Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance
Peer Review Group Report
Department of Industrial Design
Academic Year 2004/05

I.D. Report 30.03.05

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INTRODUCTION

This Quality review has been conducted following a framework model developed and agreed through the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and which complies with the provisions of Section 35 of the Universities Act (1997). The model consists of a number of basic steps.

1. An internal team in the faculty/department being reviewed completes a detailed self-assessment report (SAR). It should be noted that this document is confidential to the faculty/department and to the Review Panel and to senior officers of the College.
2. This report is sent to a team of peer assessors, the Peer Review Group (PRG) - composed of members from outside NCAD and from other areas of NCAD - who then visit the faculty/department and conduct discussions with a range of staff, students and other stakeholders.
3. The PRG then writes its own report.
4. The faculty/department produces a Quality Plan in response to the various issues and findings of the SAR and PRG Reports.
5. The PRG Report and the Quality Plan are considered by the NCAD QA Steering Group, which makes a formal response to both. The Quality Plan and the Executive Response become incorporated into what is termed the Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP).
6. The PRG Report and the QuIP is sent to Academic Council, who may approve publication in a manner that they see fit.
7. Following the approval of the report by the Academic Council, both the Peer Review Group Report and the Quality Improvement Plan are published on the Quality Promotion Unit website.

This document is the report referred to in Step 3 above.

PROFILE OF DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Overall Analysis

This chapter is largely derived from the Self-Assessment Report prepared by the Department of Industrial Design:

The Department of Industrial Design is a department within the Faculty of Design at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD). It offers a four-year undergraduate degree programme in Industrial Design leading to the degree Bachelor of Design (Industrial Design). It also offers opportunities for postgraduate research, at Master of Design (Industrial Design) and Doctorate levels. Apart from a one-week familiarisation ('block week') offered to Year One Core Studies students that express an interest in studying industrial design, students from other departments are not taught in the Department.

Honours Bachelor of Design in Industrial Design

Course philosophy

The Honours Bachelor of Design in Industrial Design course is based on the need to provide the design profession with graduates whose education will enable them to initiate, sustain and support new developments and radical thinking in the exercise of a wide range of industrial responsibilities. This calls for a broad-based interdisciplinary education comprising primary design activities that are supported and integrated with science, engineering, professional and historical subjects. Graduates are expected to attain levels of professional and personal competence as industrial designers, commensurate with the future anticipated demands of industry, commerce and society. These abilities are to be achieved through the development of analytical, creative, imaginative and visual skills coupled with a broad technological understanding.

Studies encourage and exercise individual talents and strengths. It is imperative that graduates of a course combining design, science and technology maintain a broad view of employment opportunities. The course is designed to encourage a highly flexible approach to the creative application of their knowledge and skills. The course involves the progressive development of independence of judgment and critical self-awareness. Encouragement of the individual, working within course parameters, is an effective method of inspiring and motivating towards high standards of intellectual development and professionalism.

This philosophy, and the resultant structure of the course itself, guarantees a successful combination of design, technology, commercial and social sensitivity, all attributes which are essential to the future role of the industrial designer.

The Department espouses the understanding of design that is promoted by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), 2003, which sees design as:

> "A creative activity whose aim is to establish the multi-faceted quality of objects, processes, services and their systems in whole life-cycles. Therefore, design is the central factor of the innovative humanisation of technologies and the crucial factor of cultural and economic exchange. Design is an activity involving a wide spectrum of professions in which services, graphics, interiors and architecture all take part. Together, these activities should further enhance – in a choral way with other related professions – the value of life."

Intended graduate profile

The term designer refers to an individual who practices an intellectual profession, and not simply a trade or a service for enterprises. Graduates should have the ability to establish and fulfil human needs, identify and solve problems creatively and perceive the significance of social, economic and environmental influences as they relate to the design of manufactured artefacts. They should also be proficient in the skills of clear communications and effective presentation of their innovatory ideas, to consider the wider implications of their chosen profession and to understand the personal and social responsibility inherent in all design activity.

As well as their specific industrial design abilities, students should develop transferable skills applicable to many career situations. These include problem solving; communication using imaging and models - real and virtual; research, analysis; oral presentation; teamwork; independent learning; critical thinking; time management.

