

IADT

# Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2010-2012

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Teaching and Learning Committee

<b>Document Reference and Version No</b>	AC/T&L/2008 Version 2
<b>Purpose</b>	The Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy provides a foundation and framework for learning in IADT.
<b>Commencement Date</b>	October 2010
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	September 2012
<b>Who needs to know about this document</b>	Registrar, Heads of School, Heads of Department, Programme Co-ordinators, all staff, all students
<b>Revision History</b>	Revision of first IADT Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2008-2010
<b>Policy Author</b>	Registrar
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Registrar/Teaching and Learning Committee

# Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

## Overview

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy was adopted by Academic Council at its meeting of 16 June 2008 and approved by Governing Body at its meeting of 3 September 2008. The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy supported the achievement of the following objective from IADT *Creating Futures*:

- ❧ A1.02 Teaching, learning and assessment strategy published

This is the revised Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2010-2012. It enables IADT to support and enhance learning, teaching and assessment across the Institute. It considers IADT's mission and places it in the context of higher education. It embodies the values that are fundamental to IADT and critically reflects the three pillars of enterprise, creativity and technology. The strategy outlines the philosophy of learning, teaching and assessment at IADT.

## Context

[Learning](#), [teaching](#) and [assessment](#) in IADT take place in the national and international context of higher education. It embodies principles of natural justice. The learning, teaching and assessment strategy links to *Creating Futures* IADT Strategic Plan 2008-2012. It embodies the principles stated in the IADT Learner Charter. IADT aims to be a research-informed higher education institution and research is required to enable the Institute's teaching programmes to be excellent and relevant.

The national context for higher education is that of the agenda for quality in teaching and learning, flexible provision, knowledge gain, enhancing social inclusion, raising skills levels and promoting economic regional and cultural development. The international context is that of mobility, international and Erasmus exchanges.

The legal obligations are those stated in the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act for 'fair and consistent assessment' (1999, p. 23) and expressed in the National Framework of Qualifications (2003). The emphasis on programme learning outcomes, assessment and flexible modes of delivery for the learner have been reflected in the 2009-2010

Programmatic Reviews undertaken by each School and evaluated at Programme Board level. Programmes are capable of [reasonable accommodation](#).

The Teaching and Learning Committee aims to enhance the quality of learning, teaching and assessment across the Institute by providing academic leadership for the continued development of excellence in academic practice. The Teaching and Learning Committee is committed to

- ↻ Reviewing existing practice in teaching, learning and assessment and draw from all the disciplines in the Institute
- ↻ Principles of [universal design](#) as outlined in the AHEAD charter (2009)
- ↻ Disseminating best practice within specific fields of enquiry by investigating teaching and learning strategies
- ↻ Advising on staff training and development and co-ordinating and leading teaching and learning efforts across the Institute
- ↻ Linking to wider teaching, learning and assessment initiatives internally and externally
- ↻ Developing the scholarship of teaching at IADT.

### **Teaching and Learning Mission Statement**

IADT is committed in principle and practice to the achievement of equity of access, to increased participation and improved retention and progression rates for all our learners. The Institute aims to help students to reach their potential through the provision of a supportive, vibrant and challenging [learning environment](#). All staff is involved in the construction of this learning environment. All students are valued equally during their learning journey with IADT. Accordingly the curriculum, teaching and learning and assessment at IADT are centred on the student. Policies are pursued in the area of learning and teaching which promote the increasingly international and culturally diverse nature of IADT.

#### ***Aim 1. Developing knowledge, skills and competencies***

- ↻ IADT develops programmes that link clearly to the National Framework of Qualifications <http://www.nfq.ie/nfq/en/>.
- ↻ The programme [learning outcomes](#) are practical and focused on enabling students to develop [knowledge](#), [skills](#) and [competencies](#) in their discipline area.

- ↻ Programmes have clear [programme assessment strategies](#) i.e. assessment plans, that are communicated to students
  - ↻ Programme boards and programme teams work together
  - ↻ Teaching, learning and assessment strategies are student focused
  - ↻ Cross-institute and interdisciplinary activities and study are encouraged and supported
  - ↻ Technology and elearning are used to facilitate student achievement of learning outcomes
  - ↻ Students are encouraged and supported to become independent learners
  - ↻ Learning how to learn is a key approach to student learning
- This is the 'what' are we trying to do.

### **Aim 2. Supporting student learning**

- ↻ Student engagement is critical to learning
- ↻ Class size appropriate to the learning strategy e.g. class size varies to allow for active learning or combined lectures and seminars to explore cross-disciplinary areas
- ↻ Learning focuses on the student experience and the practical application of learning
- ↻ Feedback on learning is provided as needed. [Formative assessment](#) is built into the programme assessment strategy: feedback is a vital part of the student learning experience.
- ↻ Assessment is always fair, consistent and appropriate to the learning outcomes. [Summative assessment](#) is designed to assess the learning outcomes, add to the student experience and be within the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) student workload guidelines. It is diverse, challenging and enables the student to become an independent learner.
- ↻ Ongoing development of the curriculum, teaching & learning, and assessment practices to reflect best practice is supported through staff development.
- ↻ Reaching out in new and innovative ways to learners from all backgrounds, identities and abilities.
- ↻ Equality and diversity is celebrated through the curriculum, the teaching and learning and assessment
- ↻ Resources and accommodation for learning are appropriate to both student need and programme requirements and capable of reasonable accommodation
- ↻ Student support for learning is multi-faceted

This is the 'how' we do it. This approach supports and enhances the *IADT Equal Access and Participation Policy*.

### **Aim 3. *Preparing students for life after IADT***

- ↻ Programmes link to industry, society and community and professional bodies
- ↻ Students are prepared for work through evolving practical [teaching, learning and assessment strategies](#)
- ↻ Programmes aim to develop a sense of entrepreneurship and creativity in students
- ↻ Students are enabled to develop the skills of independent learning and a sense of responsibility for their present and future learning
- ↻ Students are given the opportunity to experience blended learning environments which encourage and promote self study through the use of electronic learning environments and face to face contact.
- ↻ Students are enabled to be active citizens working in the economy and society
- ↻ Fostering life-long learning

This is the 'why' we do it.

### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment at IADT**

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

#### *Programme Development – designing the curriculum*

Curriculum development is based on the following principles

- ↻ The principle of [constructive alignment](#) (Biggs, 2003) where learning outcomes are matched with appropriate learning and teaching strategies and assessed appropriately.
- ↻ Learning outcomes (at programme level) are related to the appropriate level on the National Framework of Qualifications and meet the required award standards.  
<http://www.hetac.ie/publications.cfm?sID=41>
- ↻ Student workload is within the ECTS guidelines  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html)
- ↻ Programmes meet the demands of students, industry and society and fit with the Institute's mission as outlined in the strategic plan
- ↻ Programmes may anticipate future demands of students, industry and society
- ↻ Programmes are supported by discipline/practice expertise in staff and supporting organisations
- ↻ Programmes have elements of practice e.g. [work-based learning](#), [community learning](#), projects as appropriate to the discipline/practice

- ↻ Programmes organisation is modular and/or semesterised as agreed by IADT
- ↻ Programmes provide a level of choice for students in relation to learning and assessment. This could be through electives in the programme or through negotiated assessment, particularly projects.

*Implementing the curriculum – learning, teaching and assessing and management of learning*

Learning, teaching and assessment is

- ↻ [Student-centred](#), [enquiry-based](#), relevant to the curriculum and to the discipline/practice
- ↻ Programme teams work to implement the curriculum and manage learning
- ↻ Assessment is part of the learning experience and communicated through the programme assessment strategy. Formative assessment is provided appropriately to enable student learning. Summative assessment is fair, consistent and fit for purpose. It is criterion-referenced. There is an appropriate cycle for summative assessment from assignment issue to results in a timely fashion. Student workload is within the ECTS guidelines.
- ↻ Staff assessment workload is such that the principles can be put into practice.
- ↻ External examiners play a vital part in the enhancement of the quality of the assessment process. External examiners are involved in assessment processes to ensure that standards maintain parity with best practice nationally and internationally.

Learning teaching and assessment is supported by all staff and in particular by:

- ↻ Space for learning – there is space on campus for group and individual study
- ↻ Library and ICT resources to enable access to learning materials and the means to work and develop ideas
- ↻ Programme teams and boards through the development of the programmes and co-ordination of the teaching, learning and assessment
- ↻ Administration of students
- ↻ Staff development is at individual, programme, department, school, Institute and national level. It takes place through reading, attending conferences and courses, presenting papers and other scholarly activities that enable staff to review and develop the knowledge needed for teaching.

