University College Dublin

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

Review Panel Report

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This Quality Review was undertaken in March 2017, as part of UCD's Quality Review Framework and to meet the statutory requirements for Designated Awarding Bodies (UCD) and linked providers (Recognised College, the National College of Art and Design (NCAD)) as set out under the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

Key findings about the National College of Art and Design

The Review Panel (RP) finds that NCAD has made progress in recent years in its adoption of externally bench-marked QA procedures. However, the RP has identified that there are a number of significant weaknesses in NCAD's quality enhancement processes and in particular, the RP has concerns about the College's commitment and ability to address items for improvement in a timely and effective manner.

Most significantly, the RP has concerns about the apparent failure of NCAD to meet its statutory obligations in respect of Health and Safety and fire risk. The RP recommends to UCD, that a direction be issued to NCAD to undertake a complete Health & Safety risk assessment – including fire risk - and compliance analysis of the institutional estate. All necessary actions for compliance and enhancement must be prioritised, costed and effected without delay. Furthermore, the NCAD Health and Safety Committee must be reconvened with clear terms of reference, as a matter of urgency, and report to the NCAD Board (An Bórd) at the earliest opportunity, with a clear plan of action to address these matters.

Other key findings:

1. Staff need to take ownership for the implementation of QA procedures. Processes should be put in place that will drive a more systematic and time-limited approach to the implementation of actions identified in NCAD's quality improvement plans.
2. NCAD's committee structure requires revision and expansion to incorporate fully the roles and responsibilities of staff in ensuring good practice and quality in all aspects of the College's activities. Several new committees need to be formed to ensure that appropriate procedures and practices are enabled, managed and implemented. For example: a QA Steering Committee, a Teaching and Learning Committee, a Research Committee, a Website committee and a Health and Safety Committee, as mentioned above.
3. NCAD should review the structure of its undergraduate courses and take action to align its academic calendar more closely with that of UCD.
4. NCAD should adopt more robust policies and practices to ensure more effective management of learning opportunities, including provision of assessment feedback, student support services and better organisation of research degree activity.
5. NCAD needs to put in place more effective systems for staff support and development.
6. NCAD should review and address the outstanding actions identified in the UCD Review and Approval of NCAD's QA procedures of July 2016.
7. UCD should undertake a second institutional review of NCAD within the next 3 years.

Section 1: Introduction and Context

1. This Quality Review was undertaken as part of University College Dublin's (UCD's) Quality Review Framework and to meet the statutory requirements for Designated Awarding Body (UCD) and linked provider (Recognised College, the National College of Art and Design (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).

2. This report presents the findings of the Institutional Review of NCAD. The purpose of the review 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.

3. The members of the Review Panel (RP), appointed by UCD, were:
    - Professor Gethin McBean, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science, Chair
    - Professor Ken Neil, The Glasgow School of Art
    - Professor Hilary Grainger, London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London
    - Emeritus Professor Ian Menter, University of Oxford

4. UCD in its capacity as a Designated Awarding Body, convened a Panel in July 2016 to review and approve the quality assurance procedures of the NCAD. The Panel Report was considered by UCD's Academic Council Committee on Quality in October 2016, and the Panel recommendation to approve NCAD QA procedures was endorsed. The Panel Report also set out a number of recommendations for action by NCAD, which was included in this institutional review process.

    Outline of the Institutional Quality Review Process

5. The key stages of the review process consist of the following elements:
    a) Institutional self-assessment, which includes the preparation of an analytical and reflective self-assessment report (ISAR), which involves an internal consultation process within NCAD.

    b) Review visit (or visits) by the RP.

    c) Production of a report by the RP, in which recommendations are clearly set out and distinguished from the general findings.

    d) Production by NCAD of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which addresses all recommendations and includes a timeline in respect of their implementation.

    e) Publication of the RP's report, NCAD's institutional response to the report, the QIP and, where applicable, any decisions by UCD as the Degree Awarding Body.

    f) Establishment and implementation of a clear and timely follow-up process in respect of any quality improvement recommendations, which may include publication of updates on progress.

The review process relates to programmes of study delivered by NCAD and validated by UCD.

Review Terms of Reference

6.   The Review Terms of Reference were:

- How effectively does NCAD fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

- How effective are the internal quality assurance processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision-making and strategic management in the context of quality assurance and enhancement of educational provision?

- How effectively does NCAD fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

- How effectively does NCAD communicate public information about learning opportunities that it is responsible for providing to students and other stakeholders?

- How well does NCAD discharge its responsibilities within the context of its agreement with UCD?

7.   The RP conducted the review in agreement with NCAD and in accordance with the *UCD Recognised College Quality Review Handbook*. Evidence in support of the review included a range of internal documentation, the ISAR, policy, procedure and strategy statements, records of meetings, a range of information produced for students and staff, including handbooks, curriculum and teaching materials.

8.   The RP held meetings with staff of NCAD and UCD and visited buildings on the NCAD campus, accompanied by the NCAD Director. The RP met undergraduate and postgraduate students and a group of external stakeholders, whose organisations and agencies engage with NCAD. Documentation produced by the NCAD Senior Management Team for internal approval beyond the visit of the panel, was also provided for information and discussion. Additional information requested by the RP at time of writing of the preliminary report on the ISAR was provided during the week of the review. Further documentation requested *in situ* was produced and additional meetings were arranged to answer lines of enquiry deemed significant by the RP.

9.   The RP also considered NCAD's use of the relevant external reference points, including:

- Guidance/Policy Material provided by UCD

- The National Framework of Qualifications

- Guidance material published by Quality and Qualifications Ireland

- European Standards & Guidelines for QA in the European Higher Education Area.

Brief History and Context of the National College of Art and Design

10.   NCAD describes itself as Ireland's leading provider of art and design education. The College is long-established, dating from 1746 as a private drawing school in George's Lane, Dublin. The Department of Education took control of the College in 1924, and twelve years later it became the National College of Art. In 1971, the National College of Art and Design was established by act of an tOireachtas and is now governed by An Bórd, whose members are appointed by the Minister for Education and Science. NCAD has been a member of the National University of Ireland (NUI) since 1996. In 2011, it became a Recognised College ('Linked Provider') of UCD. The Memorandum of Agreement (2011) between UCD and NCAD is due for renewal in September, 2017.

11.   NCAD's campus is situated in Thomas Street, in the historic Liberties area of Dublin. In 1998, the College opened its new wing, the School of Design for Industry, and now houses most of its activities on the Thomas Street campus. The College has a lease (2016-2019) of the 350-seat Rupert Guinness Theatre, which is located on nearby Watling Street. In addition, the NCAD Annexe, 101-103 James's Street, is leased from Diageo on a four-year basis from 2015. The lease on both of these buildings expires in the summer of 2019 and the College's tenancy beyond this date is uncertain.

12.   NCAD offers a range of academic programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level, by way of its four schools of Design, Education, Fine Art and Visual Culture. Upon successful completion of their studies, students gain a UCD award. The Centre for Continuing Education in Art and Design is part of the School of Education and offers a range of part-time courses including certificate courses. In the 2016-2017 academic session, the College has 1,012 full-time students, of which 873 are undergraduates and 139 are postgraduates. In addition, there are 911 part-time and continuing professional development (CPD) students.

13.   The total staff headcount of NCAD (2016-2017) is 103 academic and 69 non-academic, which includes administrative, technical and non-academic management.

NCAD's Stated Responsibilities

14.   NCAD has responsibility for all aspects of assessment, including the setting, marking and moderation of assignments, and providing feedback. The College is also responsible for quality monitoring and review, student admissions, guidance and support, staff development, resources, student appeals and the collection and use of student feedback. It has overall control of information on learning opportunities and is responsible for ensuring that the information is fit for purpose. There is shared responsibility, with UCD, for monitoring the quality of learning and teaching, guidance for student progression and the generation of specific module and programme information for students.

Recent Developments

15.   The ISAR made clear to the RP that NCAD is emerging from a period of significant change. This is indubitable. The change cited in the introduction to the ISAR involves wholesale change to the curriculum structure and an acknowledged crisis of funding and governance in recent years.

16. NCAD and UCD formed The Academic Alliance in 2010. The richness of the collaboration in terms of achievements and future prospects was given to the RP by way of the '2016 NCAD+UCD: The Academic Alliance' report to the HEA. A recent inventory of collaborative initiatives has identified more than 60 projects that have taken place under the umbrella of the Alliance, ranging from academic projects, joint programmes, guest lectures, exhibitions, symposia, workshops and publications. NCAD's capacity has also been greatly enhanced through collaboration with UCD in relation to Enterprise Ireland's TTSI programme.

17. NCAD has recently submitted a new Institutional Strategic Plan (2017-2022) to An Bórd. With the pending appointment of a new Director, the RP sees this plan as a work in progress and an opportunity to describe ambition for the Academic Alliance for institutional mutual benefit.

Commendations:
18. The strength of the senior leadership over recent years, during a period of considerable challenge.

19. NCAD is commended for progress in reducing its financial deficit.

20. Colleagues from NCAD and UCD participating in meetings with the RP offered at all times informed, engaged and candid comment which was of great benefit to the RP in conducting the NCAD Institutional Quality Review for UCD.

21. Colleagues in NCAD and UCD responded positively and conscientiously to the work enjoined by the Strategic Innovation and Development Fund, reporting in 2016.

Recommendations:
22. The NCAD Institutional Strategic Plan 2017-2022 should be regarded as a draft. It should be refined and developed in support of outcomes and actions from the Institutional Review and the future development of the Academic Alliance with UCD. In particular, key roles and responsibilities for implementation of a new Plan should be defined. Furthermore, a system of communication of the objectives of the Plan to all staff that clearly outlines their individual responsibilities in achieving its goals should be set up.

23. NCAD and UCD should explore options to establish a new round of funding to support collaborative work at the renewal of the new MoA (due, September 2017), managed through the collaborations working group, or other suitable delegated body and reporting within NCAD to the NCAD-UCD JAPB and Academic Council.

Section 2: Institutional Management of Academic Standards

NCAD Governance Framework

24. NCAD has a governance framework in place for the management of academic standards, including alignment with QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines and European Standards and Guidelines. Under the National College of Art and Design Act 1971, An Bórd has primary responsibility for securing, maintaining and developing the academic standards of the provision and activities undertaken by the College. Academic Council has responsibility in relation to all aspects of academic governance. The Council

delegates a number of formal responsibilities for quality assurance and quality enhancement to the Research Committee, Examination Boards, the Appeals Committee and the NCAD Programmes Board. The NCAD Programmes Board was formerly known as the Taught Programmes Board, but was renamed and reconstituted in 2016 to include consideration of both undergraduate and postgraduate provision. It is noted that the NCAD Quality Assurance Procedures still make reference to the Taught Programmes Board and will therefore need amendment.

25. The reporting lines between the committees and boards responsible for quality and standards are as follows: An Bórd is the most senior governance committee, chaired by an appointee of the Minister of Education and Science, that meets at least twice per semester (4 times per annum). Academic Council is chaired by the Head of Academic Affairs and Research and meets twice per semester. The Senior Management Team meets once a week and is responsible for overseeing and driving Quality Improvement/Enhancement processes. School Boards meet twice per semester (4 times per annum) and report to the NCAD Programmes Board (see below). Student representatives sit on An Bórd, Academic Council, Programmes Board and School Boards.

26. The NCAD Programmes Board is a Standing Committee of Academic Council. Membership comprises The Head of Academic Affairs and Research, representatives from each School, the Admissions Officer, the Quality Assurance and Academic Support Officer and undergraduate and postgraduate student representatives. It has oversight of Quality Assurance and monitors the effective administration of NCAD programmes and students. The NCAD Programmes Board acts as a communication conduit between School Boards and Academic Council and the NCAD-UCD Joint Academic Programmes Board (JAPB). The Director, Registrar (Bursar) and Heads of School are entitled to attend meetings of this Board. School Boards also report directly to Academic Council on several matters.

27. The NCAD-UCD JAPB represents the academic interface between NCAD and UCD. In addition, NCAD representation on UCD's University Programmes Board provides oversight of NCAD programmes and developments to UCD. The JAPB and a NCAD-UCD Strategic Management Committee establish inter-institutional agreement and cooperation as specified within the Memorandum of Agreement (2011).

28. The Head of Academic Affairs and Research is chairperson of the Academic Council, the NCAD Programmes Board and the NCAD-UCD JAPB.

29. The SWOT analysis undertaken by NCAD, as part of its Institutional Self-Assessment, suggests that student representation at School Boards could be improved in order to ensure the effectiveness of those fora. Furthermore, as NCAD recognises, student understanding of the role and responsibilities of the student representative could be improved with the development of guidance and workshops for students. This view was further endorsed by the Student Union.

30. In meetings with students, the RP judged that there are currently major weaknesses in student engagement in quality procedures and processes. The development of a Student Charter would assist greatly in addressing some of these matters, but it will be critical that the student experience is articulated and listened to.

<u>Recommendations:</u>

31. NCAD should revisit and refine the College committee structures and update all remits and memberships in order to make clear the relationship and authority of NCAD's boards and committees. School boards should report to the NCAD Programmes Board, which then reports to Academic Council. Academic Council should refer items for discussion and decision to the NCAD-UCD JAPB. Attention must be paid to systematising input from, and feedback to, the student body through structured student representative mechanisms.

32. The NCAD Director should convene Academic Council as NCAD's senior academic committee, with the Head of Academic Affairs and Research continuing to convene the NCAD Programmes Board and the NCAD-UCD JAPB.

33. In the work on committee structures, School Boards must be harmonised for remit and membership and must adopt appropriate responsibility for Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement.

34. The NCAD-UCD JAPB should undertake a plan of work to progress further, the Academic Alliance and NCAD's relationship with UCD, for the benefit of both institutions.

35. With the recent revisions to NCAD committees it is recommended that these changes are mapped to NCAD QA procedures, documentation, and website.

36. A Student Charter should be developed by NCAD in partnership with students/Student Officers, to include a formal process for effective student engagement in quality processes and procedures. It should be supported by appropriate workshops, training and supports on their roles and responsibilities.

How effectively does NCAD fulfil its responsibilities for the management of academic standards?

37. The Institutional Review has offered the opportunity to NCAD to reflect on processes across the College and to address how best to assure the quality and standards of NCAD's provision and wider learning and teaching environment, building on the analysis and recommendations of the 2016 UCD-conducted approval process of NCAD's Quality Assurance procedures. NCAD's ISAR is commendably candid in its address of (1) gaps in the policy framework, (2) areas for improvement in procedures, and (3) the context through which these issues are being explored and addressed.

38. The processes and procedures for the management of academic standards are articulated in NCAD's QA Framework and Guidelines [revised in 2016 and referred to in the ISAR as QA, Principles, Framework and Guidelines] and the recently published NCAD's QA Procedures (2016).

39. The NCAD Director, as Chief Officer, has delegated overall responsibility for QA and enhancement to the Head of Academic Affairs and Research. The operational management of quality assurance reviews, which includes regular, annual, periodic and external review process, is coordinated by the QA and Academic Support Officer, who reports to the Head of Academic Affairs and Research.

40. NCAD defines its regular review processes as module design and approval, programme design and approval, student feedback and representation, and First Year Student Council. NCAD's annual review

processes include external examining, end of year undergraduate Student Survey and Research Student Survey. Periodic Review processes are defined as Annual Programme Review, School Review and Support/Administrative Review. The ISAR states that external review processes include Accreditation by Professional and Regulatory Bodies, Annual Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and Enhancement-led Institutional Review. However, the RP was not provided with any details of accreditation of NCAD by Professional and Regulatory Bodies.

41. In 2015, NCAD moved from a system of programme-based reviews to one of school-based reviews. Guidelines are in place to support school-based reviews, which are informed by current UCD Guidelines on Unit quality reviews. However, the embedding of a regular system of unit quality review (academic or administrative) into NCAD's calendar is poor. No information was provided to the RP of Departmental reviews carried out by NCAD. In addition, there was evidence of postponement of reviews, an absence of a clear cycle for review covering all units and driven and monitored by Senior Management, and effective and timely implementation of Quality Improvement Plans (QUIPs).

42. NCAD argues that its Governance Framework provides an integrated system for quality assurance and enhancement with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of learning, teaching and research, and of the College's management of these core activities. NCAD also suggests that the membership of these Boards and Committees ensures that the wider responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement is distributed throughout the various layers of governance and management within the College. For example, at Department and School levels, the key post-holders responsible for the oversight and management of Quality Assurance and Enhancement include Heads of School, Heads of Department, Programme Leaders and Module Co-ordinators.

43. As stated, UCD undertook a Review and Approval of UCD Linked Provider QA procedures for NCAD in July, 2016. UCD's report concluded by saying that it recognised the development work currently underway to enhance the QA procedures. The UCD panel made a number of recommendations intended to assist NCAD in preparation for the Review of the Effectiveness of QA Procedures (this event). UCD also requested a formal response, setting out how NCAD is addressing, or plans to address, each recommendation. It is clear from the documentation provided to the RP that a considerable amount of activity in addressing the UCD recommendations has taken place. Indeed, NCAD articulated a comprehensive list of 57 actions against these recommendations. A timetable for completion of the actions was provided, but there was no named designated responsibility. Furthermore, in discussion with the RP, it was noted that a significant number of the actions had exceeded their stated completion dates.

44. Outstanding action points include (a) the establishment of a College-wide structure for meetings between Heads of School and Heads of Department, at which minutes should be taken, to facilitate the clear communication of discussions and actions; (b) the development of a more systematic approach to, and management ownership of, implementation of actions identified in QUIPs and (c) the development of a more comprehensive response to external examiners' reports and student surveys in the annual planning process.

45. NCAD is aware of the need to ensure consistency in relation to the implementation of QA and Enhancement processes. It also acknowledges the fact that the introduction of enhancement initiatives

and any formulation of an Enhancement Strategy have been hampered by a constellation of external factors, including concerns over financial stability.

46.   Overall, the RP has concerns about the effectiveness of some of NCAD's QA procedures. The RP exhorts NCAD to address and complete the actions that have been already identified regarding the management of academic quality and standards. Furthermore, a strategy for Quality Enhancement needs to be formulated to ensure a well-orchestrated approach to the introduction of enhancement initiatives.

Recommendations:

47.   The RP urges NCAD to complete the backlog of actions that were scheduled for completion by February, 2017. Furthermore, NCAD should review its schedule for all planned Programme and Unit reviews and ensure that it is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-limited (SMART). Oversight by Senior Management and reporting to An Bórd should underpin this process, along with active engagement in implementing quality improvements. Engagement with all stakeholders (staff, students, graduates, employers) must be reflected in the process. In addition, a formal system for reporting on annual programme review within a specified timeframe should be put in place, monitored and reviewed.

48.   The RP recommends that in order to ensure that deliberate steps are taken to foster enhancement, NCAD should formulate an Enhancement Strategy, to be aligned with the College Strategic Plan (2017-2022).

How effectively does the College make use of external reference points to manage academic standards?

49.   In giving approval to NCAD's QA Procedures in July, 2016, the UCD panel made reference to UCD's QA framework, the ESG (2015), the QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines (2016) and the QQI Sector Specific QA Guidelines for Designated Awarding Bodies (2016) and sector norms for Higher Education (HE) QA (both national and international). NCAD states that it makes use of external reference points by ensuring that it meets fully the requirements of UCD. In discussions with the RP it was unclear whether these were being used to maximum effect.

50.   The RP found evidence that the College has active links with industry, businesses, professional organisations and regulatory bodies.

51.   The NCAD QA procedures determine that there should be, ideally, three independent external representatives on Peer Review Groups, two from a comparable subject area from a similar institution (in academic reviews, one reviewer chosen from academia and the other from the cultural industries) and a UCD representative with experience of the Irish HE and QA systems.

Recommendations:

52.   NCAD should establish a QA steering committee that reports to the Programmes Board and is chaired by a senior member of academic staff. Membership would include the Quality Assurance Officer, a technical staff representative and at least one academic staff member from each School. The committee would oversee delivery of the College's QA framework and monitor the effective implementation of quality review recommendations.

53.   NCAD should make more explicit reference to external reference points in its QA Framework and Guidelines (revised in 2016 and referred to in the ISAR as QA, Principles, Framework and Guidelines) and the recently published QA Procedures (2016).

54.   NCAD should consider making the requirement for external representation on peer review groups mandatory.

How does the NCAD use external moderation or examining to assure academic standards?

55.   The arrangements in place for the assessment and academic conduct of students are articulated in the NCAD QA Procedures (2016). Although the arrangements comply with the regulatory requirements of UCD, the RP was informed that a series of derogations are in place.

56.   NCAD acknowledges that there is some variation in the implementation of their policies and procedures, which will be addressed by the action points in place regarding the management of academic standards; namely, a review of assessment information in handbooks across the College; the setting up of an Assessment Feedback Working Group; the creation of a detailed description of assessment at NCAD for publication on the website and dissemination of guidance to staff and students in relation to the nature, value and conduct of 'the crit', as well as incorporation of same into the general assessment literature published by the College.

57.   Neither the NCAD QA Procedures, nor NCAD's QA Framework and Guidelines articulate policies and procedures in place for the appointment of external examiners and there is no outline of their roles and responsibilities. The ISAR, however, provides some indication of the criteria employed in the appointment of external examiners. Both the ISAR and the staff confirmed the interim visits of external examiners in addition to their involvement in end of year examinations. External examiner reports are considered by School Boards and the NCAD-UCD JAPB, and are responded to by the Head of School. It is not clear if NCAD identifies any cross-College themes or issues. More could be done to ensure that the whole College benefits from external examiners' reports, not only in the identification and sharing of good practice, but also in identifying any common themes of concern and areas for improvement.

58.   NCAD QA Procedures do not currently include provision for due diligence in relation to national and international partnerships. The College is therefore encouraged to review this situation in light of the QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines (April 2016) and ensure that a procedure for due diligence is considered as part of the review of the NCAD QA Framework and Guidelines scheduled for 2018.

It was noted that UCD does not permit serial franchising, therefore, the requirement, under the QQI Core Statutory Guidelines (April 2016) to have in place appropriate due diligence procedures for overseas taught franchise provision is not likely to be relevant for NCAD (as a UCD Recognised College) at this time.

Recommendations:

59. A review of the handling of External Examiner Reports should be undertaken, including consideration of the production of an annual overview to ensure institutional oversight, which would lead to coordinated action across the College.

60. A procedure for due diligence on national and international partnerships should be included in NCAD's Quality Procedures.

Section 3: Institutional Management of Learning Opportunities

How effectively does NCAD fulfil its responsibilities for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities?

61. The arrangements for managing and enhancing the quality of learning opportunities are mainly located within Schools and Departments and appear to be largely of an informal nature. While the commitment of the staff to their students ensures that these matters are taken seriously, the informal nature tends to mean that it is difficult to ensure that a collegial approach is being taken, or that the developments are systematic.

62. The RP found that there is clear collegial engagement at the level of the NCAD-UCD JAPB, and a willingness to progress identified collaborative actions and determine others for the furtherance of the Academic Alliance.

Recommendation:
63. In respect of the linkage between NCAD and the Academic Regulations of UCD, as well as with academic and workload planning in mind, NCAD should consider revisiting the current NCAD academic calendar to explore the benefits of emulating UCD's academic year structures, in particular, the use of the third semester to facilitate development of taught postgraduate provision and for planning staff time across the working year.

How effectively does NCAD make use of external reference points to manage and enhance learning opportunities?

64. NCAD makes reference to the requirements of UCD as reference points in enhancing learning opportunities, but continues in many respects, to operate according to past College customs and practice. If the relationship with UCD is to flourish in the future, it would be desirable for NCAD and UCD staff to have greater interaction, in order to raise awareness of some of the opportunities for development in quality management and enhancement of learning, that have not yet been availed.

65. In deferring responsibility for some matters to UCD, it is not clear that NCAD staff have yet fully recognised their own obligations for assuring and enhancing academic quality. It is advisable that the College develops staff awareness of these responsibilities, ensuring that they are formally monitored through its quality assurance mechanisms. These matters should also be the subject of careful consideration as the joint MoA is reviewed over the coming months.

66. In relation to external networks, both academic and support staff indicated that they regard their connections with these as a very important aspect of their work. Given the specialist nature of the institution, it is likely that these networks must extend beyond Ireland and it is pleasing that many academic staff are well linked to institutions in the UK, Europe and more widely. Support staff, who are often working on their own in their area of expertise, demonstrated good awareness of practices in other institutions, not least UCD, and are well networked nationally, for example in relation to access, widening participation, learning support and quality assurance.

How effectively does NCAD use management information to evaluate its procedures/processes and practice in support of academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities?

67. Within NCAD's current development plan there is a commitment to undertaking a more formal annual review process (action 5, 2.1.2, ISAR). Indeed many of the actions planned within Section 2.1.2 of the document are likely to lead to significant improvements in the annual monitoring and evaluation of provision. This will greatly facilitate the processes of enhancement of learning opportunities that need to be established urgently.

68. NCAD employs a variety of assessment methods, including formative, continuous and summative assessment. In line with the Art and Design sector, the 'crit' is an important assessment tool. There are three main approaches to assessment, tutor-led, peer review and group assessment. In discussion with staff, it became evident that further work was needed to map assessment tasks to learning outcomes systematically, to ensure the transparency and effectiveness of assessment.

69. The RP noted a significant fall in the number of students progressing from the second to the third year of undergraduate degree programmes. The expectation on the part of NCAD was that students will return after having taken a year out, but this situation needs careful monitoring. Following separate discussions with student and staff representatives, it became evident that the current 3+2 format of the undergraduate programme is highly unpopular. Indeed, the RP was not presented with any compelling reason why this structure had been introduced in the first place.

Commendation:
70. NCAD is commended for the commitment to undertake a detailed and systematic approach in establishing more formal periodic quality review processes.

Recommendation:
71. NCAD staff must act, as a matter of urgency, on their commitment to actively engage with, and take ownership of, QA procedures in order to assure and enhance academic quality.

72. NCAD should review the adoption of the 3+2 undergraduate degree structure, with the help of external advice, UCD and consulting closely with students.

How does NCAD assure itself that the quality of teaching and learning is being maintained and enhanced?

73. Most staff appear to prioritise their teaching responsibilities to a high degree. Many of the longer serving academic staff are employed on contracts which do not include a formal requirement to undertake research.

74. Teaching and learning matters are discussed within the Programmes Board at College level and also at School Boards. The CEAD, within the School of Education, has taken some ad hoc responsibility for these matters from time to time. However, there is currently no Teaching and Learning Strategy to guide developments in this area, nor is there a Teaching and Learning Committee, nor an effective professional development system which might support such matters.

Recommendations:
75. Consideration should be given to:
- establishing a Teaching and Learning Committee
- developing and adopting a Teaching and Learning strategy
- establishing a Teaching and Learning unit within the College
- the development of a formal link with UCD Teaching and Learning
- establishing a programme of seminars on Teaching and Learning matters.

76. Careful consideration should be given to the management and organisation of research degree activity within the College, including a clear designation of responsibilities in this area.

How does the College assure itself that students are supported effectively?

77. The arrangements for student support are unduly dependent on informal and voluntary interaction between students and staff. Following discussion with staff and students the RP recognises the need for a more structured approach in areas such as academic counselling, extenuating circumstances (as alluded to elsewhere in this report).   The College has no overarching student support policy and it is unclear how the effectiveness of support is formally monitored.

78. The teaching staff seek to be responsive to the needs of students and provide a range of academic and pastoral advice and support. In discussion with the RP, students confirmed that they approach staff informally for a range of support, including careers and personal advice. There is some evidence that counselling support services are under great pressure, with a suggestion that students may have to wait some weeks to secure an appointment with the specialist staff.

79. NCAD has a system of student representatives. There would now be benefit in creating a more integrated system for gathering and responding to student opinion, looking at student representation alongside other feedback mechanisms.

80. The RP was impressed by the quality of the Student Union officers and their account of their efforts to provide support to students which complements that provided by the College itself.

81. While it was clear to the RP, from talking to students, that staff were both accommodating and supportive of students presenting with extenuating circumstances, it emerged that there was no consistent approach being adopted across the College. Academic staff acknowledged this situation.

82. Many students, both undergraduates and postgraduates, expressed concerns about matters such as delay in receiving assessment feedback (for formative purposes) and about the state of the learning environment, which they felt had not been responded to appropriately. In particular, as identified in a number of comments from staff as well as students, greater attention should be paid to closing feedback loops, so that students are informed explicitly of how their concerns are being addressed.

83. The RP did not have an opportunity to meet any research students (other than staff who are undertaking doctorates at present) and so little comment can be made about their experience. There was some expression from senior staff to a commitment to expanding the numbers of such students and if this is to be the case, careful attention should be given to the framework of support that is provided for them.

Recommendations:

84. In recognition of the increasing demand on student support services, it is recommended that NCAD now introduces a more coherent and structured approach on all student support.

85. NCAD should seek to support the provision of training of Student Union Officers and of other student representatives across the institution.

86. As the Student Charter is finalised and implemented, it will be essential to monitor the effectiveness of the communication of student experience. In particular, close attention should be given to feedback loops.

87. NCAD should make greater and more effective use of the student information system, Quercus, in order to standardise an online procedure for submission of student coursework across Schools and Departments.

88. A consistent, robust and transparent procedure for dealing with extenuating circumstances should be introduced as a matter of urgency.

89. NCAD ought to address, regularise and improve, as a matter of urgency, inconsistencies in the quality of the student learning experience such as the provision of student feedback.

How effectively does the College develop its staff in order to improve student learning opportunities?

90. The academic staff are well qualified and experienced, and are effectively supported by the administrative and technical teams.

91. There is not currently a staff appraisal scheme, nor well-defined pathways for academic staff promotion. NCAD would benefit from introducing a system of performance management. A number of recently appointed staff referred to a probation period, but it was not clear what procedures are invoked. It was evident, from discussion with academic staff, that there is significant variation in the terms of individual

staff contracts. Moreover, the system of awarding professorships for management roles is at variance with UCD norms.

92. The College is in the process of bringing in a large number of HR policies with the overall intention of adopting practices that are appropriate to the context of contemporary higher education.

93. There was a strong commitment expressed by many staff to undertaking research as part of their academic role, but a sense that there is a lack of clarity about how research can be supported, managed and developed. At present the College research portfolio is included in the work of the Head of Academic Affairs and Research.

94. The ISAR states that NCAD sought to establish a Research Institute, but it is not clear whether this has been a successful venture. Several of the staff appeared to be unaware of its existence.

95. If NCAD is to fulfil its commitment to raising the profile of high quality research, then this aim would be better served by separating the management responsibilities of academic staff from the responsibilities for the management of taught programmes.

Recommendations:

96. NCAD should seek HR support to ensure that contracts of employment for academic staff are appropriate to support the institutional needs and ambitions for research, as a university-level provider of Art & Design scholarship.

97. NCAD should work with HR with the aim of standardising academic staff conditions of employment.

98. NCAD's HR and Accounting systems should be enhanced to facilitate more effective staff management procedures.

99. That NCAD reviews its current practice of awarding professorships with the aim of aligning its procedure with that of other HE institutions. NCAD is encouraged to adopt a system of promotion open to all academic staff.

100. In order to enhance the approaches of staff to Teaching and Learning, a programme of peer observation and support of teaching should be instigated. In addition, a member of staff to lead in this area, such as a Director of Teaching and Learning, should be identified.

101. A strategy for research (including doctoral studies) must be developed as a matter of urgency, building upon the commitments stated in the College Strategic Plan 2017-2022.

102. Consideration must be given to the creation of a post of Director of Research and Doctoral Studies.

103. The College Research Committee must be re-established with revised terms of reference.

How effectively does the College ensure that learning resources are accessible to students and sufficient to enable them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?

104. The RP undertook a tour of campus facilities and was concerned about the fitness for purpose of some of the buildings. Development of the facilities has clearly been severely impeded by the lack of resources for investment, but in addition to the question of the basic provision in some parts of the College, there was serious concern about Health and Safety and fire risks. In particular, some parts of the Granary building were very labyrinthine in nature and there was considerable evidence of flammable materials as well as obstruction of some areas and doorways. Other items that were a cause of concern included incorrect storage of fire extinguishers, the presence of wooden staircases and an absence of fire guards in the vicinity of the glass-blowing kilns. The practice of allowing students to design their own workspaces without apparent regard to Health and Safety and fire risk guidelines was also a concern. The recently appointed Facilities Manager is clearly starting to identify some of these matters. Nevertheless, such was the concern of the RP that it is deemed necessary to recommend that UCD issue a Direction on these matters, which is stated in the Executive Summary of this document.