Aims of the course

The aims of the course are as follows:

a) To train and educate students to enter the industrial design profession.
b) To provide graduates with a highly developed intellectual capacity to make critical assessments of human needs and to analyse, synthesise and evaluate imaginatively the problems attending design and its associated disciplines.
c) To perceive the nature of problems in depth and to pursue innovative and creative solutions to design problems.
d) To recognise the significance of social, economic and environmental influences as they relate to the products of industry.
e) To recognise the diversity of industry and the evolving role of industrial design.
f) To sufficiently educate to allow graduates to make a broader contribution to small indigenous industry, in recognition of its importance in Ireland.

Objectives of the course

Students will be expected to develop the following abilities:

a) To create and interpret a brief and to make competent judgements and decisions at all levels of design activity.
b) To assess human needs, and to relate social, cultural, environmental and economic criteria to function, aesthetics, and human factors, materials selection and manufacture.
c) To review and appraise own work through logical and reasoned judgment
d) To communicate design concepts, visually and orally to multi-disciplinary teams.
e) To produce complete design data in appropriate formats.
f) To understand aesthetic and ergonomic factors in design.
g) To understand basic physics and mechanical, electrical and electronic systems.
h) To understand materials and their potential and the related technologies of forming and finishes.
i) To understand business practice and marketing, and the professional practice of industrial design.
j) To understand the function and structure of industry and its influences in society.

Background to the course

The undergraduate course began in 1976; it was the first industrial design course to be offered in Ireland, and was structured to suit the needs of indigenous manufacturing industry. It began as a joint course, organised with the University of Limerick (then the National Institute for Higher Education, Limerick). Naturally, many changes have been made to the course since then, including the introduction of computer-aided design, the development of a very active student exchange programme and an increasing number of industry-sponsored projects. The arrangement with the University of Limerick ceased at the end of the academic year 2003-2004 and from autumn 2004, became an NCAD course only.

During the four-year programme, students engage with a range of modules and projects broadly described as Design Theory and Practice, Science and Technology, Information Technology, History of Design and Business and Complementary Studies. They also participate in field trips, exchange programmes and work placements, the latter having been a feature of the course since its inception.

Student numbers
To date, student intake has averaged 25 in each of the four years of the course, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Student numbers, 2000-2005

	Undergraduates	postgraduates
2004/2005	91	2
2003/2004	74*	3
2002/2003	71*	1
2001/2002	72*	1
2000/2001	66*	0

*excludes Year 1 students at University of Limerick

Gender balance
One-third of undergraduate students are female and two-thirds male and this has been a pattern for many years. An analysis of applicants revealed that approximately one-third are female, that about the same proportion are offered places and that the same proportion accepts the offer.

The postgraduate programme
The Department offers the opportunity to undertake study leading to a Masters degree or a PhD. The nature of the study is flexible: it may be wholly thesis or practice based, or a mixture.

To date there has been a limited amount of postgraduate activity in the department. Just two students have graduated with an MA in Design, both in the area of medical device design and one student has completed a PhD related to furniture design. Currently, there are two students on track to complete their MA studies in the near future and a PhD has been registered in 2004.

Applicants for postgraduate study submit a research proposal for evaluation by the Postgraduate Committee and may be accepted, subject to a qualified staff member being available to supervise the student. Each postgraduate student is assigned to a tutor who oversees progress and liaises with the student on an agreed basis - normally once per month. External advisers or tutors may be appointed depending on the nature of the study. Of the five postgraduate students in the Department, one was female.

The Department has five full-time staff, eligible part-time (EPL) lecturers, part-time lecturers and visiting lecturers, eligible part-time (EPT) technical assistants and part-time technicians. All staff are involved in teaching at all levels of the course. Many of the part-time staff in the Department are practicing designers. On occasions when project briefs or student progression demands specialist skills and knowledge, visiting lecturers are invited.

Table 1: Academic staff, contracted working arrangement

	Student contact (hours/week)	Administration (hours/week)
Head of Department	12	12
F/T Lecturer	18	6
EPL	9	3
Part-time (2004)	24	-

Table 2: Budget, 2004 (€)

Full-time academic staff	228,530
Part-time academic staff	35,936
Full-time technical staff	47,095
EPTA technical staff	32,633
Materials	28,400
EIDD	1,000

The Department operates within the context of the Campus Development Plan. Its mission, goals and objectives are:

Mission: To provide educational excellence through its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and research facilities to enable students to realise their individual creative potential, to learn to design responsibly, and to seek to improve the quality of life globally.

Goals: To ensure the highest quality education in industrial design, preparing students to be creative and responsive to the needs of a global society.

Objectives:
To recruit and retain the best students and staff.
To encourage the development of all staff.
To develop the curriculum continuously.
To develop new programmes in response to professional trends and national policy.
To increase the visibility of the Department through public events, symposia, publications, web site, etc.
To maintain and develop contact with industry
To maintain and develop relationships with our partner colleges in the exchange programme.
To track alumni, feature their success, and invite them back to the Department/campus for special occasions, lectures, career presentations, and major events.

Staffing
The Self Assessment Report expresses satisfaction with quality of staffing but states that the academic staffing workload is not satisfactory. For example, the budget for 2004 appears to provide for a total of 72 hours contact time (part-time and full-time staff), per week. As there are 76 students (including two MAs), this equates with rather less than one hour per student per week. However that simple calculation does not allow for other costs assigned to the part-time budget, such as:

- travel and accommodation of part-time tutors, typically resulting in an hourly cost twice that of a local tutor
- cost of organising student work experience including visits to employers
- external examiner interim visit expenses
- travel and accommodation of part-time tutors to accompany students on the mandatory field trips
- IT maintenance (100 hours at technician rate)

In reality, the budget allows time per student in the order of 30 minutes per student, per week. Whilst the 'right amount' of time per student is certainly debatable, two fifteen-minute sessions per week design tutoring is definitely tight and the time available should allow for more comfortable discussion. It is clear, however, that staff have been voluntarily providing additional contact time than their contracts require.

Staffing is based on a 14.14:1 staff student ratio - high by European standards. The 2003 budget allowed for about 900 part-time hours: in 2004 it declined to 734. Clearly the variety and range of input available to the course might be restricted. Contact time per student should not be allowed to fall further.

Workshop staffing appears to be satisfactory. The nature of design projects and necessary timetabling means that there are periods of intense activity, followed by periods of relative calm and the technical staff roster themselves to meet the demands. Workshops are dangerous and it is to the great credit of the technical staff that there have been no serious accidents in the history of the course. Nonetheless, there is no room for complacency and regular and relevant courses on workshop safety and supervision and first-aid are desirable. It is our intention that a more planned approach to this type of training will be implemented.

There is a heavy administration burden in the Department that is largely handled by the Department Secretary who is also the Design Faculty Secretary. This workload means that there is no time available to address or contribute to some of the interesting and demanding activities listed in the Objectives above such as increasing the visibility of the Department.

The Self Assessment Report states that possibly the greatest problem is the lack of time available for staff to invest in self-development and in development of the course, to undertake research or to supervise additional postgraduate students or indeed, to develop any of the activities outlined as Goals of the Department. It should be noted that academic staff are committed to student contact for 75% of their total time, unlike universities where the contact is limited to about 20% of the time.

Facilities

A survey of space, completed by Irish consultants in 2002, reported that the Department has a shortfall of about 1000 square metres, or roughly half the space presently available. This finding was endorsed by the US academic consultant, Professor Hardu Keck.

Studios are crowded and in particular, there is insufficient space for full scale sketch model building. However, a proposal to use space in the College premises in nearby St John Street West, to be shared with other departments needing large free space, may be realised in the near future. Clearly, not being immediately adjacent to the studio is a disadvantage, but nonetheless it will be an acceptable solution to the problem.

Workshop equipment is barely adequate. Most items of machinery are nearly 30 years old and are not representative of modern technology, to which the students ought to be exposed. There is not a single item of CNC machinery. Indeed, the average second-level school has equipment that far exceeds the Departments, in terms of quality and quantity. The machinery requires continuous and time-consuming maintenance. Applications for capital funding have been submitted regularly but to date have not been successful.

At time of writing, no provision for space and equipment has yet been made to teach technical subjects to an adequate level, following the withdrawal of the arrangement with the University of Limerick.

Office provision is adequate.

There is an up-to-date computer facility and a leasing arrangement means that the equipment will remain current. Regrettably, however, there is insufficient specialist computer staff available to keep the systems properly maintained. There are daily problems which causes endless delays for students and staff.

Links with other colleges
The Department enjoys more and closer links with colleges outside of Ireland than within Ireland!

The NCAD Administration Department organises successful exchanges but the programme needs to be monitored and evaluated more consistently through regular visits to host colleges. In several instances we have long-running exchange arrangements with colleges that we have never visited ourselves!

Many colleges in Europe have begun to adapt the standard educational model agreed in the Bologna Declaration, i.e., a 3-year bachelor qualification followed by a 2-year master's qualification. Exchanges will then take place during the master's period.

Unless NCAD embraces the new model there is a strong likelihood that we will be excluded from many other colleges, probably in the near future. In the recent past, premier colleges in Finland, Norway and Copenhagen have stopped accepting the Department's undergraduate students and this situation is likely to worsen as more and more colleges adopt the Bologna model.

Strengths and weaknesses
The strengths and weaknesses of the Department, and Threats and Opportunities facing it were summarised as follows in the Self Assessment Report.

Strengths
- quality and dedication of staff and students
- reputation of college
- reputation of graduates
- new curriculum offering electives
- focus on teaching
- interest in interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary studies
- in-depth professional focus
- responsible balance between humanities/history of art, design and studio concentration
- sound teaching philosophy and practice
- strong industry connections
- strong international connections
- reasonable working environment

Weaknesses
- minimal research activity and poor research facilities
- high staff/student ratios
- only one course offering
- omitted postgraduate research opportunity
- space limitations and tired facilities
- need for more computer and technology support
- need for more workshop facilities
- many spaces overcrowded
- cross-over into other departments, sharing resources and staff difficult
- very limited budget
- need for staff and course development resources

Threats
- more colleges offering similar qualifications
- more competition for work placements
- more competition for sponsored projects

Opportunities
- development of professional development type courses
- use of facilities during summer vacation; computer, studio and workshops
- development of focused taught courses at masters level, e.g., medical device design (see below)

Conclusions

The undergraduate course is currently being changed following an extensive review. As a result, there has been a concentration of all resources on the development of the undergraduate course. Any possibility of postgraduate development, other than the occasional recruitment of an MA student, has been curtailed. In these circumstances the Department can only concentrate on what it does now and make efforts for continual improvement even if those improvements are merely incremental.

THE PEER REVIEW GROUP PROCESS

Members of the Peer Review Group:

1. Professor George Burden, International Relations, University of Design, Schwäbisch Gmünd
Professor George Burden, DesRCA, MSc studied Industrial Design (Engineering) at the Royal College of Art in London, and, as a German Academic Exchange Service exchange scholar, at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm. He later studied Applied Psychology at the University of Aston in Birmingham.

   George Burden has held industrial and human factors design positions in England and, as a professor at Ohio State University, taught and consulted in industrial design and human factors in the USA for a number of years. Since 1973 he has been a professor of industrial design at the University of Design in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. He has planned and run further education projects for Asian designers and advises a number of industrial clients.

   In 2004 he was awarded the Baden-Württemberg State Prize for Teaching Excellence, and in 2005 received the Staufer Medal of Baden-Wuerttemberg for his international activities on behalf of education.

2. Professor Gary Granville, Head of Faculty of Education, N.C.A.D.
Gary Granville is Professor of Education and Head of the Education Faculty in the National College of Art and Design, Dublin. A member of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), he was formerly Assistant Chief Executive of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), and a Lecturer in Education in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth.

   He is a member of the Advisory Group for the major national project on Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century (*TL21*), based in NUI, Maynooth (2004), and of the NCCA committee on senior cycle education. He is Research Director with the Irish Youth Foundation, an independent charitable trust and partner of the International Youth Foundation, a global network of 60 organisations committed to the growth and development of children and young people. He is a member of the Educational Advisory panel of national awards schemes operated by the Bank of Ireland and by Independent Newspapers. He sits on the management board of a number of schools. He has published extensively on issues of curriculum, vocational education and training, and education policy, contributing articles, book chapters and conference papers to international and national publications.

3. Mr. Peter Rushe, Senior Packaging Designer, Henkel Technologies, Ireland
Mr. Peter Rushe, BDes, MSc, is a Senior Packaging Designer with Henkel Technologies, Ireland. Peter Rushe graduated with an honours degree in Industrial Design from NCAD in 1988. He has worked in France for over 10 years specializing in packaging design and development. He obtained an honours Master degree in Packaging Technology from Brunel University in 1997. He returned to Ireland in 1999 and works with Henkel Technologies designing and developing packaging solutions for their various global consumer brands.

Chair: Professor George Burden
Rapporteur: Mr. Peter Rushe

Methodology

The Peer Review Group Review process consisted of the following discrete activities:

- Familiarisation with the Self Assessment report
- A comprehensive site visit over two days to review, discuss, analyse and validate the details contained within the Self Assessment documentation
- Taking elements of the Self Assessment report and commenting and adapting them based on the PRG findings from the site-visit
- The preparation and delivery of a Review Report documenting the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review team

Site Visit

The site visit took place on **22nd –23rd February 2004**.

Day One began with a meeting of the PRG with The Director of NCAD Colm O Briain, Registrar, Ken Langan & QA/QI Officer, Nicky Saunders.
This meeting was a general introduction to the college with briefing and emphasised the commitment of the college to the quality assurance programme.
Head of Design Faculty, Angela Woods & Head of Industrial Design, Paul Fortune joined the meeting, which was equally open and informative.
There then followed a tour of the College and School of Design facilities including Library and Computer facilities.
In the afternoon, a series of meetings were held with both staff and students (as follows).

Staff: Katharina Pfützner: 50% part-time teacher for design
Gearoid O Conchubhair: full-time lecturer for design
Mary Power: Faculty/Department secretary
Enda O'Dowd: 50% part-time lecturer for technology
Steve Chan: full-time lecturer for ergonomics and design
Gerry Nolan: senior technician

Students: Steven Corcoran – 1st yr. Core Studies rep.
Shane Kearney – 2nd yr. rep.
David Delahunty – 3rd yr.
Billy Harney – 4th yr. rep.

The second day provided the opportunity for the PRG to evaluate and discuss the main issues of importance identified from the Self Assessment report and from the meetings the previous day.

There then followed a meeting, in the afternoon, to present the findings of the review to staff, Head of Design, Head of I.D., Director, Registrar & QA/QI Officer.

From the tour and many meetings held, the PRG was greatly impressed by the open and honest way the stakeholders put their views forward. Both staff and students alike treated the Review very seriously, clearly seeing it for the quality improvement opportunities it presented.

The Head of Design & Head of I.D provided clarification on a number of issues and are clearly committed to the future of the development of Industrial Design however, perhaps a presentation by the Head of I.D. could have been more suitable rather than the general discussion due to the time restraints of the visit.

Although short on time for individual meetings, these were very open and very suitable.
Perhaps to improve efficiency a possible transposition of morning and afternoon activities on day one could have been considered.

FINDINGS OF THE PEER REVIEW GROUP

1. The PRG was impressed by the positive way the College had approached the Review process, and in particular the level of participation, openness and dedication by staff. Evidently, much valuable work had been done in order to produce the Self Assessment Report. This report gives a good and balanced overview of the Department and has contributed and should continue to contribute significantly to the future development of the Industrial Design course at NCAD.

2. The PRG commends the working programme and reputation of the course. This programme has been offered since 1976 and is very successful with a high proportion of graduates working and remaining in design. The PRG is also impressed by the adaptability of graduates in the business environment.

3. The PRG found the College to be vibrant and was impressed by the committed professionalism of all staff and the enthusiasm of the students. The PRG noted the high calibre of the students and the selection process to the course. The PRG was highly impressed by the students it spoke to during the site visit, finding them to be honest and committed and critical participants in the life of the Department. The students used this opportunity to engage with the PRG and showed an energy and willingness to participate openly in the process.

4. The library facilities are excellent and accessible from 9am to 9pm in the week. The high degree of motivation on the part of the Library staff to support design students was appreciated by the PRG.

5. The PRG welcomes and affirms the commitment of the Department to the concept of Industrial Design, and in particular, the definition of design as set out by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), 2003:

   "A creative activity whose aim is to establish the multi-faceted quality of objects, processes, services and their systems in whole life-cycles. Therefore, design is the central factor of the innovative humanisation of technologies and the crucial factor of cultural and economic exchange. Design is an activity involving a wide spectrum of professions in which services, graphics, interiors and architecture all take part. Together, these activities should further enhance – in a choral way with other related professions – the value of life."

6. The PRG raises the question as to whether “Industrial Design” is in fact the best title for this field of endeavour: does the term “industrial” limit its horizons too much? The PRG does not recommend a name change but rather suggests that this be kept under review by the Faculty and Department in the light of international professional practice.

7. The PRG is worried by the almost complete identification of the Department with its undergraduate course. While the undergraduate course is central to the work of the Department, it is not sufficient for a Department to be defined by a course. Instead, the PRG would like to see the Department take on a more proactive advocacy of Industrial Design across the Design Faculty, across College, at postgraduate level and among the wider public. Elements of what is essential to ID should also be available to students on other NCAD courses - for example, a module in ergonomics should have a wide appeal and application among students.

8. The strengths of the Department can be summarized as follows
    - An experienced staff, professional and dedicated to the welfare of the students, Department and College
    - The Department is based on the main campus of the College with a good infrastructure and surroundings, though this could perhaps be utilised better
    - Good tradition, reputation & working programme
    - High quality of undergraduate course and graduates
    - Physical accessibility to Library and computer facilities outside of College hours is a great benefit to all
    - Impressive level of maturity, commitment and engagement of students, with laudable personal beliefs
    - High commitment of students to profession and department
    - Adaptability of graduates – employability criteria are being fulfilled
    - Ready willingness of all involved to engage in self-assessment activities
    - Impressive quantity and quality of work done on the self-assessment report
    - The PRG experienced an openness with no avoiding, clouding or disguising of issues

9. The PRG found the long-term curricular strategy for the restructured undergraduate course questionable and recommends a thorough, careful and constant monitoring and evaluation of the course both internally and externally.

10. The PRG was not convinced by the current rationale for the new course – which appears to be an operational rather than strategic justification. The intellectual argument cannot be taken at face value and the course should be strongly monitored over the next few years by an external examiner and through student feedback processes. Periodic assessment is recommended and the inclusion of the external examiner whose experience and expertise and associated resources appear from the presented evidence grossly underused.

11. Subsequent correspondence with the external examiner clarifies that his input and subsequent discussions were in fact in line with accepted practice. During the last year his presence has been curtailed by his need to undergo surgery. His perceptions and comments support the findings of the PRG in general.

12. The PRG cautions against a 'quick fix' short-term strategy that may be counter-productive as it absorbs human, financial and creative resources.

13. The PRG recommends that the positive experiences from Limerick should not be lost but rather built into the course. In particular the PRG is not convinced that sufficient provision has been made for the necessary technical skills that the course demands.

14. The PRG noted the need to incorporate visible structures for debate – this includes assignments and arrangements with a clear responsibility and timing. Targets can and should be discussed, allocated and reviewed.

15. The PRG recommends distributing teaching and research - core competences and specialisation – carefully and consciously to the undergraduate and graduate programmes. It is evident that several members of the staff have specialist topics that can become attractive in the long-term development.

16. The PRG recommends that the implications of The Bologna Declaration need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Topics such as modularisation, credit transfer, equivalencies need to be addressed. Is the Department ready if these issues were to be implemented in September 2005?

17. Possible solutions and modifications should not only be discussed but also recorded and should be the basis for further development. Correspondence with the external examiner and with partner institutions across Europe could be very useful here.

18. Communication deficiencies exist – these are internal, staff to staff, staff to students and students to students. A certain complacency appears to exist College wide. There appears to be little to no shared teaching or knowledge of what is going on within Faculty or College.

19. While informal communications within a small college should be a continuing feature, there is a need for a more effective system of communications between departments in the Design Faculty, between staff members in the ID Department and especially between the Department staff and the student body. There appear to be frequent low-level communication problems and ambiguities in relation to student assignments, submission dates and projects.

20. 50% dissatisfaction of students to the clarity of information relating to the course that is admitted in report is considered alarming by the PRG. Also the liberal use of the term good/moderate in evaluating certain topics of the Self Assessment report was questioned by the PRG as it implies acceptance of a certain mediocre level of performance and satisfaction.

21. The PRG recommends that the Mission statement of the Department and the aims of the course need to be clearly understood and visible in the long and short-term. These should be publicised to the whole Department. They should also be visible in the student work areas.

22. The PRG recommends that a model for programme, course and module description be developed. Industrial Design could be the benchmark for this model if developed fast enough.

23. The PRG noted that there are too few meetings, albeit well scheduled, structured and documented, and these appear to be mostly operational and not strategic in nature.

24. The PRG recommends that students be made aware of the availability of email NCAD addresses in the interests of improving communication in general.

25. The PRG recommends that staff development be emphasised, structured, and facilitated more.

26. The PRG recognises the commitment of the staff to scholarship and research. Creative production from a professional practice perspective and participation in public life are well represented. The PRG is concerned about the unstructured nature and low level of staff development and recommends that this should be facilitated. Personal goals and department goals should be adequately and frequently discussed, with appropriate review and recognition. The PRG recommends that annual plans with tangible targets for staff development, research activity and professional practice be agreed and reviewed between Faculty Head, Department Head and staff.

27. The PRG believes that the Department should exploit its position to enhance its profile. The students on graduation have high employment skills: this should be emphasised. