.19 An NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee has been established comprising senior management and academic personnel of both parties. The role of this Committee is to deal with the administration of matters to be developed under the current and previous MoAs and to manage such matters as may need joint management, e.g. (non-exclusively) in research, library, information technology, e-learning infrastructure, academic publishing or with specific joint projects, including the implementation of financial guidelines, financial arrangements and implementation of financial aspects of the MoA. The NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee reports to An Bord but is accountable to the UCD University Management Team.

1.20 The Review Panel observed that there is significant scope for improving the functioning of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee. Minutes of the meetings of this Committee were not available, and the Review Panel heard evidence that Committee meetings were convened on an ad hoc basis and were informal.

1.21 The NCAD Strategic Plan 2019-2024 'Futures, Bold and Curious' was launched in June 2019 and it sets out the College's mission and values. The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 states, "There is a balance between autonomy and accountability. At the heart of this strategy is the recognition that a diverse range of strong, autonomous institutions is essential if the overall system is to respond effectively to evolving and unpredictable societal needs. Funding and operational autonomy must, however, be matched by a corresponding level of accountability for performance against clearly articulated expectations."

1.22 A summary of the staff profile (including the gender breakdown) for NCAD (in the 2020-2021 academic session) is as follows:

Staff - Type	Total	FTE
Academic	131	78.802
Non-Academic	96	80.612
Grand Total	**227**	**159.414**

Staff- Gender			
	Female	Male	Total
Academic	86	45	131
Non-Academic	61	35	96
Total	**147**	**80**	**227**

(*Source: NCAD Institutional Profile (updated March 2021), p.20*)

The Review Panel was informed that NCAD intends to seek Athena Swan status.

1.23 Through the MoA with UCD, NCAD is required to ensure that:

- The academic management and supervision of students registered for masters and doctoral degrees by research in NCAD shall be compliant with regulations and practice in the University;

- Those engaged in supervising research students shall be appropriately qualified and experienced and include NCAD staff, University faculty and staff, or external specialists nominated by NCAD and approved by the University (in accordance with the practice in the University); and
- Students registered for research degrees in NCAD shall be students of both NCAD and the University and the University shall confer the appropriate academic awards on students who successfully complete their programmes of research in accordance with regulations and practice in the University.

1.24 NCAD offers full-time and part-time programmes of study leading to UCD awards at National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) levels 7 and 8 (undergraduate), 9 (postgraduate) and 10 (postgraduate research). Programmes of NCAD that are currently accredited by UCD are listed in Schedule 3 of the MoA. The table below provides enrolment data for credit bearing programmes from 2013-2020:

	Oct 2020	Oct 2019	Oct 2018	Oct 2017	Oct 2016	Oct 2015	Oct 2014	Oct 2013
Total CEAD Credit (PT) *Year 1 UG*	138 316	174 284	163 287	162 277	156 272	159 302	137 *317*	156 *292*
Year 2-4 UG	720	682	633	587	602	822	*716*	*631*
Total UG (FT)	1036	966	920	864	874	1,090	1,033	923
Postgrad MAs |**	138	128	130	138	138	137	*133*	*142*
PhDs	16	14	10	19	19	24	*22*	*20*
Total Postgrad	154	142	140	157	157	161	155	162
TOTAL	1,334	1,282	1,223	1,183	1,186	1,410	1,325	1,241

(*Source: NCAD Institutional Profile (updated March 2021), p.12*)

1.25 The Review Panel was informed that the NCAD programmes are not captured in UCD curriculum information and not included in the UCD return to Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) for the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ). On further investigation, it was determined that the NCAD qualifications do not appear at all on the IRQ (neither under UCD or under NCAD itself).

1.26 NCAD uses a portfolio submission to assess applicants to studio based programmes, accounting for 95% of all first year entrants. Places are offered based on a ranking of portfolio scores to applicants who meet minimum academic entry requirements (matriculation). NCAD does not use a ranking based on final school exam achievement (CAO points) as the basis for entry to studio based programmes.

1.27 Minimum academic entry qualifications can be met with either a final school examination, a Further Education qualification such as FETAC/QQI or as a mature student based on previous educational and other experience.

1.28   NCAD may develop new programme proposals, and submits such proposals to UCD for validation. Any such programmes (including postgraduate as well as undergraduate programmes) as NCAD shall submit to UCD for accreditation, are submitted in accordance with the University's policies and procedures, and are assessed and validated as appropriate by the University in accordance with the regulations and standard practice within the University with respect to programme approval.

1.29   NCAD manages the provision of any validated programmes in accordance with:

- The University's policies and procedures for academic management, assessment, and quality assurance; and
- Such additional academic quality assurance and enhancement regulations for University programmes as may be approved by the UCD Academic Council, except where authorised to depart from these by An Bord and the UCD Academic Council; and
- NCAD's internal systems and procedures for monitoring and approving its educational provision.

1.30   Section 4.4 of the Memorandum of Agreement between UCD and NCAD (dated 9 December 2020) states that, "students registered on NCAD programmes at degree level (as may be accredited by the University) shall be students of either NCAD and/or the University, and the University shall confer the appropriate academic awards on students who successfully complete such programmes. Such Students shall be subject to the disciplinary and other codes of both parties." The Review Panel was informed that implementation of this provision in the Memorandum of Agreement and reporting of such matters has not been possible given the incongruity of the respective student registration systems.

1.31   The Review Panel noted that UCD leads a six-college consortium comprising, Institute of Art and Design (IADT), Marino Institute of Education (MIE), National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Trinity College Dublin (TCD), and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) in a HEA-funded initiative to collaboratively promote and advance equality of access to higher education for under-represented groups. This Consortium oversees five projects: Creative Arts Summer School, led by NCAD; Open Learning, led by UCD; Community Mentoring, led by TCD; Dublin Learning City, jointly led by IADT and MIE; and the 1916 Bursaries, led by UCD.

1.32   The Creative Futures Academy is an initiative of NCAD, IADT and UCD funded by the Higher Education Authority's Human Capital Initiative.

Commendations

1.33   The Review Panel commends the NCAD on its new strategy and the key staff appointments which have been made who led its development and will lead its implementation. The new NCAD Director was appointed since the 2017 institutional quality review and is supported by a number of new posts. The Director reports to a newly re-constituted An Bord. These developments have resulted in enhanced 'connectedness' and evidence of a confident, ambitious and significant new leadership. Further meetings are planned with key staff to evaluate the most appropriate structures to implement, suitable to the size and nature of the institution. NCAD is now undertaking a strategic implementation phase, following the pre-COVID completion of its ISAR

(August 2019), much of which was beginning or underway during the quality review. The success of the implementation phase will be central to the management and enhancement of learning opportunities, and more broadly to NCAD as a premier art and design education institution in Ireland and with a high international reputation.

Recommendations

1.34   The Review Panel recommends that the meetings of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee be made more formal, including convening such meetings on a regular basis, and that minutes (with required actions) should be taken of such meetings which should be made available to key stakeholders in both institutions. The Review Panel further recommends that both institutions consider how this Committee could be utilised for reporting and monitoring of progress against the recommendations made in this report – reports on progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) should be made on a 6-monthly basis and provided to the Registrar and the Director of Quality at UCD, and these will also be considered by the ACQEC.

1.35   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD engages with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to determine its obligations in relation to the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ).

1.36   The Review Panel recommends that the relevant staff in NCAD with responsibility for student registration and records engage with the relevant staff in UCD to consider whether and how section 4.4 of the Memorandum of Agreement between UCD and NCAD (dated 9 December 2020) can be fully implemented.

2. Institutional Management of Academic Standards

General Comments and Context

2.1 Through the Self-Assessment Report and the Review Site Visit meetings with stakeholders, the Review Panel was provided with evidence which demonstrated that there is already valuable recognition for the need for improvements in the institutional management of academic standards within NCAD.