105. Also during the tour, the RP observed a range of equipment in use. Some of this equipment unavoidably creates risks and the RP was assured that technical as well as academic staff ensure that all users are advised of the necessary precautions to be undertaken to avoid injury. However, some of the equipment does appear to be unfit for purpose, most notably a glass blast furnace which has been the subject of considerable student dissatisfaction. Stopgap measures had been undertaken to maintain some provision but there had been several periods when the equipment was unavailable.

106. Students and staff reported that some of the computing facilities are in urgent need of updating.

107. NCAD is justly proud of its library resources, although here too there is a shortage of space and of up to date computing facilities. The National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) collection is well respected within the artistic community of Ireland and is frequently visited by international scholars.

108. The College's Gallery is also an important 'shopfront' for the College, facing directly onto the street and providing an excellent space for the display of applied art.

109. At present the College does not make use of a virtual learning environment (VLE). Some use is made of the website as a repository for teaching resources, podcasts and such like, but it is likely that the learning experience of students could be enhanced by the creation of a VLE.

Recommendations:

110. NCAD's Health and Safety Committee should be reconvened with clear terms of reference, as a matter of urgency and report to An Bórd at the earliest possible opportunity, with a clear plan of action to address these matters.

111. There should be a review of equipment in all areas of the practice-based work of the College, with prioritisation given to areas where problems have already been recognised. This could lead to a costed listing of what investments NCAD will need to make over a planned period of time in order to ensure

that it continues with its current course provision. Where appropriate equipment cannot be provided, then provision should be closed down.

112. A similar review of IT provision should also be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

113. A cross-college working group should be established to consider the provision and development of a VLE. The RP proposes that such a working group would report to the newly constituted Teaching and Learning Committee, in the first instance.

Section 4: Public Information

How effectively does the College communicate information about learning opportunities to students and other stakeholders?

114. The NCAD website is the primary channel for publishing information, providing access to a wide range of materials for students, staff and other stakeholders. It includes helpful information for potential students, a student resources section, brief programme descriptions, staff and student handbooks, some College policies, and the College's collaborative agreements with higher education institutions. The programme information on the website is limited to standard descriptors published by UCD.

115. In terms of admissions, transition and retention, the College has identified the need to review documentation and the website in order to ensure clarity for students for whom English is not their first language or who may be applying from overseas. Furthermore, provision for online applications is being put in place through an upgrade to Quercus, which is currently underway.

116. The College publishes information on quality procedures and guidelines on the website. This illustrates an open and consultative approach to ensuring alignment of the College's QA practices to HEI norms. The College has itself identified items for improvement in enhancing transparency and accountability of QA processes. These include (a) ensuring timely, systematic and coherent publication of all QA documentation on the website; (b) publication of the minutes of meetings of Academic Council; (c) publication of the annual QA statement.

117. The student resources section of the website is publicly accessible and includes the NCAD Undergraduate Student Handbook and the NCAD Graduate Student Handbook. Students confirm that both provide an attractive and valuable introduction to the College, its staff and facilities, as well as life in the local area. They are aimed at both Irish and International students. The undergraduate Handbook includes some policy statements and indicates that fuller versions, including regulations, are accessible on the website. For example, the information regarding examination regulations refers to the 2014/15 academic session, plus an addendum for 2015/16. In the case of the policy on equal opportunities and disability, the College does not demonstrate how it can be accessed by students.

118. Students are provided with detailed module information, including credit-rating, aims, learning outcomes and assessment arrangements. It is noted that in some modules, information is provided on what contributes to partial (50%), rather than full assessment. Students may access an overview of their whole programme through the 'student academic information' portal on the website. General information is provided at induction and students are given the module guides and specifications, as

well as assignment tasks produced by NCAD. It is desirable that students are provided with an overview of their studies in programme handbooks or their equivalent.

Commendations:

119. The website provides a good introduction to the College and its programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

120. Staff profiles, which include information on research interests, publications and teaching and learning activities have been recently updated on the website.

121. NCAD will convene a Website committee whose purpose will be to ensure accuracy, ease of access and currency of information. However, it is important that this committee will enforce a consistency in information across schools and will adopt clearly-articulated timelines for renewal of information by staff.

Recommendations:

122. The ease of navigation of the website could be enhanced. Notable achievements of staff, students and alumni should be highlighted, including links to associated publicity. Information pertaining to disabled access to the campus should be included.

123. Steps must be taken to ensure that information to students on the website refers to the current academic session, particularly in regard to examination regulations.

124. Greater transparency and accountability of the College's QA policy and procedures would be achieved by publication of an annual quality assurance statement.

125. The College should develop structures, in addition to the website, to promote the profile of staff research within and beyond the College.

How effective are the College's arrangements for assuring that published information about learning opportunities is fit for purpose, accessible and accurate?

126. The arrangements for checking and approving information produced in the College's name have proved sufficient in the past, but are now in need of improvement. The College fulfils its responsibilities in relation to UCD requirements. Although there is no evidence of a serious threat to the accuracy of published information, there have been examples of out-of-date information carrying the College's name still being in circulation. For example, the College had been unaware that an out-of-date version of the NCAD Course Prospectus had remained on the website, pending the publication of the 2017/18 version. While the error was not deliberate and there was no significant threat of misleading visitors to the site, the information did not relate to current courses.

127. The NCAD Director takes direct responsibility for approving all published information, 'howsoever disseminated'. In the absence of a formal information policy it is not clear how responsibilities are devolved for the development and checking of materials prior to the final signing off. Similarly, there is a lack of security surrounding the mechanisms for monitoring the accuracy of current published

information and removing that which is no longer correct. Due to the growing scale and complexity of the College's provision, and associated information, there is now a need for a more systematic approach to publishing information.

128. The various mechanisms for collecting student and other stakeholder opinion do not explicitly require feedback on the clarity or accuracy of published information. It is therefore unlikely to be formally addressed as part of annual programme monitoring.

129. The RP concludes that reliance can be placed on the information that the College produces for its intended audiences about the learning opportunities it offers. However, NCAD needs to put structures in place to ensure ongoing accuracy of information, clear timelines and consistency of information.

Commendation:
130. The website contains a wealth of information for students.