Learning, teaching and assessment is sustained through various modes including:

- ↻ Flexible modes of delivery including seminars, lectures, workshops, tutorials, online

- ↻ Flexible modes of assessment including continuous assessment, project based work, collaborative work, exhibitions, examinations etc
- ↻ Individual confidential student feedback and evaluation of teaching and learning methodologies and programme delivery
- ↻ Programme Boards held three times a year enabling programme evaluation, curriculum development and student feedback
- ↻ Institutional and Departmental review
- ↻ Teaching and Learning sub-committee of Academic Council
- ↻ Writing and Research Support Service

### *Evaluation of learning*

Learning, teaching and assessment is reviewed in various ways including

- ↻ Individual confidential student feedback through the nationally agreed processes
- ↻ Evaluation of learning, teaching and assessment strategies, and programme implementation by staff at module level and programme teams at programme level annually and during programmatic review
- ↻ Programme Boards held three times a year enabling programme evaluation, curriculum development and student feedback
- ↻ Institutional, School and Departmental review on a regular five year cycle. These review the curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, students' experience and the facilities and support for learning.

### Conclusion

The revised Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is current for two years 2010-2012.

### **Supporting documents**

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| ↻ <i>Creating Futures</i> IADT Strategic Plan 2008-2012       | ↻ IADT Complaints Procedure 2008     |
| ↻ IADT Learner Charter and Student Handbook (issued annually) | ↻ IADT External Examiner Policy 2009 |
| ↻ IADT Equal Access and Participation Policy 2009             | ↻ IADT Marks and Standards 2010      |
| ↻ IADT Quality Manual 2009                                    | ↻ IADT Plagiarism Policy 2009        |
|   | ↻ IADT Library Charter 2009          |

## References

- Biggs, J. (2003) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University Second Edition*, Buckingham, The Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.
- ECTS [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/socrates/ects/index_en.html).
- HETAC (2009) *Assessment and Standards*, Dublin, HETAC.
- AHEAD (2009) *Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning*, Dublin, AHEAD.

## Glossary

Term	Description
Assessment	Assessment is any process that aims to judge the extent of students' learning. It is usually based on the evidence of students' work.
Community learning (also service learning)	Learning in communities outside of educational institutions. This is often voluntary work but recognised and assessed for accreditation.
Competencies	Appropriate knowledge and skills for a purpose
Constructive alignment	The alignment of teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks with the learning outcomes.
Enquiry-based learning	Approaches to learning driven by enquiry. The term covers projects and research, small scale investigations as well as problem-based learning PBL.
Formative assessment	Assessment designed to provide information (feedback) to students so that they can improve their work (Freeman and Lewis, 1998, pp. 314-317).
Knowledge	The facts, principles, truths of a subject, discipline or practice.
Learning	Developing knowledge, skills, or competence through study, teaching, or experience
Learning environment	The physical or virtual space and resources in which students learning. It includes classrooms, studios, laboratories and libraries as well as virtual learning environments such as Blackboard.
Learning outcomes	A statement of student performance/learning at the end of a programme (and module) e.g. At the end of the programme a student will be able to . . . . . . At the end of the module a student will be able to . . . .
Programme assessment strategy	This is a document for teachers, learners and assessors that outlines the principles and practices of assessment in the programme (HETAC, 2009, p. 13). These can be considered assessment plans.
Programme document	This is the document prepared for the programme. It is validated and then reviewed every five years during programmatic review. Each IADT programme has a programme document.
Programme handbook	This is a document prepared and issued to students annually. There is one for each programme.
Reasonable accommodation	This is a means of adapting assessment to enable students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes (HETAC, 2009, p. 54).
Skills	Proficiency or dexterity acquired through training or experience.
Student-centred learning	Student-centred learning is focused on the student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator of learning.
Summative assessment	Assessment that counts towards or constitutes a final

	grade or qualification (Freeman and Lewis, 1998, pp. 314-317).
Teaching	The act, process of imparting knowledge, developing skills and enabling student learning.
Teaching, learning and assessment strategies	The strategies used in teaching, learning and assessment.
Universal design	Universal design refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size or disability. (Disability Act, 2005)
Work-based learning	Work-based learning is learning at higher education level derived from undertaking paid or unpaid work. It includes learning for work (e.g. work placements), learning at work (e.g. company in-house training programmes) and learning through work, linked to formally accredited further or higher education programmes.