2.2 In relation to the governance structures at NCAD, the College has a Board (An Bord) appointed by the Minister of Education; an executive committee – the College Management Team, led by the Director; and a system of academic governance, overseen by the Academic Council, to ensure the academic standards of awards and the quality of educational provision. A School structure, with Departments as appropriate, is in place, the Schools being: Design, Education, Fine Art and Visual Culture. The Schools, and the work of the College, are supported by Academic Affairs and Corporate Services. The Head of Academic Affairs oversees Admissions, Quality Assurance, Examinations, Student Progression and Research. The Head of Corporate Services/Registrar is responsible for financial and resource planning and ensures that NCAD is built on a solid operational foundation. Both offices report to the Director who reports to An Bord.

2.3 The Review Panel observed that there is a sense of responsibility among the staff of NCAD towards the management of academic standards. Further, there has been an ongoing process for improvement and tackling recognised challenges in this area. There has been a recent strategic management process to create a vision for the NCAD – this was an important milestone. This has been successful as there is now vast institutional knowledge about the main aims and objectives of the vision, and an awareness of and commitment to that vision. It is evident that some of the work resonates particularly well with the senior Faculty (the Professoriat and Heads of Schools) who share both the vision and momentum for change.

2.4 The Review Panel believes that the need for revision and renewal of the overall management of academic standards is recognized among staff throughout NCAD. Some of the urgent needs flagged in the previous QA Report have been recognized and prioritized, including: health and safety issues around facilities and work processes; some improvements have occurred, for example, in the setting up of an internal human resources office (some of this work had previously been outsourced); taxation policies and protocols have been updated; and procurement issues have been addressed. Yet, there is need for further improvements and continuation of the work that has already been done. It is clear that there needs to be greater accountability throughout the organisation to meet these improvements.

2.5 NCAD operates and applies UCD policies and procedures on academic quality with a degree of autonomy. NCAD issues its own quality assurance handbook which details the quality assurance policies and procedures of NCAD, and it also operates its own Registry function. The academic policies and procedures are developed from and largely map to the current UCD policies and procedures as well as national laws and regulations. These links are detailed in the ISAR documentation provided as part of the review process. There is evidence that staff training within NCAD is appropriate and complies with UCD policies and procedures.

2.6   The Review Panel was provided with a flowchart that describes how the feedback loop works in relation to internal quality assurance. Middle management (Heads of Schools) described broadly how feedback is utilized and has an impact on various levels of educational processes, including designing and managing study programmes, and evaluating student performance and outcomes. The NCAD Programmes Board manages programme development and approval and compliance with UCD Academic Regulations – it was noted that, as is the case within UCD, a significant amount of authority is delegated to the NCAD Programmes Board.

2.7   The internal quality assurance processes are working, yet throughout the Review Panel's discussions with different stakeholders it is obvious that the quality varies from unit to unit, for example in relation to student performance, quality of teaching and learning, and facility management.

2.8   The Review Panel was provided with evidence which demonstrated the effectiveness of the mechanisms for assessing learners. There is rigorous peer review and critical self-evaluation as core values for student assessment. There is a process for appointing the Extern Examiners as well as managing, amending and sharing their reports with the Heads of Department/School for cross-evaluation. The Quality Assurance Steering Committee also has oversight of these reports. This is a valuable quality assurance mechanism in the assessment of learners and the outcomes they produce. There is also a specific Student Appeals Committee.

2.9   To support overall quality, NCAD recently established a Teaching and Learning Action Plan. A Learning and Teaching Development Officer has also been appointed and is working with colleagues to both look at best practice externally and to benchmark NCAD's practice against these.

2.10   The Review Panel was informed that student cohorts are tracked through to completion of their degree programmes. In overall terms, student services was in receipt of feedback from stakeholders. NCAD programmes are modular in structure but it was noted that they are not 'fully modular' – for example, there are some optional modules within programmes, but there is no free 'elective' choice as is the case within UCD. The NCAD Programmes Board oversees a very complicated set of programmes with high levels of overlap between them, including shared modules. There are, therefore, effective arrangements in place to support student admission and progression.

2.11   The Review Panel heard some concerns in relation to student admission and progression – for example, there is pressure to increase student intake and accept students that may not always meet the standard of admission. Some student cohorts are very small and individually designed, even personally tailored (e.g. medical device design), and this leads to significant responsibilities being placed on academic staff, especially assistant lecturers. There is also pressure for student progression, even while student performance can be inhibited due to a lack of facilities and machinery management, which was particularly problematic during the COVID-19 pandemic. These issues can hinder student progression and a good quality learning experience and student outcomes.

2.12   UCD's Programme Board terms of reference outline their responsibility to oversee the development, approval, review, and delivery of modules and programmes to assure compliance

with Academic Regulations and the effectiveness and quality of programmes. There is a wide spectrum of programmes in NCAD, and the operational nature of the NCAD Programme Board may inhibit its ability to be more strategic in order to better safeguard quality and manage resources.

2.13   The Review Panel observed that there have been delays in the Quality Review reporting of academic programmes, and many of these which had been planned did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There may be some developmental needs in relation to the process for new model or programmes development and approval. Efficiency in the planning and delivery of programmes could be developed further, for example, one of the criteria for quality review of academic programmes could be how the programmes are responding to the new NCAD strategy.

2.14   NCAD is an independent College in which UCD guidance has been adapted into its internal policies. These are visible and are published on the NCAD website, including the NCAD Quality Assurance Principles, Framework and Guidelines and the NCAD Quality Assurance Procedures. UCD's Programme Boards oversee programmes and programme components. NCAD develops and publishes its own processes, policies and practices. Collectively, these provide the framework for the management of academic standards.

Commendations

2.15   There are numerous instances of good practice in the management of academic standards. The assessment process, in particular, is robust and is a source of institutional integrity. Extern Examiners, who visit twice during each academic year, are appointed for a three-year period to review and provide feedback on the assessment process. Feedback was observed to be helpful, instructive and consistent with student learning. Extern Examiners commented positively on the good elements of assessed work and indicated where improvements could be made and how such improvements could be effected. NCAD is therefore effective at using external moderation to assure academic standards.

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2.16   The Review Panel recommends that the next milestones for NCAD should be focussed on the development of the managerial tools that can be used to support and drive the aims and objectives of the new NCAD Strategic Plan and the work of the NCAD Director. These developments would support the enhancement of the overall quality of management processes and would help to establish performance indicators for the quality of academic outputs, direct the workload and performance of staff, as well as support overall workplace satisfaction.

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2.20   To strengthen alignment with UCD academic policy and procedures, the Review Panel recommends that the adherence to UCD academic policy and procedures should be included as a standing agenda item of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee. Furthermore, reporting (and management meetings) would be more efficient and effective if aligned to the protocol 'Indicative Responsibilities Checklist' (2019 ISAR, Appendix 1-Annex 2).

2.21   To ensure consistency in the approach to internal quality assurance, the Review Panel recommends that a system should be established for peer-to-peer learning and benchmarking within NCAD. The Review Panel heard evidence that this exists in relation to Extern Examiner reports, and this approach should be extended to other areas which likewise provide important feedback and help to ensure and enhance the quality of NCAD's educational provision.

2.22   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses a number of issues regarding procedures for admission, assessment and progression which are in place but are not yet aligned to UCD's Academic Regulations (e.g. procedures for assessment).

2.23   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD puts in place a schedule of Quality Assurance reviews of its programmes and units. The College should ensure that there is effective oversight on adhering to the schedule, and the monitoring of these reviews including timely reporting on the implementation of all review report recommendations.

3. Quality of Learning Opportunities

General Comments and Context

3.1 Enhancing the quality of learning opportunities is a central feature of NCAD's Vision, Values, Strategy 2019-2024. The Strategy plans for the future within three distinct but interconnected facets intended to enable students and staff to flourish and make a difference through their 'bold and curious thinking' and evident within their research and professional practice. The Strategy has teaching and learning as its central focus.

3.2 The Review Panel observed that NCAD is partially effective in fulfilling its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities, with improvements ongoing.

3.3 The Review Panel met with the NCAD Senior Management Team with the latter noting that a large volume of groundwork is being done. It was manifestly clear during the Review Panel visit that the staff of the institution, from the newly appointed Board through to part-time academic staff, have a common goal of enhancing the quality of learning opportunities.

3.4 The Review Panel notes that NCAD is moving towards a sense of collective ownership and coherent direction in enhancing the resources available to support learning opportunities. However, a constrained financial context and a backlog of timetabled enhancements delayed by and before the COVID-19 pandemic remain current challenges.

3.5 The COVID-19 pandemic impacted on the timetable of NCAD's responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities and, understandably, a backlog of programme and unit periodic quality reviews has since emerged. The Review Panel noted that "Through investment [NCAD] have begun to make progress in 2021 [and] procurement of the additional resource [...] is underway." A timeline for the completion of this task is an urgent requirement. Prioritising enhancements in teaching and learning within a viable timeframe is essential to the success of the implementation phase of the new NCAD strategy.

3.6 The Review Panel observed that NCAD is only partially effective in relation to the use of management information to evaluate its procedures/processes and practice in support of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities. The Review Panel received a large volume of documentation prior to and during the visit. While these offered commendable and aspirational ambitions it was not always clear if the evaluation of academic standards and quality of learning opportunities were fully embedded within the current arrangements.

3.7 The Review Panel was informed that there is a current review of NCAD Academic Council which is aimed at improving the connection between different levels in the programme (e.g. First Year Board feeding into the Boards for higher levels of the various programmes). Some Academic Staff reported that the process of decision-making at Academic Council, and the communication of such decisions, was not always clear.

3.8 Deepening the engagement in NCAD's quality assurance processes on the part of the NCAD Senior Management Team has been achieved through the key role played by this forum in developing and publishing the Annual Quality Enhancement Statement (introduced in 2017/18).

3.9   The 2017 QIP updates provided detail on extending the guidance on quality assurance and enhancement available to students and staff through, for example, the development of guidance for Student Reps, a Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Handbook for students and staff, and an Academic Staff Handbook.

3.10   In relation to degree awards and the COVID-19 pandemic, the proportion of graduates of level 8 honours degree programmes receiving a 1st or upper 2nd class honours degree award increased from 70% in 2018/19 to 81% in 2019/20. This year-on-year increase is most likely explained by the application of an exam safety net policy during the year in response to the situation arising from the COVID-19 impact on the final semester.

3.11   The Review Panel was informed that modularisation, introduced at the same time as the undergraduate programmes were changed from a four-year to a three-year structure, will be the subject of future review.

3.12   The Review Panel observed that NCAD was only partially effective in the use of external reference points for the management and enhancement of learning opportunities. Being a Recognised College offers a mechanism for encouraging and enabling wider collaboration, and the MoA identifies possible areas for this. Under the aegis of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee, in 2017 a Collaboration Working Group audited and reviewed collaborations that had occurred and developed a process map to support colleagues interested in initiating collaboration. Given the scale of NCAD relative to UCD, realising the potential of the alliance requires clarity in respect of priorities, and a sharp focus, while ensuring compliance with UCD governance and Quality Assurance requirements.

3.13   In relation to quality assurance enhancements 2017-2019, the Review Panel noted that "Implementing NCAD's 2017 Quality Improvement Plan has delivered a significantly more comprehensive QA system within the College" (2019 ISAR). Enhancements in this regard have included extending NCAD's policy and procedures infrastructure.

3.14   The NCAD 2019 ISAR (along with the 2021 updates) includes an Enhancement Strategy and intentions to publish an Annual Quality Enhancement Statement.

3.15   The Review Panel heard that students recognise that academic staff are often visible figures in their discipline and that NCAD has 'high calibre people coming in.'

3.16   The Review Panel considered NCAD's approach to the effective use of external reference points and best international practice in their discipline to be limited to national rather than international measures.

3.17   Subject Extern Examiners reports are shared among Heads of Department/School for cross-evaluation including ensuring consistency of grade performance across all programmes. This is a valuable quality assurance mechanism for the institution and the Quality Assurance Steering Committee also has oversight of the reports which feed into the Annual Programme Review Report, reviewed by the Committee and these then go to Academic Council and the NCAD Senior Management Team. Example 3.11 in the NCAD 2019 ISAR further elaborates on how the work to

'close the loop' in relation to Subject Extern Examiners reports has been undertaken, including through the publication of NCAD's Annual Quality Enhancement Statement.

3.18   The Review Panel was informed that the College Community Charter will be reviewed in light of the recently published Strategy and is intended to become more effective as a live document in the coming years.

3.19   The Review Panel heard from numerous participants and were able to reflect upon current practices in the NCAD but were sometimes unable to confirm the stage at which plans for quality enhancements would be implemented. The external stakeholders noted that NCAD sometimes has an organisational weakness in its lack of structure for project management, with an alumnus noting 'NCAD does well with the dream side of things'.

3.20   The Review Panel was informed that in the longer-term, NCAD intends to seek Athena SWAN accreditation.

3.21   While overall this is currently partially effective, during the Review Panel visit it was observed that student support for the institution and its staff was exceptionally high. However, there was a lack of detail about, and sometimes low levels of, formal student involvement with internal quality assurance processes. In general, student representation in the management/governance structure does not have high visibility.

3.22   Since the 2017 institutional quality review the NCAD has amplified the student voice within the College through the introduction of bi-annual student fora intended to provide rich information at module-level enabling relatively immediate response where needed and possible, and as a vital source of information for annual programme planning and enhancement.

3.23   In relation to student membership of College-wide committees – two students sit on An Bord as do two elected faculty representatives, and one part-time student also sits on the Athena SWAN committee alongside the two NCAD Students' Union officers. The NCAD Students' Union officers sit on a significant number of committees.

3.24   The Review Panel observed that there is low class representative engagement. All elected positions were uncontested – there was only one candidate for each, and these were voted in.

3.25   The interaction between students and the Quality Assurance Committee is primarily through student surveys – one internal (Annual End of Year Survey) and one external (StudentSurvey.ie). There have also been Student Forums – two per year up until the current year, and on an annual basis from the 2021-2022 academic session onwards (held mid-way through Trimester 2). Observations on the latest version of Student Survey Findings reviews the findings from 2019 with those of 2020. Key points recorded include: 1) the low level of satisfaction of Postgraduates in relation to publications and other external presence of their output; 2) the lack of investment in technology and equipment; and 3) a minor increase in satisfaction regarding information on assessment. A significant increase in satisfaction was recorded for the administration of Studio/Visual Culture+.

3.26   Class sizes were small with 'crits' and one-to-one teaching as a central feature of student-centred learning and teaching. The overall workload and pace of learning was considered to be very rigorous.

3.27   Anecdotally, the Review Panel heard that the student complaints system is ineffective as the system for escalating concerns from students is not entirely clear. Issues are also captured through surveys, but it is not clear where these surveys go. The Review Panel was informed that there have been other areas in which student feedback has been addressed – for example, there are monthly Student Council meetings which student class representatives are invited to and at which issues from students can be raised.

3.28   The Interim Head of Academic Affairs and Research's responsibilities include oversight of the milestones along the student lifecycle, oversight of quality assurance and oversight of student and learning support services and student complaints, and other student-facing issues.

3.29   The Review Panel observed that NCAD is becoming increasingly effective in relation to quality assurance of research programmes through renewed leadership.

3.30   There is however a deficiency in identifying practice-led research methodologies (a situation not unique to NCAD but which warrants further consideration nonetheless). An organic approach to both QA and appropriate training and support for NCAD's doctoral researchers emerged through meetings with postgraduate students. The Review Panel considered that this was due to the lack of a critical mass.

3.31   In 2018 the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee identified the development of a shared doctoral research programme anchored in creative practice as a priority for 'systemic' collaboration. The process of scoping of the focus for this programme, and the development of the required enabling structures, is underway.

3.32   An Bord recognise the potential for NCAD to play a leading role in defining research in a practice-based context, including making themselves better able to utilise metrics that make sense for their discipline, more conducive to risk management and evaluation, and to make themselves more fundable.

3.33   The Review Panel determined that there are significant limitations on what NCAD provides for staff in relation to their research – limited sabbatical leave, teaching buy-out, limited information about funding opportunities, and limited research support staff. NCAD still needs the 'academic weight' to provide the support for staff research.

3.34   The Review Panel determined that the provision of training and supports for research students was only partially appropriate. Evidence was provided to the Review Panel that there are different approaches to supervising doctoral researchers in NCAD. Some design research is conducted through practice; in education, a more traditional PhD thesis format is followed. A similar variety is found in other comparable Arts Schools internationally (e.g. The Glasgow School of Art). There are some modules available for all PhD students – for example, a credit-bearing module in Research Methods. In relation to research into, by and for practice; it was noted that the College has not yet fully worked out what shape this should take. The NCAD PhD is not a fully structured PhD, and the supervisory approach is tailored to the individual and is not systematic. The background of

individual staff members has not always been drawn on to work through this, partly due to internal structures and the need for a revised approach to Human Resources and Staff Research workloads.

3.35   UCD's relationship with NCAD relates primarily to the arts and humanities, but there is also collaboration in the areas of medical design and engineering where NCAD is very active. These linkages have flourished, but more could be developed to provide opportunities for inter-institutional doctoral supervision.

3.36   The MoA between the institutions states that NCAD shall ensure that "the academic management and supervision of students registered for masters and doctoral degrees by research in NCAD shall be compliant with regulation and practice in the University". Recent developments in PhD programme structure, paperless assessment (E-thesis) and others are yet to be embraced by NCAD.

3.37   The Review Panel determined that there are appropriate procedures in place for the appointment of staff. Since 2019, the College has had a Human Resources and Staff Development Manager and a Human Resources team.

3.38   The role of Head of Department/School is typically an advertised role and there is a systematic approach to recruitment including gender balanced shortlisting / interview panels. The guiding approach being taken within the new strategy is to determine what is right for art and design nationally (and not only what is best for NCAD). The 2019 ISAR outlines the recruitment processes.

3.39   Post-recruitment, and with reference to continuing professional development, the Review Panel heard of reports of Heads seeking out their own external training in leadership/management, and this was supported (and paid for) by the College. The aim in the development of the NCAD strategy was to ensure that the staff voice was heard, but also to meet institutional objectives.

3.40   The Review Panel determined that the student learning and social spaces were mostly appropriate. Enhancements to learning and teaching spaces are acknowledged by students.

3.41   The in-person tour of NCAD by the Chair of the Review Panel was remotely directed by all of the Review Panel members and revealed a combination of historic but also worn spaces alongside new developments such as the NCAD Gallery. This combination is typical of art schools, with clean spaces contrasting with evidently 'dirty' spaces. The allocation of individual studio spaces seemed generous in some areas but the Review Panel heard students critically commenting on sharing desks in some studio spaces and a problematic lack of storage.

3.42   A schedule of work including technical areas and studio layouts is underway, to enable NCAD meet its statutory obligations in respect of health and safety and the mitigation of fire risk.

3.43   A Learning and Teaching Development Officer has been appointed and there is a Project Team which is involved in reviewing international best practice and benchmarking and maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

3.44   Alumni noted class sizes were small with well-tailored learning. The overall workload and pace of learning appears very rigorous and of a high standard in comparison to other similar entities.

3.45 The 2019 ISAR notes that "NCAD has a higher number of students with learning support requirements than the national average." The College Counsellor reported that demand for student support has risen significantly. NCAD has a Framework for Supporting Studentship and a cross-College Community Welfare Committee, and the latter is responsible for the review of Support Services. In addition, the College has a range of pastoral and careers advisory services. The Student Assistance Fund and Childcare Support Fund (Irish Government / EU) provide support and finance for family-related or unexpected financial difficulties.

3.46 Academic support for students encompasses disability support, assistive IT and software support and two on-site library collections. The Review Panel heard that the infrastructure of the College estate can inhibit the support of students with disabilities and addressing this is a feature of the new strategy.

3.47 The Review Panel heard that staff teaching and learning workloads are 'intense' with very little time for research. Resourcing staff development is considered a perennial problem.

3.48 The Review Panel heard that staff enjoy working with NCAD, and many consider NCAD to be innovative, and mentoring and nurturing of students is a key asset for the institution.

3.49 The Review Panel observed that NCAD is mostly effective in ensuring that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the learning outcomes.

3.50 In art and design education, the primary learning resources are the studio and technical workshops. The shortening of the degree programme from four-years to three-years has squeezed access to the workshops, and now this access has to be rigorously timetabled via a booking system. The management of the technical workshops are a substantial health and safety undertaking. The Review Panel found the technical workshops to be accessible, in terms of welcoming and supportive.

3.51 The College library and other specialist resources such as the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) and the NCAD public-facing Gallery are accessible.

3.52 The Review Panel heard that students requested an induction programme with information about how the programmes are structured and how the modules work and contribute to the programme requirements.

Commendations

3.53 Throughout meetings the Review Panel heard from students, alumni and external stakeholders that the quality of teaching is exceptionally high, with a level of dedication and commitment noted even in the historic context of low-quality teaching spaces and COVID-19 pandemic-related occasional lack of resource. The Review Panel noted that student-facing academic, technical and support staff across all programmes were frequently and enthusiastically commended by students at all levels.

3.54   The Review Panel was provided with evidence of student-centred learning and teaching. Tutors were excellent and helped to push the self-directed learning approach.

3.55   The Review Panel welcomed the renewed leadership for Research and Doctoral Studies.

3.56   Meetings of the Review Panel with Alumni and external stakeholders were particularly valuable in enabling the Review Panel to better understand how the developing and often positive influence NCAD has on the lives of its graduates and non-HEI partners. There is evidence of good employability outcomes, examples of knowledge exchange and of longer-term partnering.

3.57   The Review Panel commends the NCAD on the significant capital projects addressing health and safety concerns reported in 2017 onwards, including €250k investment in fire safety, investment in IT infrastructure, addressing major concerns of the 2017 Review Panel Report. This is followed by HEA-funding of €2.2 M for capital expenditure (up to the 2019 ISAR) including IT infrastructure.

3.58   UCD and NCAD seek to collaborate through strategic projects and strategic collaborations. The Review Panel commends both UCD and NCAD on the development of the Creative Futures Academy, which provides an opportunity for programme innovation, including also streamlining the process for programme development. NCAD, IADT and UCD's Creative Futures Academy is receiving €10 million in funding to innovate in the delivery of creative education for learners at all stages of their careers.

Recommendations

3.59   As highlighted previously under Chapter 2 of this report and in the 2017 Review Group Report, the Review Panel recommends that NCAD re-establishes and implements its regular cycle of quality reviews, including reviews of academic programmes, and that these reviews should overtly relate to the objectives of the new NCAD strategy.

3.60   The Review Panel recommends that robust systematic approaches to the effective communication of decision-making and actions to all staff stemming from policies and committees be embedded (see also 2.17).

3.61   The Review Panel recommends that, in benchmarking its various activities, NCAD should ensure it identifies international measures and institutions, to complement the existing set of national benchmarks.

3.62   The Review Panel recommends that the NCAD considers streamlining its committees as part of its governance review.

3.63   The Review Panel recommends that the NCAD reviews its mechanisms for formally 'closing the loop' on student-centred learning and their involvement.

3.64   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD evaluates the range of mechanisms for receiving and processing student feedback, and provides clarity about the process to all students.

3.65   The Review Panel recommends that the new leadership in support of NCAD's doctoral programme addresses its alignment with UCD structures and function.