Recommendations:
131. The College is advised to review its arrangements for the approval and revision of published information about learning opportunities. There is a need to ensure transparency and the recording of decisions at each stage of the process. The creation of an active Website Committee, who will drive information management on the website, should address many of these concerns.

132. NCAD should develop a handbook and induction programme for staff.

What is the view of the College and its students / alumni by external stakeholders?

133. During the site visit, the RP met with a number of stakeholders, including the President of the Institute of Designers in Ireland, the CEO of the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland, the Director of Temple Bar Gallery and Studios, the Curator, Engagement and Learning at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, a Founding Partner of H2 Learning, Digital Exchange, the Deputy Principal of the Ballyfermot College of Further Education and the Principal, Mercy Secondary School, Inchicore, Dublin. The group was unanimous in voicing its positive perception of the College, students and graduates. NCAD's teacher training programme received particular praise for the high quality and dedication of the students during their placements in schools. Students and alumni of NCAD were rated highly by potential employers in terms of their creativity and technical abilities. Several members of the group stressed the importance of including business-related modules in taught courses. Members of the external stakeholders' group also expressed the view that NIVAL and NCAD would benefit from greater public visibility of the library. In a similar vein, it was commented that the Gallery at NCAD could 'work better' and relate more to the College. It was proposed that the public's perception of the NCAD-UCD alliance would benefit from using the Gallery to showcase examples of joint projects. Indeed, it was commented that such a display would enhance the city-centre visibility of UCD, as well as NCAD.

Commendation:
134. NCAD enjoys very good relationships with external stakeholders. Students and alumni are held in high regard by external stakeholders and potential employers in the sector.

135. NCAD should continue the rollout of business-related modules to the final stages of the undergraduate curricula.

NCAD outreach programmes

136. NCAD is located in the heart of Dublin's Liberties, an area that is traditionally associated with high unemployment and very low progression rates to third-level education. The College has an Access Officer and interacts positively with the local community at a number of levels, including, but not confined to, schools' visits, homework clubs, primary and second-level access programmes and summer courses in portfolio preparation. In addition, NCAD participates in the Young Creators programme, which is run locally by Dublin's Digital Hub, by providing tutors to assist in training local 13-16 year olds in digital skills.

Commendation:
137. The College is commended for its active engagement with primary and second level school children through its Access Programmes.

Dissemination of information of interest to the public

138. NCAD publishes a monthly online e-zine, which has a current circulation of 2,000 to 3,000. This initiative is welcomed by staff and provides a timely and important link to the research and commercial outputs of staff, students and recent graduates.

139. The 'Events' tab on the NCAD website provides information on upcoming events that include several that are open to the public. However, critical information on the timing of these events is not always readily accessible 'at first glance' on the website.

140. The NCAD campus comprises several buildings of historical and architectural interest. Whilst acknowledging the need to ensure safety and security of students, as well as the infrastructure of the buildings, thought could be given to ways of highlighting the visitor potential of the site.

141. NIVAL is a considerable resource of both professional and public interest. The library contains a superb collection of documentation of primarily 20th and 21st century Irish art and design in all media. A shortage of storage space and a reading room that, although pleasant, can only accommodate a small number of readers at a time, means that the content of this important archive cannot be optimally displayed.

Recommendation:
142. It is recommended that greater prominence could be given to items of public interest, such as the Gallery, NIVAL and buildings of historical significance, on the website.

Section 5: Conclusions

143. The site visit took place at a time when NCAD was in the early stages of implementing its 'newly reviewed' policies and procedures. However, as stated within the report, the RP has identified a number of concerns in relation to the management of quality in NCAD. The real issue is that of how effective the College is in implementing its self-defined actions for improvement. It was clear that it was already slipping behind its own schedule.

144. NCAD must engage fully with its statutory obligations in respect of quality assurance. Staff must accept and act upon their individual and collective responsibilities in managing and enhancing academic standards and learning opportunities. Progress with implementation of QA recommendations should be a standing item on the agendas of all meetings of both the NCAD Academic Council and the NCAD-UCD JAPB. A formal, internal Annual Report on progress with the implementation of recommendations should be made to NCAD Academic Council at the last meeting of each session and relayed to NCAD-UCD JAPB, and the UCD Academic Council Committee on Quality.

145. The RP is firmly of the view that UCD should undertake a second major institutional quality review of NCAD within the next three years.

Section 6: Response of NCAD to the Review Panel Report

Each stage of the Institutional Quality Review has been a valuable experience for NCAD. The process in developing the self-assessment report clarified many strengths and weaknesses, and allowed the College to focus and prioritise areas that need immediate and significant review. The panel review visit allowed the College to see itself from an external viewpoint, confirming much that we had realised needed attention as we emerge from a period of significant change and identifying some things that we had not recognised. The Panel Report gives NCAD further impetus to enhance the provision of education to our students. Enhancement is a continuous process, and NCAD is well on the way already to implementing many of the recommendations in the report.

Key findings about the National College of Art and Design
The Review Panel (RP) finds that NCAD has made progress in recent years in its adoption of externally bench-marked QA procedures. However, the RP has identified that there are a number of significant weaknesses in NCAD's quality enhancement processes and in particular, the RP has concerns about the College's commitment and ability to address items for improvement in a timely and effective manner.

> **Response/Comment**
> Since the beginning of the year, NCAD has been progressing on a programme of developments it identified through the self-assessment report. Following the Review Panel visit, the programme was expanded and accelerated to incorporate recommended actions identified through the panel visit. The programme of developments will form the basis for the Quality Improvement Plan.

Most significantly, the RP has concerns about the apparent failure of NCAD to meet its statutory obligations in respect of Health and Safety and fire risk. The RP recommends to UCD, that a direction be issued to NCAD to undertake a complete Health & Safety risk assessment – including fire risk - and compliance analysis of the institutional estate. All necessary actions for compliance and enhancement must be prioritised, costed and effected without delay. Furthermore, the NCAD Health and Safety Committee must be reconvened with clear terms of reference, as a matter of urgency, and report to the NCAD Board (An Bórd) at the earliest opportunity, with a clear plan of action to address these matters.

> **Response/Comment**
> The concerns articulated in by the Review Panel in respect of Health and Safety are shared by NCAD's newly appointed Facilities Manager. Since the Review Panel visit, NCAD has commissioned the first of a series of safety audits that will be completed over the coming months.   The audits include:
> - Fire Safety
> - Electrical and Mechanical
> - Asbestos
> - Water Management / Legionnaires
> - Health and Safety Procedures
> - Structural Engineering
> - Disability Access
>
> The Fire Safety Report has been completed (26 May 2017) and the recommendations contained therein are currently being costed by a Quantity Surveyor. The immediate actions include the replacement of fire doors in the Granary Building, and an inspection of the electrical system in the Granary Building. Both will be pursued without delay.
>
> In addition to the audits and the remediation of their findings, the College will engage a Health and Safety Management programme to document and implement controls for the on-going compliance of the College with all regulatory standards and engage in a training and awareness campaign among staff and students. This will be coordinated by the reconvened Health & Safety Committee.

These activities are detailed in a project plan that is being overseen through weekly meetings of the Director, Registrar, Facilities Manager and the Chairperson of the H&S Committee. The President of UCD and An Bórd will be provided with regular updates on progress against the plan.

Other key findings:

1. Staff need to take ownership for the implementation of QA procedures. Processes should be put in place that will drive a more systematic and time-limited approach to the implementation of actions identified in NCAD's quality improvement plans.

   Response/Comment

   The College is developing a programme of professional development for academic staff to ensure staff members are well-informed on quality assurance and enhancement, more importantly to understand their roles and responsibilities in the QA/QE processes. This will be further supported through an annual survey of staff experience of, and suggested improvements in relation to, QA/QE processes. While it will take time, the work over the next three months will result in more up to date, accurate and transparent information for staff and students from Semester 1 of 2017/18 onwards.

   The Quality Improvement Plan will provide details of who is responsible for each action, the timing of each action and when the results can be integrated into general practice. A review of existing QIPs is being undertaken, and these will be integrated into the annual QA/QE workflow, reflected in an Annual Quality Assurance Statement to An Bórd, and an annual Quality Enhancement Statement to be published on the NCAD website.

2. NCAD's committee structure requires revision and expansion to incorporate fully the roles and responsibilities of staff in ensuring good practice and quality in all aspects of the College's activities. Several new committees need to be formed to ensure that appropriate procedures and practices are enabled, managed and implemented. For example: a QA Steering Committee, a Teaching and Learning Committee, a Research Committee, a Website committee and a Health and Safety Committee, as mentioned above.

   Response/Comment

   In response to the Review Panel's recommendations and in support of delivering NCAD Strategy 2017-2021, significant progress has been made in revising and expanding the College's committee structure. The revised committee structures include: a QA Steering Committee (as a sub-committee of NCAD Programmes Board); a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (as a sub-committee of Academic Council); a renewed Research and Innovation Committee (with several sub-committees in support of both Review Panel recommendations and the College strategy); a Website Committee (reporting to NCAD's Senior Management Team); and a Health and Safety Committee.

   The renewed Research & Innovation Committee held its first meeting on May 26th. The Health and Safety Committee has been reconvened and is meeting regularly.

   A review of academic committees, their remit and membership, will be undertaken in the context of a new Memorandum of Agreement being agreed by NCAD and UCD, to ensure that they are fit for purpose, serve the College well and are coherent in support of NCAD's relationship to UCD.

3. NCAD should review the structure of its undergraduate courses and take action to align its academic calendar more closely with that of UCD.

   Response/Comment

   The suggestion that NCAD should review the structure of its undergraduate programmes and take action to align its academic calendar more closely with that of UCD is being considered, and a rationale for such

a review is being framed and has been discussed with key stakeholders such as the HEA. It will form the basis of consultation with An Bórd in the first instance and with staff and students thereafter.

4. NCAD should adopt more robust policies and practices to ensure more effective management of learning opportunities, including provision of assessment feedback, student support services and better organisation of research degree activity.

Response/Comment

Several projects are planned and/or underway in response to this recommendation:

- Module and Programme documentation is being reviewed and enhanced, with a focus on clear information for students on delivery, assessment, evaluation opportunities, and staff feedback to students on progress and (formative and summative) assessment. Project outlines will also be reviewed in this context. Associated staff development workshops have been scheduled in the 2017/18 Academic Calendar.

- Student handbooks are being redeveloped ahead of registration in 2017/18. Staff handbooks are also being developed in relation to QA/QE processes.

- End of year programme review forms have been revised to include input from students, technicians, externs, and staff surveys.

- Bi-annual Programme Review Forums have been scheduled in the 2017/18 Academic Calendar.

- The programme of engagement for Student Orientation/Welcome is being reviewed and enhanced.

- A Doctoral Research Development Committee has been formed as a sub-committee of the Research & Innovation Committee. This will be responsible for reviewing and enhancing research degree activity on an annual basis. Programme changes proposed by this committee in consultation with Schools and Departments will go to the Programmes Board for approval.

5. NCAD needs to put in place more effective systems for staff support and development.

Response/Comment

A number of initiatives are underway to develop more effective systems for staff support and development. These include: staff development workshops (focused upon learning and teaching strategies, including the crit, and working with students experiencing difficulties) have been scheduled for 2017/18; a staff development committee is being convened, a staff development strategy is being developed, and a range of policies in support of staff development have been agreed.

6. NCAD should review and address the outstanding actions identified in the UCD Review and Approval of NCAD's QA procedures of July 2016.

Response/Comment

As of June 7th, all of the actions identified in the UCD Review and Approval of NCAD's QA procedures in July 2016 have been addressed. NCAD's QA Policy is published on the website (as per recommendations 1 and 2). The articulation of QA processes and procedures and the development of NCAD's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy is anticipated within the Terms of Reference for NCAD's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee (recommendation 3). Issues that may arise in relation to learning and teaching, and in relation to the learning environment are captured through a range of mechanisms, including: bi-annual Programme Review Forums, the work of NCAD's Learning Resources Committee, a detailed annual planning report encompassing responses to external examiners, student feedback, & technical officer feedback, and the publication of an annual Quality Enhancement Statement (recommendation 4). The workflow of all academic committees includes a schedule for review and renewal of relevant policies and procedures, and all policies and procedures have a scheduled date for review and renewal, as well as clearly identified responsibility for same (recommendation 5). NCAD's QA Procedures sets out clearly the importance of supporting the development of all staff within the College, policies have been put in place that support this, and a strategy will be developed by the newly formed

Staff Development Committee in support of cross-college CPD (recommendation 6). Significant changes in the structure of both academic and governance committees within the College will greatly enhance both evidence-based decision making and the dissemination of data regarding all aspects of quality assurance and enhancement, learning and teaching practice and development, and recruitment, progression and retention to staff (recommendation 7).

7. UCD should undertake a second institutional review of NCAD within the next 3 years.

Response/Comment

NCAD agrees that a second institutional review should be undertaken within three years. The College has considerable development ahead, and is confident that the outcome of the next review will provide positive affirmation of the progress planned, to assure UCD and our other stakeholders that NCAD provides a truly excellent, research-led art and design education, and empowers its students to shape the contemporary world through critical practice, studio-based learning, research and engagement.