



Dearbhú Cáilíochta  
agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann  
Quality and  
Qualifications Ireland



**Higher Education Pathway  
Assessment Report:**  
**Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art,  
Design and Technology**



## About this assessment

This report details the findings of the assessment conducted by an Assessment Panel on behalf of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) of Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology's IEM Application Statement (IEMAS), which was submitted to QQI as part of the provider's application for authorisation to use the TrustEd Ireland mark. The desk assessment was conducted by the following Assessment Panel:

Name	Role	Affiliation
Prof. Jeremy Bradshaw	Chairperson	International Higher Education Consultant, United Kingdom
Prof. Michelle Callanan	Report Writer/Secondary	Deputy Dean (QA & Enhancement), University College Birmingham, United Kingdom
Paul Mullaly	International Education Expert	International Higher Education Consultant, Ireland
Damian Gornik	Learner	Munster Technological University, Ireland

## Outcome of the assessment

This assessment evaluates the provider's compliance with the criteria set out in the Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners (HE Code). From the evidence provided by the provider in the self-assessment document, the IEM Application Statement (IEMAS), the Assessment Panel concludes that the provider should be:

Outcome	Please tick
Authorised to use TrustEd Ireland Mark	✓
Not Authorised to use TrustEd Ireland Mark	

Please see below a summary of the outcome by HE Code principle (5.1-5.6)

## 5.1 Marketing and Recruitment:

**Principle: HE providers recruit international learners in a transparent and ethical manner. In their marketing and promotional materials, they ensure that clear, accurate, transparent, accessible, relevant and up to date information is provided.**

5.1.1 (a) HE providers shall endeavour proactively to understand the information needs of prospective international learners.

5.1.1 (b) HE providers shall ensure that information provided to potential international learners about the institution and its provision is clear, accurate, transparent, accessible, relevant and up to date. This shall include information about the intended purpose of the provision e.g., to prepare a learner for further study or specific employment. Where necessary, it should also include information on associated immigration requirements, including requirements for learners requiring entry visas and/or immigration permission.

5.1.1 (c) Where applicable, information should also be provided on the professional accreditation status of programmes.

5.1.1 (d) Where applicable, information on practice placement requirements, and how these may be fulfilled, should also be made be known to prospective international learners.

5.1.1 (e) HE providers shall be compliant with information for learner requirements, as set out in Section 67 of the 2012 Act as amended. They shall confirm:

- (i) whether or not the successful completion of the programme entitles the learner to an award;
- (ii) the awarding body making the award;
- (iii) the title of the award;
- (iv) whether the award is one that is included within the NFQ;
- (v) the level at which the award is included within the NFQ;
- (vi) whether the award is a major, minor, special purpose or supplemental award, as identified within the NFQ;
- (vii) the procedures for access, transfer and progression that are in place, including the pathways for international learners for further study, employment, and residency, where applicable (see also section 4.2 above);
- (viii) details, where appropriate, of the arrangements in place for the protection of enrolled learners under Section 65 of the 2012 Act as amended (see section 4.5.2 above and Appendix Two of this code).

5.1.1 (f) HE providers shall ensure that information is provided in a way that is accessible to international learners and assists them in making informed decisions. This information should support international learners in understanding all matters related to a programme prior to enrolment. If provided in a different language, it is the responsibility of the HE provider to ensure that the information is clear, accurate, transparent, accessible, relevant and up to date.

5.1.1 (g) HE providers shall accurately represent their organisation and facilities in all marketing and promotional materials and ensure that no false or misleading information is issued.

5.1.1 (h) HE providers shall provide appropriate contact details for an appropriate person or persons to provide assistance with queries from international learners prior to enrolment.

5.1.1 (i) HE providers shall state the commencement dates for all programmes.

5.1.2 (a) Prior to enrolment, HE providers shall ensure the availability and provision of relevant financial information pertaining to the study and average subsistence costs of their programme provision, from the period of enrolment through to graduation.

5.1.2 (b) Prior to enrolment, HE providers shall ensure that the learner is made aware of any insurance requirements, e.g., medical or travel insurance, and of the availability of accommodation, and any accommodation services provided.

5.1.2 (c) HE providers shall have a written agreement with each education agent, recruitment partner or consultant that formally represents their programme provision.

5.1.2 (d) HE providers shall ensure that any contractual arrangements entered with an education agent, recruitment partner or consultant incorporate the principles of the London Statement. Existing contracts that do not incorporate these principles shall be amended appropriately within two years of the date of the HE provider's application for authorisation to use the IEM.

5.1.2 (e) The contract between the HE provider and education agent, recruitment partner or consultant shall include a termination clause in instances where the agent does not comply with the principles of the London Statement or is found to have acted in an unethical fashion to the detriment of international learners.

5.1.2 (f) HE providers shall conduct due diligence e.g., three reference checks, to verify the track record of education agents, recruitment partners or consultants, in relation to learner protection issues, prior to entering into a contractual agreement.

5.1.2 (g) HE providers shall ensure that all education agents, recruitment partners or consultants contracted to them are in possession of accurate and up to date information regarding the provider and its provision.

5.1.2 (h) HE providers shall have in place a transparent process for monitoring and reviewing the activities of education agents, recruitment partners or consultants including, where appropriate, feedback from applicants, to ensure that the education agent, recruitment partner or consultant is operating within the spirit of the HE Code and the London Statement.

5.1.2 (i) HE providers required to put in place arrangements for the protection of enrolled learners under Section 65 of the 2012 Act as amended shall do so prior to the recruitment of learners (see also section 4.5 and Appendix Two of this HE code).

### Summary

The Panel agrees with IADT that 11 of the 18 criteria are applicable for Principle 5.1: Marketing and Recruitment, confirming that criteria 5.1.2 (c) to (i) are not relevant to this provider. The Panel also concurs with IADT's assessment that full compliance has been demonstrated across 10 of the 11 applicable criteria, with partial compliance with criterion 5.1.1 (d). The Panel reached this conclusion by examining the evidence submitted by IADT, as covered below.

The Panel noted that IADT employs both formal and informal approaches to understand and respond to the needs of prospective and current international students, thereby meeting criterion 5.1.1 (a). The International Office, established in 2021, plays a pivotal role in advancing internationalisation and maintaining communication with international applicants and students. The Panel reviewed documentation demonstrating that staff regularly attend at least one international education conference annually and actively participate in expert groups such as the Irish Council for International Students, THEA, Education in Ireland, and NAFSA. These engagements enhance their understanding of international student recruitment and facilitate the exchange of best practices. Additionally, IADT gathers insights through annual focus groups and surveys, including the QS International Student Survey, which support benchmarking and inform continuous improvements to the international student experience.

The Panel confirmed that all programmes available to international students are listed on the International Student Hub, which provides key information, including awarding body, ECTS credits, NFQ level, and ILEP reference. The Hub also links to individual programme pages and offers essential details on applications, commencement dates, fees, scholarships, contact information,

cost of living, and visa requirements. For ease of access, the Hub is directly linked from the IADT homepage. To further enhance communication with prospective applicants, IADT is developing a tailored international student brochure [5.1.1 (b)–(f), (h), (i)].

In relation to criterion 5.1.1 (d), IADT has rated itself as partially compliant, a position the Panel supports. A consultation process is currently underway to review the work-placement and work-based learning components of the curriculum, with consideration given to the needs of international learners. Following this, a policy group will be established to develop a formal framework for work placements. The Panel endorses this initiative but places a condition on IADT to complete the development of this framework within one year of TrustEd Ireland authorisation, to ensure full compliance with 5.1.1 (d).

The Panel reviewed documentation demonstrating that IADT hosts a variety of events, including Open Days, Spotlight Sessions, and Virtual Project Days, which are delivered both in-person and online to support prospective students. The institution maintains high standards in its marketing and promotional activities, with staff contractually required to uphold professionalism and brand consistency. While the Panel would have welcomed further detail on how these standards are monitored or assured, it is satisfied that IADT is compliant with criterion 5.1.1 (g).

The Panel also reviewed the financial information on the International Student Hub and confirmed that it includes tuition fees, refund policies, scholarship opportunities, and budgeting advice. The Student Fees Policy confirms that students will retain the same fee rate as their first year of enrolment. Medical insurance requirements are also detailed on the Hub. While IADT does not provide accommodation directly, they have confirmed that the IADT Student Pad website, linked from the International Student Hub and managed by the Student Union, offers guidance and support for students seeking housing [5.1.2 (a) and (b)].

IADT does not currently use agents, so 5.1.2 (c) to (i) are not applicable.

Overall, 11/18 out of the 18 criteria are applicable to IADT for Principle 5.1 (5.1.2 (c) to (i) are not applicable as IADT does not work with agents), and 10/11 criteria are fully compliant, with 5.1.1 (d) as partially compliant. Accordingly, the Panel has placed one condition on IADT, as noted below:

#### **Condition 1**

**5.1.1 (d):** IADT must complete the development of a formal framework for work placements and work-based learning within one year of TrustEd Ireland authorisation.

**Principle 5.2 Admissions and Qualifications' Recognition:**

**HE providers operate fair, transparent and consistent admission policies that support the successful participation of international learners in their chosen programmes**

5.2 (a) HE providers shall clearly specify entry requirements for international learners that support the successful participation of the learners in their chosen programmes.

5.2 (b) HE providers' entry requirements shall clearly specify English language proficiency requirements for applicants whose first language is not English. These should include references to the benchmarks used in assessing proficiency requirements and, like other entry requirements, support the successful participation of international learners in their chosen programmes.

5.2 (c) HE providers shall adopt the principles, and follow the guidance, contained in the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) and subsidiary texts in assessing the qualifications presented by international learners for the purpose of admission to their programmes. Qualifications should be assessed in an accessible and fair manner and within a reasonable timeframe.

5.2 (d) HE providers should recognise qualifications that are recognised for the purpose of access to programmes in an international applicant's own higher education system, unless a substantial difference can be demonstrated between the requirements for admission in the applicant's own higher education system and those of the Irish HE provider.

5.2 (e) HE providers shall provide a timely written response to international applicants who are refused admission.

5.2 (f) Where a HE provider decides to withhold recognition of a qualification from an international learner for the purpose of admission, the reasons for the refusal to grant recognition shall be stated, and information provided concerning possible measures the applicant may take to obtain recognition at a later stage. If a HE provider decides to withhold recognition of a qualification for the purpose of admission, or if no decision is taken, the applicant shall be able to make an appeal within a reasonable time limit.

5.2 (g) HE providers shall support QQI, as appropriate, in implementing its statutory function to facilitate the recognition outside the state of awards made in the state, including the home countries of their international learners.

**Summary**

The Panel agrees with IADT that all seven criteria under Principle 5.2: Admissions and Qualifications Recognition are applicable. It also concurs with IADT's self-assessment that full compliance has been demonstrated across six criteria. It concludes that the provider was overly cautious in its assessment of 5.2 (d). The Panel confirms full compliance for this criterion with a timebound recommendation to further enhance alignment. This conclusion was reached following a detailed review of the evidence submitted by IADT, as outlined below.

The Panel reviewed IADT's Access, Transfer and Progression (ATP) Policy, which clearly outlines general entry requirements, including the evaluation of international qualifications. These qualifications are assessed using NARIC, EU/EFTA/UK systems, and the International Student Qualifications Database. English language requirements are defined in IADT's recently approved English Language Policy and aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A range of recognised English proficiency tests is accepted, as detailed in the CAO EU, EFTA, UK document, which is accessible via the International Student webpage and

linked from individual course pages for ease of access [5.2 (a), (b)].

The Panel confirms that IADT adheres to the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention in assessing international qualifications, both independently and in collaboration with other higher education institutions. This commitment is embedded within the ATP Policy, ensuring transparent, timely, and criteria-based recognition processes [5.2 (c)].

With reference to criterion 5.2 (d), the Panel confirms full compliance for this criterion, noting that the application of the “substantial difference” principle by Admissions Officers could be further strengthened. The Panel welcomed IADT’s development of a training plan to address this gap and recommends that the plan be fully implemented within six months of TrustEd Ireland authorisation to further enhance alignment with this criterion [timebound recommendation].

The Panel reviewed documentation confirming that international applicants receive responses within a maximum of four weeks, through a structured and systematic evaluation process [5.2 (e)]. Where an offer is not made, IADT provides guidance to support applicants in identifying their next steps. If applicants are dissatisfied with the recognition of their qualifications or the admissions decision, they may appeal to the Admissions Office, as outlined in Section 15 of IADT’s ATP Policy. Each application is reviewed by the Admissions Office and the relevant Head of Department. If the applicant remains unsatisfied, the appeal may be escalated to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar [5.2 (f)].

The Panel also noted IADT’s confirmation of its support for QQI’s statutory role in promoting the recognition of Irish awards abroad and its ongoing communication with QQI on relevant developments [5.2 (g)].

The above clearly demonstrates IADT’s compliance with six applicable criteria for Principle 5.2 Admissions and Qualifications’ Recognition, with one timebound recommendation to achieve full compliance for 5.2 (d), as noted below:

#### **Recommendation 1**

**5.2 (d):** The Panel recommends that IADT complete and implement its training plan to strengthen the application of the “substantial difference” principle in admissions within six months of TrustEd Ireland authorisation, to further enhance alignment with this criterion.

**Principle 5.3 Fees, Refunds and Subsistence:**

**HE providers provide all learners with clear, accurate, transparent, accessible, relevant and up to date information on all study costs, including subsistence and accommodation. HE providers shall inform learners about fees and other costs associated with undertaking a programme of study in Ireland**

5.3.1 (a) HE providers shall provide information on compulsory fees for the full duration of the programme from registration and admission to graduation or exit from the programme. Where fees may change, this shall be clear to applicants in the information provided.

5.3.1 (b) HE providers shall provide information on the collection or payment of fees, including sanctions for late payment and debt collection for moneys owed.

5.3.1 (c) HE providers shall establish a fees structure that supports the mission of the organisation and reflects the costs associated with quality provision.

5.3.1 (d) HE providers shall ensure that there are no additional fees or unexpected charges that international learners have not been made aware of.

5.3.1 (e) HE providers shall issue a receipt to international learners upon receipt of payment of fees which will include a breakdown of fees paid.

5.3.1 (f) HE providers shall establish and publish a procedure on full and partial refunds. This procedure shall outline the conditions under which a refund will be granted e.g., a refused entry visa application, in the case of a non-EU/EEA Swiss learner.

5.3.1 (g) HE providers shall provide information on any financial supports or resources that exist within the organisation, or nationally, for international learners.

5.3.2 (a) HE providers shall provide information on the indicative costs of studying on their programmes e.g., the costs of textbooks, electronic resources, computer requirements, protective equipment.

5.3.2 (b) HE providers shall furnish prospective learners with general advice regarding the average cost of living e.g., accommodation, food, transport and medical care, for the programme duration.

5.3.2 (c) HE providers shall provide information on:

- (i) fees for accommodation services, if offered by the HE provider or other accommodation service providers;
- (ii) fees for complaints and appeals procedures as relevant e.g., rechecking of exam results.

5.3.2 (d) HE providers shall provide information on any other costs related to the provision of student services as considered relevant by the provider.

**Summary**

The Panel agrees with IADT that 10 of the 11 criteria under Principle 5.3: Fees, Refunds, and Subsistence are applicable. It concurs with IADT's assessment of full compliance across the 10 criteria. These judgements are based on a thorough review of the evidence submitted by IADT.

With reference to criteria 5.3.1 (a) and (b), the Panel reviewed the *Fees and Grants* section of the IADT website, which aligns with the institution's *Student Fees and Charges Policy*. The site clearly outlines current fee rates, payment methods, refund procedures, grant eligibility, deferred entry options, and additional charges. Separate fee schedules are published for EU and non-EU students across undergraduate, postgraduate, and certificate programmes, along with payment deadlines. The criteria for EU fee eligibility are clearly presented, and students are encouraged to contact the *Fees and Grants* team for personalised guidance. Once assigned, a student's fee status remains fixed for the duration of their programme.

The *Fees and Grants* pages also link to a comprehensive FAQ section, which includes policies on late payments. The panel noted that IADT withholds transcripts and progression or graduation rights from students with outstanding debts. Fee information is also communicated directly to students via email, and receipts are automatically generated for online payments. Additional receipts or statements can be requested from the *Fees and Grants* team, whose contact details are published online. Refunds may be issued under specific circumstances, such as visa refusals, as outlined in the *Student Fees and Charges Policy* [5.3.1 (b), (d), (e), (f)].

With reference to criterion 5.3.1 (c), the Panel noted that fees are reviewed annually and benchmarked against comparable institutions to ensure alignment with market rates. Any changes are approved by the Executive Management Team. Additional charges for services such as repeat exams, academic appeals, duplicate parchments, and replacement ID cards are outlined in the *Student Fees and Charges Policy*, which is published online.

IADT's documentation confirms that it does not impose additional tuition-related charges beyond standard fees. Students are not expected to purchase textbooks or specialist computer equipment. The *Planning Your Budget* section of the International Student Hub provides guidance on non-tuition costs, including links to external resources such as the Irish Council for International Students, Numbeo, and other budgeting tools [5.3.1 (d), 5.3.2 (a)].

The Panel noted that IADT provides financial support to international students through initiatives such as the Sanctuary Scholarships and the Government of Ireland scholarships. Details are available on the *Student Finance* and *International Student Hub* pages [5.3.1 (g)].

The Panel also noted that many of IADT's programmes are practice-based and may involve additional costs for materials, field trips, or specialist software. These costs are detailed on the relevant programme webpages and communicated to students at the time of offer and by academic staff. These expenses are not paid to IADT but are incurred directly by students [5.3.2 (a)].

While IADT does not provide accommodation directly, the *IADT Student Pad* platform, linked from the International Student Hub and managed by the Student Union, offers advice and listings to support students in securing housing, along with general cost-of-living guidance. All student services at IADT are provided free of charge [5.3.2 (b), (c)].

Based on the above, the Panel concludes that IADT complies fully with the 10 applicable criteria for Principle 5.3: Fees, Refunds, and Subsistence.

## Principle 5.4 Supports and Services for International Learners

**HE providers shall foster a supportive environment which supports the wellbeing and integration of all learners into the student body and ensures a positive learning experience for all learners**

5.4.1 (a) HE providers shall designate appropriate personnel to be responsible for inquiries about learner support issues from international learners e.g., course coordinator, counsellor, or international officer.

5.4.1 (b) HE providers shall offer information to international learners prior to their arrival to help them adjust to their new surroundings e.g., information on transport, banking, availability of accommodation and accommodation services.

5.4.1 (c) HE providers shall ensure that inductions offered to learners also meet the needs of international learners, including intercultural awareness. They should direct learners to services, supports and facilities relevant or appropriate to their programme of study. They should also remind international learners requiring entry visas and/or immigration permissions of their responsibilities under the Department of Justice's student immigration regime.

5.4.1 (d) The induction programme shall be provided to all cohorts of international learners who register or enrol at various times of the year, including learners who access programmes through advanced entry.

5.4.1 (e) HE providers shall provide information on appropriate learner supports and services to facilitate learner integration into the wider HE community.

5.4.1 (f) HE providers shall ensure that international learners are aware of opportunities to participate in, and be represented at, engagements between the provider and the learner body. Where possible, they should provide, in collaboration with learner representative bodies, information on national learner engagement initiatives and opportunities for international learners to avail of training opportunities.

5.4.1 (g) HE providers shall have mechanisms in place to support international learners financially in instances of personal or other emergency or hardship.

5.4.1 (h) HE providers shall facilitate and encourage feedback from international learners on the delivery of any supports and services. This includes informing learners about complaints processes for these services.

5.4.1 (i) Institutional approaches to quality assuring learner services and supports will include all learners, including international learners.

5.4.2 (a) HE providers shall offer induction that is accessible to all learners and, where appropriate, tailored to the needs of international learners. They shall provide full information and advice on all relevant institutional and academic policies.

5.4.2 (b) Induction shall be provided to learners and cohorts who enrol at different points during the year, including those accessing programmes through advanced entry.

5.4.2 (c) HE providers shall ensure the information provided at induction is easily accessible throughout the academic year and shall offer reminders of this information at key points during the year e.g., in the lead-up to examinations or submission of assignments.

5.4.2 (d) HE providers will include academic integrity as a core component of induction for all learners, including international learners. Recognition will be given in inductions to the different education cultures of international learners, and the content, advice and support they impart will be relevant and specific to the Irish higher education context. Formal and informal conversations about academic integrity should be held on an ongoing basis throughout the period of enrolment of all learners, including international learners.

5.4.2 (e) HE providers shall endeavour to integrate their international learners, through their inductions and through their policies, procedures, and services, into the wider learner community.

5.4.2 (f) HE providers shall continue to provide staff with training and support to facilitate an appropriate and effective delivery of programmes and services to international learners. This should include, where appropriate, training in intercultural competence and support for the development of English language education competence.

## Summary

The Panel confirms that all 15 criteria under Principle 5.4: Supports and Services for International Learners are applicable to IADT. It concludes that the provider was overly cautious in its assessment of 5.4.1 (c). The Panel confirms full compliance for this criterion with a timebound recommendation to further enhance alignment. These judgements are based on a comprehensive review of the evidence submitted by IADT, as detailed below.

With reference to criterion 5.4.1 (a), the Panel noted that IADT's International Office serves as the primary point of contact for international students, supported by the Student Experience Team, Student Learning Centre, and other student services. The International Office, staffed by a Senior Lead and an International Officer, responds to enquiries via email, WhatsApp, Teams, and phone. The online International Student Hub complements this support by providing accessible information outside office hours.

The Panel confirmed that the *Going IADT* app enables international learners to connect prior to arrival, with offer holders invited to register. Pre-arrival guidance is provided on immigration, visas, budgeting, and living in Ireland. Accommodation support is available via the newly established IADT *Student Pad* platform. To support applicants through the CAO process, IADT also offers both pre-recorded and live webinars [5.4.1 (b)].

IADT delivers an induction and orientation programme in collaboration with the Student Union and First Year Focus leaders. Additional orientation events are provided, and all programmes commence in September or October, eliminating the need for repeated inductions [5.4.2 (b)]. While IADT does not currently offer a tailored induction for international students due to low enrolment numbers, the institution proactively contacts each international student to ensure they have access to all relevant information [5.4.1 (c), (d)]. The Panel confirms full compliance for criterion 5.4.1 (c) and acknowledges its plans to enhance this provision. Accordingly, the Panel recommends that IADT should complete the development and delivery of tailored inductions for international learners within one year of TrustEd Ireland authorisation, to further enhance alignment with this criterion [timebound recommendation].

With reference to criteria 5.4.1 (e), 5.4.2 (a), and 5.4.2 (d), the Panel noted that IADT's induction programme covers key areas such as academic integrity, complaints procedures, library services, and student support services. It also includes the IADT Connect module, where interdisciplinary student groups collaborate on digital artefacts. Intercultural awareness training is being integrated into orientation activities and Student Handbooks.

The Panel noted that the Student Experience Team organises events such as scavenger hunts, movie nights, and cultural celebrations to support integration. Plans are in place to further connect international and domestic students through weekend trips and International Days. IADT collaborates with the Student Union and the Erasmus Student Network to promote inclusion, cultural exchange, and international student representation [5.4.1 (f)].

With reference to criterion 5.4.1 (g), the Panel confirmed that IADT offers financial support through *Sanctuary Scholarships* and the Government of Ireland scholarships, with details available on the *International Student Hub* and *Student Finance* webpages. Applications for financial assistance are assessed on a case-by-case basis by the *Student Assistance Fund* Committee, as outlined in Section 5.3.

The Panel confirmed that IADT promotes inclusion through student representation and events promoted via the *Going IADT* app. International students are encouraged to participate in student representation, ensuring their voices are heard. Feedback is gathered through focus groups, surveys, and informal channels, leading to tangible improvements such as the introduction of direct application routes for non-EU students, the launch of the *Going IADT* app, and enhanced student events [5.4.1 (f), (h), (i); 5.4.2 (e)].

The Panel also noted IADT's achievement of the *Athena Swan Bronze Award* in September 2022, which reflects its commitment to fostering an inclusive learning environment. Since then, the institution has introduced mandatory race awareness training and CPD offerings on anti-racism, inclusive education, unconscious bias, and intercultural communication, alongside broader teaching and learning development opportunities. IADT also engages with UNESCO *Dublin Learning City* and the *Global Network for Learning Cities* to promote inclusive, equitable, and quality education [5.4.2 (e), (f)].

The above clearly demonstrates IADT's compliance with 14 of the 15 applicable criteria for Principle 5.4: Supports and Services for International Learners, and partial compliance with 5.4.1 (c). Accordingly, the Panel issues the following timebound recommendation on IADT:

### **Recommendation 2**

**5.4.1 (c):** The Panel recommends that IADT should complete the development and delivery of tailored inductions for international learners within one year of TrustEd Ireland authorisation to further enhance alignment with this criterion.