4.   Public Information

General Comments and Context

4.1   The Review Panel noted that the provision of public information, communication and information data management have been a focus for improvement since the last review in 2017, and the Review Panel found clear evidence that this is being achieved; public information is communicated effectively, predominantly via the NCAD website which has developed a clear visual identity and appears to be regularly updated. Prospective student-facing information, and the use of social media to maintain NCAD's profile, are particularly effective. Through the on-going *Working Together Better* project, further enhancements in student record-keeping, communication to staff, the use of data to inform decision making, and the transparency of College reporting are expected; a structured project to scope and define what is needed for a new NCAD website launched in September 2021 and is due to conclude in December 2021. This includes the introduction of a new staff intranet (due for completion in 2021) and the roll out of a new Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) (from January 2022).

4.2   The website includes easy-to-access information about the NCAD Gallery. Information is up-to-date and the gallery pages highlight a range of opportunities for public engagement. However, the Gallery programme appears largely aimed at specific stakeholders (e.g. artists) and does not specifically target a broader public audience, and the physical space does not actively invite many visitors from the general public.

4.3   At the time of the review site visit, the website information on *NCAD in Public* included a regular NCAD newsletter, and a link to NIVAL's website; this represents some progress following the 2017 institutional quality review recommendation that greater prominence could be given to items of public interest, such as the Gallery, NIVAL and buildings of historical significance, on the website. However, improvements to the visibility, access and quality of accommodation for NIVAL that were to be addressed through re-location on the campus over the past two years have stalled due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, whilst developing a more effective 'virtual visibility' for the Gallery, NIVAL, the Edward Murphy Library and the historical significance of the campus remains dependent on future investment in ICT infrastructure, including the College website.

4.4   There is comprehensive information on the NCAD website for prospective students for undergraduate*,* postgraduate and continuing education courses and learning opportunities, and public-facing information about NCAD's research and innovations, including current and completed PhDs, research projects with external partners, and academic/research staff profiles.

4.5   Furthermore, as described in the 2019 ISAR (3.17), progress is evident in terms of using the website to highlight and celebrate the achievements of NCAD staff, students and graduates externally.

4.6   Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) is used to showcase the achievements and activities of students and staff, and to reinforce positive messaging to prospective students about the college; execution of much of this communication is outsourced to public relations consultants to work on highly targeted campaigns associated with marketing and recruitment.

4.7   *NCAD Outreach* provides comprehensive information on outreach programmes shared with a range of external partners and stakeholders. However, some information here appears in need updating.

4.8   The NCAD website is also a portal for current, and prospective, students providing access to a wide range of support including IT support, programme information, student support services, academic and student affairs, and the student intranet (*My NCAD*). With the exception of the latter, much of the information available is accessible to the public despite being of little practical use to external website visitors.

4.9   At stakeholder meetings during the review site visit, current students described the website as a showcase and thus more intended for external audiences, and were critical of the student intranet, describing the user-experience as outdated and poor; it was acknowledged that some improvements had been made but there was still a need to "smooth the experience" of the three strands of the inter/intranet access to NCAD i.e. the externally facing website, *My NCAD* and the Library.

4.10   Regarding Virtual Learning Environments, a license for Canvas® has been recently purchased and transition to this platform is planned. Google Classroom and Zoom® have been used effectively for delivery of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Workvivo® is currently used for all internal (staff) communication and includes access to policy documents and handbooks.

4.11   Current staff, including Extern Examiners, can access a wide range of information via the staff area of the website that is also largely accessible to external viewers. This includes all policies, procedures and regulations (including a set responding to the COVID-19 pandemic), and the Academic Affairs staff handbook developed in response to a recommendation from the previous institutional quality review in 2017.

4.12   The Review Panel noted some comments made by some stakeholder groups which suggested that the College has become effective in circulating information to staff but is not always *communicating* as effectively. A strategic response to this, including the *Working Together Better* strategic project, are underway with the aim of supporting wider shared understanding of how decision-making processes across the College are informed by data-based evidence.

4.13   It was noted that some documents, e.g. the staff handbook currently accessed via the website, may be in need of updating.

4.14   Public information is communicated predominantly via the NCAD website, and as determined by the in-person tour of NCAD, there was no evidence of information about NCAD, including the printed prospectus mentioned in the 2019 ISAR (14.1), being made available to walk-in visitors to the College reception. Public access to the physical site is managed and limited.

4.15   The Review Panel determined that arrangements to ensure that public information is accurate, accessible and fit-for-purpose is partially effective and improving.

4.16   In response to the last institutional quality review, responsibility for the management and development of website content went to a new Website Committee, as outlined in the *Website Committee Terms of Reference* (Sept 2017, accessible from the website). Since its inception, the Website Committee has included website navigation, accuracy, out of date information, and effectiveness of the homepage in its meeting agendas.

4.17   The Website Committee implemented a student focus group in January 2018 which explored current students' and alumni's views of the website in terms of user experiences for potential students applying to NCAD. Feedback from this was detailed and included consideration of competitors' websites. The learning from this appears to have been successfully applied – as already noted above, information for prospective students is a strength of the current website.

4.18   A Website Committee proposal (February 2018) to appoint a Communications Officer has not been actioned; however, the Review Panel noted that the Student Services and Admissions Officer engages in significant external communication in relation to student recruitment, and has oversight of the various NCAD social media accounts.

4.19   Aspects of the new strategy and HEA compact projects have subsumed some of the Website Committee's work, e.g. internal communications as framed by the *Working Together Better* project. It is noted in the 2019 QIP update that, as NCAD establishes stronger organisational structures, business systems and stronger administrative functions, clear financial planning will enable investment in ICT infrastructure, including the College website.

4.20   A structured, and funded, project scoping and defining what is needed for a new NCAD website launched in September 2021 and is due to conclude in December 2021. This includes the introduction of a new staff intranet (due for completion in 2021) and the roll out of a new VLE (from January 2022), and also highlights the need to better understand user behaviour using analytics; there is evidence of progress on this as user analysis from October 2020 to September 2021 is now being used to shape this project.

4.21   The Review Panel observed that reporting on quality assurance and review is accessible and seeks to be transparent. However, some documents accessed via the website appear to be in need of updating.

4.22   NCAD uses a range of data sets to inform decision-making across, and at different levels within, the institution (2019 ISAR 13.1). Reliable information in support of programme planning and effective quality enhancement is presented to, and disseminated by, NCAD's Senior Management Team and Academic Council on the basis of the following data sources:

- Student Feedback Reports – from Quality Officer
- Student FTEs – from Student Services and Admissions (SS&A)
- Student Recruitment, Admissions and Enrolments Reporting – from SS&A
- Access and Lifelong Learning Students – from NCAD's Access Officer
- Retention and Progression Rates – from SS&A

This information enables a degree of self-monitoring and planning at programme, Department, School and College level.

4.23   Since 2019, NCAD has put in place structures to ensure that information for students on the website refers to the current academic session, particularly in regard to examination regulations, are in place and have bedded down.

4.24   The *About* tab on the homepage takes users to a comprehensive information set about the College, including the new strategy and Academic Affairs (Academic Council, Student Services and Admissions, Quality Assurance, and Policies, Procedures & Regulations). Quality Review Reports, Quality Improvement Plans and an Annual Quality Enhancement Statement are also accessible via NCAD's website. However, the Quality Improvement Plans, and the schedule of unit and programme reviews, accessible via the website, appeared in need of updating from 2018 and 2017 respectively at the time of the current review.

4.25   Key Policies and Documents, Annual and Financial reports in English and Irish, Web Policies, and Matters to be Reported can also be accessed via the website. However, some reports have apparently not been updated here since 2019 e.g. Annual and Financial reports covered 2011-2018 at the time of the current review.

4.26   In common with some other institutions in Ireland, NCAD uses QUERCUS® as a system for managing student records. NCAD reported finding the functionality of the system to be robust, and all credit and non-credit programmes and courses (including in Continuing Education in Art and Design (CEAD)) are now fully administered through the system including applications, registration, fee payment and examination results. The system provides data that can be used to inform decision-making. However, progressing with further improvements is needed to allow deeper data analysis and better communication to students and staff of how what is learnt from this can be applied to enhancement activities. Additionally, academic staff use of QUERCUS in assessment has been withheld for several years due to GDPR issues within the platform that are being addressed by the developer, Ellucian.

4.27   The College has identified that there are challenges with the structure and management of the College website, and a need for an effective intranet function for staff - currently, only staff within NCAD can access the NCAD intranet on Google Drive to view NCAD Programmes Board reports and Student Feedback reports.

Commendations

4.28   Information for prospective students is comprehensive and includes a dedicated site for detailed guidance, with exemplar materials, to undergraduate applicants on preparing portfolios.

4.29   Overall, the Review Panel found that information provided for prospective students is very good; all key information is easy to access and navigate, and includes a comprehensive dedicated site for guidance on preparing portfolios. This has supported recent improvement to application rates (see 2019 ISAR Case Study 14.6).

Recommendations

4.30   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses the fact that, whilst the student facing (marketing) orientated content on the website has been maintained and kept up-to-date, the College appears to fall short of fulfilling its obligations in ensuring other information (e.g. Quality Improvement Plans and Annual and Financial Reports) is available.

4.31   Progress has been made since the last institutional quality review in 2017. However there are acknowledged challenges with the structure and management of the College website, and a need for an effective intranet function for staff; the Review Panel therefore recommends that the College prioritises action on the improvements needed, as identified in the 2019 ISAR, following a realistic and achievable timeline.

5.   Alignment with QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines and ESG

General Comments and Context

5.1   The institutional quality review of NCAD – both in 2017 and the current review – is the central component in the NCAD external cyclical review processes, which are overseen by UCD. Under the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)*, higher education institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis (ESG 1.10).

5.2   The Review Panel observed that the overall approach taken by NCAD to the preparation of the Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR) and support for the review site visit itself has been to address the twin purposes of accountability and enhancement as required under the *ESG*, the *QQI Handbook for Cyclical Review* and the *UCD Guidelines for Linked Provider Institutional Review*. Section 15.6 of the 2019 ISAR also provides valuable information via a table which maps the key provisions in the 2019 ISAR to the *QQI Core Guidelines*, and the relevant provisions of the ESG are also referenced in each chapter of the 2019 ISAR.

5.3   The structures in place within NCAD's quality assurance framework that assure oversight and assign responsibility for quality assurance and quality enhancement are as follows: Primary oversight of quality rests with An Bord; Institutional responsibility rests with the College Management Team and NCAD's Academic Council; NCAD's Quality Assurance Steering Committee and School Boards play a key role in driving the delivery of quality assurance / quality enhancement processes and initiatives, and formal responsibility in respect of quality assurance / quality enhancement is held across a number of roles: Head of Academic Affairs & Research, Heads of School, Heads of Department, Programme Leaders and, from 2019, Module Co-ordinators.

5.4   NCAD appears to have a good plan but should recognise the reality in the difficulty of achieving the objectives set-out in the plan. The capacity of the NCAD business plan to embed its policy framework is a resource intense requirement which could be partially allayed through the Recognised College relationship and through sharing experiences of change in an academic setting.

6.   Conclusions

6.1   The Review Panel concludes that, overall, the 'direction of travel' in relation to NCAD meeting its obligation to ensure that its quality assurance procedures are effective for managing and enhancing academic standards and learning opportunities is appropriate, and they are commended on the progress they have made in this regard. However, there is still work to be done, and the NCAD should ensure that it continues to develop realistic plans, targets and timelines for achieving the goals which it has articulated for itself, and the recommendations from both the 2017 and the current review.

6.2   Progress in relation to the implementation of all quality assurance recommendations should be rigorously monitored, both within NCAD and by the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee, to ensure that both institutions meet their statutory obligations and that NCAD remains on track to achieve the ambitious goals set-out in its strategic plan.

Appendix 1 – Full List of Review Panel Commendations and Recommendations

Introduction and Context

Commendations

1.33   The Review Panel commends the NCAD on its new strategy and the key staff appointments which have been made who led its development and will lead its implementation. The new NCAD Director was appointed since the 2017 institutional quality review and is supported by a number of new posts. The Director reports to a newly re-constituted An Bord. These developments have resulted in enhanced 'connectedness' and evidence of a confident, ambitious and significant new leadership. Further meetings are planned with key staff to evaluate the most appropriate structures to implement, suitable to the size and nature of the institution. NCAD is now undertaking a strategic implementation phase, following the pre-COVID completion of its ISAR (August 2019), much of which was beginning or underway during the quality review. The success of the implementation phase will be central to the management and enhancement of learning opportunities, and more broadly to NCAD as a premier art and design education institution in Ireland and with a high international reputation.

Recommendations

1.34   The Review Panel recommends that the meetings of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee be made more formal, including convening such meetings on a regular basis, and that minutes (with required actions) should be taken of such meetings which should be made available to key stakeholders in both institutions. The Review Panel further recommends that both institutions consider how this Committee could be utilised for reporting and monitoring of progress against the recommendations made in this report – reports on progress against the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) should be made on a 6-monthly basis and provided to the Registrar and the Director of Quality at UCD, and these will also be considered by the ACQEC.

1.35   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD engages with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to determine its obligations in relation to the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ).

1.36   The Review Panel recommends that the relevant staff in NCAD with responsibility for student registration and records engage with the relevant staff in UCD to consider whether and how section 4.4 of the Memorandum of Agreement between UCD and NCAD (dated 9 December 2020) can be fully implemented.

Institutional Management of Academic Standards

Commendations

2.15   There are numerous instances of good practice in the management of academic standards. The assessment process, in particular, is robust and is a source of institutional integrity. Extern

Examiners, who visit twice during each academic year, are appointed for a three-year period to review and provide feedback on the assessment process. Feedback was observed to be helpful, instructive and consistent with student learning. Extern Examiners commented positively on the good elements of assessed work and indicated where improvements could be made and how such improvements could be effected. NCAD is therefore effective at using external moderation to assure academic standards.

Recommendations

2.16   The Review Panel recommends that the next milestones for NCAD should be focussed on the development of the managerial tools that can be used to support and drive the aims and objectives of the new NCAD Strategic Plan and the work of the NCAD Director. These developments would support the enhancement of the overall quality of management processes and would help to establish performance indicators for the quality of academic outputs, direct the workload and performance of staff, as well as support overall workplace satisfaction.

2.17   The Review Panel recommends that there should be more transparency and communication between the management team and all staff on a regular basis, including through informal meetings, to ensure ongoing alignment with, and commitment to, the new vision for NCAD, and to also ensure contributions and buy-in from all staff members within the College (see also 3.60).

2.18   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD should consider developing and implementing a set of practical management tools and applications, in order to:

- Evaluate and manage staff workload time allocations, including research, as staff represent the most important resource, including in relation to cost;
- Develop pedagogic models that can create efficiency in distribution of teaching hours and independent student work;
- Develop staff career paths;
- Develop and engage with individual staff performance assessments; and
- Develop a set of performance indicators per school, study programme and for individual staff members.

2.19   The Review Panel observed that there is a need to create a development plan for organisational change and its implementation, to accompany the new strategic plan. This development plan should include clearly indicated milestones, priorities, responsibilities and a realistic timeframe for implementation. It should include a mechanism to evaluate progress and create incentives for achieving the milestones. As there are financial constraints it is important to prioritise the development processes and have clear responsibilities, timelines and accountabilities. The Review Panel recommends that there should be one or more checklists which could be used to monitor implementation of the strategic plan and its key performance indicators (KPIs).

2.20   To strengthen alignment with UCD academic policy and procedures, the Review Panel recommends that the adherence to UCD academic policy and procedures should be included as a standing agenda item of the NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee. Furthermore, reporting (and management meetings) would be more efficient and effective if aligned to the protocol 'Indicative Responsibilities Checklist' (2019 ISAR, Appendix 1-Annex 2).

2.21   To ensure consistency in the approach to internal quality assurance, the Review Panel recommends that a system should be established for peer-to-peer learning and benchmarking within NCAD. The Review Panel heard evidence that this exists in relation to Extern Examiner reports, and this approach should be extended to other areas which likewise provide important feedback and help to ensure and enhance the quality of NCAD's educational provision.

2.22   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses a number of issues regarding procedures for admission, assessment and progression which are in place but are not yet aligned to UCD's Academic Regulations (e.g. procedures for assessment).

2.23   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD puts in place a schedule of Quality Assurance reviews of its programmes and units. The College should ensure that there is effective oversight on adhering to the schedule, and the monitoring of these reviews including timely reporting on the implementation of all review report recommendations.

Quality of Learning Opportunities

Commendations

3.53   Throughout meetings the Review Panel heard from students, alumni and external stakeholders that the quality of teaching is exceptionally high, with a level of dedication and commitment noted even in the historic context of low-quality teaching spaces and COVID-19 pandemic-related occasional lack of resource. The Review Panel noted that student-facing academic, technical and support staff across all programmes were frequently and enthusiastically commended by students at all levels.

3.54   The Review Panel was provided with evidence of student-centred learning and teaching. Tutors were excellent and helped to push the self-directed learning approach.

3.55   The Review Panel welcomed the renewed leadership for Research and Doctoral Studies.

3.56   Meetings of the Review Panel with Alumni and external stakeholders were particularly valuable in enabling the Review Panel to better understand how the developing and often positive influence NCAD has on the lives of its graduates and non-HEI partners. There is evidence of good employability outcomes, examples of knowledge exchange and of longer-term partnering.

3.57   The Review Panel commends the NCAD on the significant capital projects addressing health and safety concerns reported in 2017 onwards, including €250k investment in fire safety, investment in IT infrastructure, addressing major concerns of the 2017 Review Panel Report. This is followed by HEA-funding of €2.2 M for capital expenditure (up to the 2019 ISAR) including IT infrastructure.

3.58   UCD and NCAD seek to collaborate through strategic projects and strategic collaborations. The Review Panel commends both UCD and NCAD on the development of the Creative Futures Academy, which provides an opportunity for programme innovation, including also streamlining the process for programme development. NCAD, IADT and UCD's Creative Futures Academy is

receiving €10 million in funding to innovate in the delivery of creative education for learners at all stages of their careers.

Recommendations

3.59   As highlighted previously under Chapter 2 of this report and in the 2017 Review Group Report, the Review Panel recommends that NCAD re-establishes and implements its regular cycle of quality reviews, including reviews of academic programmes, and that these reviews should overtly relate to the objectives of the new NCAD strategy.

3.60   The Review Panel recommends that robust systematic approaches to the effective communication of decision-making and actions to all staff stemming from policies and committees be embedded (see also 2.17).

3.61   The Review Panel recommends that, in benchmarking its various activities, NCAD should ensure it identifies international measures and institutions, to complement the existing set of national benchmarks.

3.62   The Review Panel recommends that the NCAD considers streamlining its committees as part of its governance review.

3.63   The Review Panel recommends that the NCAD reviews its mechanisms for formally 'closing the loop' on student-centred learning and their involvement.

3.64   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD evaluates the range of mechanisms for receiving and processing student feedback, and provides clarity about the process to all students.

3.65   The Review Panel recommends that the new leadership in support of NCAD's doctoral programme addresses its alignment with UCD structures and function.

Public Information

Commendations

4.28   Information for prospective students is comprehensive and includes a dedicated site for detailed guidance, with exemplar materials, to undergraduate applicants on preparing portfolios.

4.29   Overall, the Review Panel found that information provided for prospective students is very good; all key information is easy to access and navigate, and includes a comprehensive dedicated site for guidance on preparing portfolios. This has supported recent improvement to application rates (see 2019 ISAR Case Study 14.6).

Recommendations

4.30   The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses the fact that, whilst the student facing (marketing) orientated content on the website has been maintained and kept up-to-date, the

College appears to fall short of fulfilling its obligations in ensuring other information (e.g. Quality Improvement Plans and Annual and Financial Reports) is available.

4.31   Progress has been made since the last institutional quality review in 2017. However there are acknowledged challenges with the structure and management of the College website, and a need for an effective intranet function for staff; the Review Panel therefore recommends that the College prioritises action on the improvements needed, as identified in the 2019 ISAR, following a realistic and achievable timeline.

Appendix 2 – Response from the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) to the Review Panel Report

The task of developing the Self-Assessment Report for the Quality Review of the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) was a hugely valuable reflective exercise, which facilitated the College to review its position from a number of perspectives, to reflect upon our priorities, highlight and confirm our strengths and opportunities, identify areas of good practice and evaluate our weaknesses and challenges in a systematic way. The engagement with the Review Panel was a positive and constructive experience. We welcome the endorsement of the Review Panel for our activities through commendations and will carefully consider the recommendations in the context of developing the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

There was a high level of engagement in the Quality Review process from all staff categories and from the student community, both in compiling the Self-Assessment Report and in interacting with the Review Panel during their virtual visit. The institution wishes to thank the Review Panel for their time, expertise and constructive comments, both during the visit and in their helpful Report. Their generosity in undertaking this work is greatly appreciated.

We will formulate the QIP to address the recommendations in the Review Panel Report, and many actions are already underway. These include investing in additional resources to remediate delays in our Quality Review reporting, establishing a development plan for the organisational change involved in delivering our Strategy, and engaging with QQI to determine our obligations in relation to the Irish Register of Qualifications.

With specific reference to the prioritised recommendations identified by the Review Panel, the College's initial proposals/comments are outlined below:

(i) Recommendation 2.16: The Review Panel recommends that the next milestones for NCAD should be focused on the development of managerial tools that can be used to support and drive the aims and objectives of the new NCAD Strategic Plan and the work of the NCAD Director. These developments would support the enhancement of the overall quality of management processes and would help to establish performance indicators for the quality of academic outputs, direct the workload and performance of staff, as well as support overall workplace satisfaction.

> **Proposal/Comment**: The College recognises the importance of organising the work of the College to ensure that we deliver on our ambitions as articulated in the strategy. We also appreciate and value the recommendation to consider and develop managerial tools to support us in doing this. Careful consideration will be given to how best to address this recommendation within and beyond the parameters of our Working Together Better strategic project as we develop our QIP.

(ii) Recommendation 2.17: The Review Panel recommends that there should be more transparency and communication between the management team and all staff on a regular basis, including through informal meetings, to ensure ongoing alignment with, and commitment to, the new vision for NCAD, and to also ensure contributions and buy-in from all staff members within the College.

> **Proposal/Comment**: This recommendation accords well with feedback from staff emphasising the value of regular All Staff meetings led by the Director. These regular informal meetings will be continued, and consideration given to how they might enhance awareness of and alignment with the new vision for NCAD. This recommendation will also be considered in the context of the

Working Together Better strategic project which includes within its remit working to bring greater clarity to decision making processes and effective communication across the College.

(iii) Recommendation 2.18: The Review Panel recommends that NCAD should consider developing and implementing a set of practical management tools and applications, in order to:

- Evaluate and manage staff workload time allocations, including research, as staff represent the most important resource, including in relation to cost;
- Develop pedagogic models that can create efficiency in distribution of teaching hours and independent student work;
- Develop staff career paths;
- Develop and engage with individual staff performance assessments; and
- Develop a set of performance indicators per school, study programme and for individual staff members.

Proposal/Comment: The College shares the view of the panel that our staff represent our most important resource and our determination to create a better workplace and to better support the staff of NCAD lies at the heart of our Working Together Better strategic project. In this context, progress is already being made in respect of developing staff career paths with the recent approval and implementation of an Assistant Lecturer-to-Lecturer progression policy. Developing pedagogic models that enhance our capacity to support Bold and Curious learning is at the heart of our Teaching and Learning strategic project, and the recommendation to consider efficiency and equity in the distribution of teaching hours and independent student work will be considered in this context as we build our QIP. In all of this, engagement with the staff and students of the College is vital and will take time.

(**iv) Recommendation 2.19**: The Review Panel observed that there is a need to create a development plan for organisational change and its implementation, to accompany the new strategic plan. This development plan should include clearly indicated milestones, priorities, responsibilities and a realistic timeframe for implementation. It should include a mechanism to evaluate progress and create incentives for achieving the milestones. As there are financial constraints it is important to prioritise the development processes and have clear responsibilities, timelines and accountabilities. The Review Panel recommends that there should be one or more checklists which could be used to monitor implementation of the strategic plan and its key performance indicators (KPIs).

Proposal/Comment: NCAD's Strategic Plan is underpinned by 4 Strategic Projects and 3 Enabling Projects, each of which includes a clear articulation of priorities that fall within the remit of the project as well as clear milestones, deliverables, timeframes and responsibilities and accountability. The recommendation that the checklists embedded within these project plans be combined to support monitoring of progress across the whole will be addressed as part of our QIP.

(v) Recommendation 3.59: The Review Panel recommends that NCAD re-establishes and implements its regular cycle of quality reviews, including reviews of academic programmes, and that these should overtly relate to the objectives of the new NCAD strategy.

Proposal/Comment: Re-establishing and implementing a regular cycle of quality reviews is a very high priority for the College. As noted in our opening comments, significant additional resources have been put in place to support an intense schedule of reviews for our academic programmes over the next two years. In this context, there is evidence of progress being made through the

imminent completion of the quality review of 2 programmes. The recommendation that the reviews should overtly relate to the strategy is welcome and will be addressed across our quality assurance processes.

(vi) Recommendation 4.30: The Review Panel recommends that NCAD addresses the fact that, whilst the student facing (marketing) oriented content on the website has been maintained and kept up to date, the College appears to fall short of fulfilling its obligations in ensuring other information (e.g. Quality Improvement Plans and Annual and Financial Reports) is available.

> **Proposal/Comment**: The College acknowledges that there is significant work to be done to improve the accessibility, accuracy and currency of non-recruitment-oriented information on the website. Immediate steps are being taken to address this in respect of quality assurance and annual and financial reports, and consideration will be given to taking a systematic approach to this as part of developing the QIP, as well as in the context of wider enhancements of our digital infrastructure.

Within three months of receiving the Review Panel Report, the institution will prepare the QIP outlining how it proposes to implement the Review Panel Report recommendations. The QIP will be agreed within the institution and signed-off by the Chair of the Review Panel and the UCD Director of Quality. The QIP will be considered by the UCD Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) and then published alongside the Review Panel Report.

Appendix 3 – Schedule for Review Remote Site Visit to NCAD
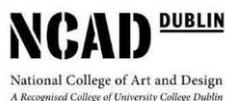
National College of Art and Design

Site Visit Timetable
18-22 October 2021

SESSION 1
Monday, 27 September 2021
Review Panel Briefing Meeting

All times are local Irish time	
14.00-14.30	Introductions; UCD Quality Office Lead briefing to Review Panel members on the quality process; run through technical platform, collaborative spaces, and any practicalities
14.30-14.40	Break
14.40-15.30	Review Panel Chair to lead discussion on preparation of Preliminary Comments on the Institutional Self-Assessment Report (ISAR), preparations for the site visit, timetable, initial observations, information requests

SESSION 2.1
Wednesday, 6 October 2021
Review Panel Planning Meeting

All times are local Irish time	
09.00-09.45	Preliminary Comments and areas for discussion – Review Panel
09.45-10.00	Break
10.00-11.30	Timetable Review, assignment of Review Panel roles for meetings/questions, additional information requests

SESSION 2.2
Tuesday, 12 October 2021
Review Panel Meeting with the
UCD Registrar/Deputy President/Vice-President for Academic Affairs

All times are local Irish time	
09.30-10.30	Meeting with UCD Registrar/Deputy President/Vice-President for Academic Affairs

SESSION 3
Monday, 18 October 2021
Review Panel Meeting with NCAD Director and NCAD Senior Management Team

All times are local Irish time	
12.00-12.30	Review Panel – preparation for meeting with the NCAD Director
12.30-13.15	**SESSION 3.1, NCAD Director**
13.15-14.00	Review Panel – break for lunch
14.00-14.45	**SESSION 3.2, NCAD Acting Head of Academic Affairs and Research**
14.45-15.00	Review Panel – break & preparation for next session
15.00-15.45	**SESSION 3.3, NCAD Senior Management Team**
15.45-16.00	Review Panel – break & preparation for next session
16.00-16.45	**SESSION 3.4, Stakeholder meeting – NCAD Programmes Board**
16.45-17.00	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session
17.00-17.15	**SESSION 3.5, Stakeholder meeting – An Bord Chair & Chair of An Bord Audit & Risk Committee**
17.15-17.45	**SESSION 3.6, Stakeholder meeting – Committee Chairs**
17.45-18.00	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session

SESSION 4
Tuesday, 19 October 2021
Core Activities & Stakeholder Feedback

All times are local Irish time	
09.30-10.00	Review Panel – preparation for session
10.00-10.30	**SESSION 4.1, NCAD Facilities Manager**
10.30-10.45	Review Panel – break & preparation for next session
10.45-11.30	**SESSION 4.2, Stakeholder meeting – Staff & Student Support**
11.30-11.45	Review Panel – break & preparation for next session
11.45-12.30	**SESSION 4.3, Stakeholder meeting – Teaching & Learning Support**
12.30-12.45	Review Panel – break & preparation for next session
12.45-13.30	**SESSION 4.4, Stakeholder meeting – Research Support**
13.30-14.30	Review Panel – break for lunch
14.30-15.00	**SESSION 4.5, Stakeholder meeting – NCAD Students' Union**
15.00-15.15	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session
15.15-16.00	**SESSION 4.6, Stakeholder meeting – Undergraduate Students (F/T & P/T)**
16.00-16.15	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session
16.15-17.00	**SESSION 4.7, Stakeholder meeting – Postgraduate Students (Taught and Research)**
17.00-17.15	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session

SESSION 5
Wednesday, 20 October 2021
Core Activities & Stakeholder Feedback

All times are local Irish time	
09.30-10.00	Review Panel – preparation for session
10.00-10.45	**SESSION 5.1, Stakeholder meeting – Heads of Department/School**
10.45-11.00	Review Panel break
11.00-11.45	**SESSION 5.2, Stakeholder meeting – Academic Staff**
11.45-12.00	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session
12.00-12.45	**SESSION 5.3, Stakeholder meeting – New Academic Staff (appointed within the last 5 years)**
12.45-14.00	Review Panel break – lunch
14.00-14.45	**SESSION 5.4, Stakeholder meeting – Alumni**
14.45-15.00	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session
15.00-15.45	**SESSION 5.5, Stakeholder meeting – External Stakeholders**
15.45-16.15	Review Panel – Key observations & preparation for next session

SESSION 6
Thursday, 21 October 2021
Exit Presentation: Review Panel Key Findings – Commendations & Recommendations

All times are local Irish time	
13.00-14.00	Review Panel – preparation for Exit Presentation
14.00-14.30	**Session 6.1 – NCAD Director**
14.30-15.00	**Session 6.2 – NCAD Senior Management Team**
15.00-15.15	Review Panel – Site Visit close out & next steps

IN-PERSON TOUR
Friday, 5 November 2021

All times are local Irish time	
10.30-12.00	Review Panel Chair, Guided by the NCAD Director and NCAD Facilities Manager

SESSION 7
Monday, 1 November 2021
Review Panel Drafting Session 1

All times are local Irish time	
14.00-16.00	Review Panel Drafting Session 1

SESSION 8
Tuesday, 16 November 2021
Review Panel Drafting Session 2

All times are local Irish time	
10.00-12.00	Review Panel Drafting Session 2, with sign-off on Report