## Principle 5.5 English Language Policy Statement and International Foundation Year Programmes

**The English language supports provided by HE providers to international learners, including through the provision of international foundation year programmes, are underpinned by a coherent and transparent institutional policy approach.**

5.5 (a) HE providers shall have an English language policy statement for international learners that shall:

- (i) document the policy approach and process to the assessment of English language proficiency entry requirements;
- (ii) document, as appropriate, the institution's policy approach to the provision, support, and development of English for Academic Purposes;
- (iii) set out the institution's policy approach to the provision of English language supports to non-native English speakers prior to commencement and throughout the duration of their higher education programmes;
- (iv) document the arrangements, including, as appropriate, the quality assurance, credit and/or awarding arrangements, for different types of EAP programmes, such as:
  - pre-sessional programmes/modules,
  - in-sessional programmes/modules

5.5 (b) HE providers offering international foundation year programmes shall set out in their English language policy statement for international learners

- (i) the quality assurance, credit and/or awarding arrangements for these programmes,
- (ii) the corporate and academic governance arrangements in place where such programmes are provided in partnership with other entities e.g., a private English language education provider, other independent/private education provider or campus company.

5.5 (c) For compliance with this HE Code, an international foundation programme shall lead to one of the following awards included within the NFQ:

- (i) QQI preparation for undergraduate programmes, leading to NFQ Level 5 Special Purpose Award (foundation qualification)
- (ii) QQI preparation for postgraduate programme, leading to NFQ Level 8 Special Purpose Award (foundation qualification)
- (iii) equivalent programmes leading to awards that are included within the NFQ and validated by an Irish awarding body.

5.5 (d) Where HE providers currently offer international foundation year programmes that do not lead to awards that are included within the NFQ, they must secure programme validation/course approval for such programmes through an Irish awarding body within two years of the date on which they are authorised to use the IEM.

### Summary

The Panel concurs with IADT that one of the four criteria under Principle 5.5, the English Language Policy Statement and International Foundation Year Programmes, is applicable. While IADT assessed criterion 5.5 (a) as partially compliant, the Panel considers this assessment to be overly cautious, as in-sessional support is not a requirement under this criterion. Therefore, the Panel judges that 5.5 (a) is fully compliant. Nonetheless, a timebound recommendation has been issued to strengthen in-sessional support, as outlined below.

With reference to 5.5 (a), the Panel reviewed IADT's recently approved English Language Policy Statement (ELPS), which outlines English language requirements aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). A range of recognised proficiency

tests is accepted, as detailed in the CAO EU, EFTA, UK document, accessible via the International Student webpage and linked from individual course pages.

The ELPS outlines general in-session support through Education Week, part of Year 1 induction, which includes academic writing support. Additional support is provided via the FFACT Connect module, the Student Learning Centre, and a suite of online resources. IADT also confirms that free, non-credit-bearing English language classes are available throughout the academic year.

Although IADT self-assessed criterion 5.5 (a) as partially compliant due to the absence of formal in-session support for non-native speakers, the Panel considers this overly cautious. As in-session support is not a formal requirement under this criterion, the Panel judges that IADT is fully compliant. Nonetheless, the Panel welcomes IADT's plan to introduce dedicated English language support classes from 2025/26, with approval from the Academic Council expected in autumn 2025 and piloting scheduled for November. Accordingly, the Panel recommends that IADT clarify within the ELPS whether in-session English language supports are currently offered to international learners. If not, the Panel recommends that IADT consider offering focused in-session support to help ensure international learners progress successfully in their studies within 12 weeks of TrustEd Ireland authorisation.

Based on the above, IADT fully complies with 5.5 (a); however, the recommendation below would further enhance its level of compliance.

### **Recommendation 3**

**5.5 (a):** The Panel recommends that IADT clarify within the ELPS, within 12 weeks of TrustEd Ireland authorisation, whether in-session English language supports are currently offered to international learners. If not, the Panel recommends that IADT consider offering focused in-session support to help ensure international learners progress successfully in their studies.

### **Principle 5.6 International Learners outside the State**

**HE providers ensure that learners outside the state who are enrolled on their programmes receive quality learning experiences, where these programmes lead to awards that are included within the NFQ, and whether they are offered in transnational education settings and/or through remote, fully online modes of learning.**

5.6.1 (a) HE providers, having regard to their statutory quality assurance obligations, shall ensure that the academic quality, standard and recognition of their transnational education programmes are equivalent to the academic quality, standard and recognition of the programmes they provide within the state.

5.6.1 (b) HE providers shall apply the principles and criteria set out in this HE Code in an equivalent manner in transnational education settings, including in relation to the provision of learner support services.

5.6.1 (c) HE providers shall support QQI, as appropriate, in implementing its statutory function to facilitate the recognition outside the state of awards made in the state. This facilitatory function extends to awards included within the NFQ, where the programmes leading to these awards are provided outside the state.

5.6.1 (d) Linked providers who intend to offer transnational education programmes that lead to awards within the NFQ shall only do so with the agreement of the designated awarding body or bodies making the awards.

5.6.2 (a) HE providers, having regard to their statutory quality assurance obligations, shall ensure that the academic quality, standard and recognition of their remote online programmes are equivalent to the academic quality, standard and recognition of the programmes they provide through other teaching and learning modes.

5.6.2 (b) HE providers shall apply the principles and criteria set out in this HE Code in an equivalent manner in relation to learners outside the state enrolled on remote online programmes that lead to awards included within the NFQ, including in relation to the provision of learner support services.

5.6.2 (c) HE providers shall support QQI, as appropriate, in implementing its statutory function to facilitate the recognition outside the state of awards made in the state. This facilitatory function extends to awards included within the NFQ, where the programmes leading to these awards are offered as remote online programmes.

5.6.2 (d) Linked providers who intend to offer remote online programmes to learners outside the state that lead to awards within the NFQ shall only do so with the agreement of the designated awarding body or bodies making the awards.

### Summary

The Panel agrees with IADT that six of the eight criteria are applicable to Principle 5.6: International Learners Outside the State, confirming that criteria 5.6.1 (d) and 5.6.2 (d) are not applicable to the provider. The Panel concurs with IADT's self-assessment of full compliance across all six applicable criteria.

With reference to 5.6.1 (a), (b) and 5.6.2 (a) and (b), the Panel noted that IADT's commitment to quality was affirmed through a positive outcome in QQI's CINNTE Institutional Review, confirming compliance with statutory obligations, including those related to transnational education. The institution also adheres to the principles of the Higher Education Code, ensuring consistent application of policies on marketing, admissions, qualification recognition, fees, and refunds across all modes and locations. International and online learners have equitable access to support services, including induction, academic support, online library resources, and comprehensive programme information. In collaborative programmes, such as those within the FilmEU alliance, students are informed of their entitlements across partner institutions, with IADT working to ensure parity in support provision.

The Panel also noted IADT's strategic international partnerships (e.g. FilmEU, Colleges Ontario–THEA agreement), which promote global recognition of Irish qualifications, particularly NFQ-aligned awards delivered abroad. IADT's internationalisation strategy aligns with national

objectives and supports QQI's facilitatory role by maintaining open communication and reporting recognition challenges [5.6.1 (c), 5.6.2 (c)].

In addition, the Panel confirmed that fully online programmes, such as the MSc in Cyberpsychology and MSc in UX Design, are underpinned by the same quality assurance mechanisms as on-campus provision. Purpose-built digital infrastructure, interactive learning design, and robust student support ensure a high-quality learning experience. Continuous enhancement is driven by student feedback, programme board oversight, and staff development in digital pedagogy, with formal reporting to Academic Council ensuring accountability and improvement.

The above clearly demonstrates IADT's compliance with the six applicable criteria for Principle 5.6: International Learners Outside the State.

## Summary of assessment outcomes

**This section provides for the Assessment Panel findings and outcomes by principle and criterion**

### **Overview of the provider's international profile and activities**

Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) has been operating for over 30 years, with a strong focus on the creative, cultural, and technological sectors. Its academic portfolio spans NFQ Levels 6 to 9, offering programmes in areas such as Animation, Film, Graphic Design, Art, Marketing, New Media, Business, Psychology, and the Humanities. In 2024, IADT's student population represented 63 nationalities, with international students comprising 8% (191 of 2,299), the majority of whom were from Europe. The institute maintains partnerships for academic exchanges and mobility programmes with institutions in 20 countries across Europe, Canada, and the USA.

The International Office, established in 2021, plays a central role in supporting international applicants and students. It provides pre-arrival guidance, visa and immigration support, and coordinates orientation and welcome events. The development of IADT's first International Education Strategy and Implementation Plan is currently underway, with internationalisation identified as one of six strategic pillars for institutional growth. IADT employs approximately 259 staff and is committed to expanding its global engagement.

Academic and student affairs are overseen by the Directorate of Academic Affairs and Registry, while the International Office manages all aspects of international student engagement. IADT has

two active articulation agreements: the MA in 3D Animation, developed in collaboration with Sheridan College, Toronto, which allows students to progress from Sheridan into IADT’s master’s programme through recognition of prior learning; and the MA in Design for Change, which provides a postgraduate pathway for students from George Brown College, Toronto.

IADT is home to the National Film School and is a founding member of FilmEU, a European University Alliance comprising eight institutions. As part of this alliance, IADT co-delivers two master’s programmes: the MA KinoEyes, supported by Erasmus+, delivered across four European film schools; and the MA FilmMemory, an Erasmus Mundus project delivered in four countries, including Ireland.

Since the 2021/22 academic year, IADT has offered two part-time, fully online Level 9 programmes: the MSc in Cyberpsychology and the MSc in User Experience (UX) Design. In 2024, IADT began collaborating with Maynooth University to co-supervise PhD and Master’s by Research students, with two students currently enrolled in the jointly delivered PhD programme.

Looking ahead, IADT’s Strategic Plan 2024–2028 marks a new phase of growth in education, research, and influence within the creative industries, both nationally and internationally. The institute has also finalised its HEA–IADT Performance Agreement 2024–2028 with the Higher Education Authority, which will serve as a framework for assessing strategic performance. International education is a key focus of Pillar 1 of the strategic plan, with an emphasis on expanding international partnerships to support student recruitment and mobility opportunities.

Overall, IADT is compliant in 49 out of 50 applicable criteria (98%) across the six principles outlined in the Higher Education Code (5.1–5.6), meeting the threshold of 80%, which equates to 40 out of 50 criteria. That said, the Panel has issued one condition and three recommendations to achieve full compliance or enhance compliance, as noted below.

**Recommended condition(s) for authorisation**

**Condition 1**  
**5.1.1 (d):** IADT must complete the development of a formal framework for work placements and work-based learning within one year of TrustEd Ireland authorisation.

**Commendations**

N/A

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

**5.2 (d):** The Panel recommends that IADT complete and implement its training plan to strengthen the application of the “substantial difference” principle in admissions within 24 weeks of TrustEd authorisation, to further enhance alignment with this criterion.

### Recommendation 2

**5.4.1 (c):** The Panel recommends that IADT should complete the development and delivery of tailored inductions for international learners within one year of TrustEd authorisation, to further enhance alignment with this criterion.

### Recommendation 3

**5.5 (a):** The Panel recommends that IADT clarify in the ELPS, within 12 weeks of TrustEd Ireland authorisation, whether in-session English language supports are currently offered to international learners. If not, the Panel recommends that IADT consider offering focused in-session support to help ensure international learners progress successfully in their studies.

## Declarations of Assessment Panel

This report has been agreed by the Assessment Panel and is signed on their behalf by the Chairperson.

Assessment Panel Chairperson: Jeremy Bradshaw

Date: 03/10/2025

Signed:



## IADT Institutional Response

Since its establishment over 25 years ago, the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) has strived to provide an excellent environment and experience for all its staff and students, including international students. IADT is the only Institute of Higher Education in Ireland with a specific mission to drive and inform the creative, cultural and technological industries through teaching, learning, research and innovation. IADT's *Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028* marks a new phase of growth in education, research and influence within the creative industries, nationally and internationally, as we move towards the Institute's vision to be Ireland's university for the creative industries. The HEA-IADT Performance Agreement 2024 – 2028, sets out the Institute's performance objectives and the associated implementation, monitoring, assessment and reporting processes. International education is a key focus of Pillar 1 of IADT's strategic plan and within the performance agreement. IADT's ambitions include expanding international partnerships to support student recruitment and mobility opportunities for staff and students with the commitment to develop the necessary supporting infrastructure.

IADT is committed to the continuous improvement and enhancement of the learner experience, and welcomes opportunities to evolve across all of its functions and services. Preparing for the submission of the TrustEd application provided the Institute with the opportunity to critically evaluate and appraise its activities as they relate to international students, at a whole-of-institution level. To that end, an International Education Mark (IEM) Steering Group was established in November 2023, with the objective of working on the IEM application project in an inclusive and comprehensive manner, giving staff and students the opportunity to input to the project. Relevant staff from across the Institute joined and actively contributed to the IEM Steering Group, including representatives from the International Office, Academic + Student Affairs; Student Experience Team; FilmEU (European University for Film + Screen Media), Student Union, Library; Academic Staff and the Teaching + Learning Sub-Committee. As well as drafting the TrustEd application, the Steering Group had the additional role of championing the TrustEd application project within IADT and in doing so ensured the needs of international learners are considered and represented across all areas of the Institute. The Steering Group reviewed the principles of the HE Code of Practice; audited IADT's policies and procedures which relate to international students and identified areas of good practice and areas where improvements were possible. The Steering Group also oversaw the implementation of amendments and enhancements, aligned with the expectations of the HE Code of Practice.

IADT appreciates the work undertaken by the Assessment Team and welcomes its detailed and insightful review report. The Institute is delighted that the Assessment Team found IADT to be compliant in 49 of the 50 applicable criteria (98%) across the six principles outlined in the Higher Education Code (5.1 – 5.6), comfortably exceeding the threshold of 80%. This closely corresponds with the results of the self-evaluation undertaken by the Institute under the 50 criteria which are applicable to the Institute. The Assessment Team positively endorses IADT's work as it relates to the recruitment and management of international students.

IADT acknowledges the condition set by the Assessment Team which relates to work placement at IADT. Work placement is under review during the current academic year 2025/26 and the Institute confirms that a formal framework for work placement and work-based learning will be in place before the start of the coming academic year.

The three recommendations relating to in-session English classes; deepening the Institute's understanding and implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the development and

implementation of tailored inductions for international students are well received, as they were all identified as areas for improvement in the Institute's TrustEd application. Work is underway in each of these areas, and these recommendations will be implemented well within the timeframes set out in the Assessment Report.

*Global Citizens 2030 - Ireland's Talent and Innovation Strategy* promotes Ireland as a first-choice destination for international learners, researchers and innovators by ensuring an excellent multicultural, inclusive and culturally rich learning and living experience. IADT is thrilled to receive confirmation that the Assessment Team has recommended that IADT is authorised to use the TrustEd Ireland Mark and we look forward to working with QQI and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Mark. IADT's holistic approach to internationalisation will ensure that the quality of our international student experience will continue to be of foremost consideration as we implement our *Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028* and work towards our vision of becoming Ireland's university for the Creative Industries.

IADT would like to extend its gratitude to all members of the Assessment Panel for their thorough assessment of the IADT TrustEd application.

In conclusion, I wish to sincerely thank all those who contributed to the IADT TrustEd submission, including staff, students and the IEM Steering Group. IADT also acknowledges and appreciates the assistance of the International Unit at QQI for their guidance and support throughout the TrustEd process.



**David Smith,**  
**President**  
**November 2025**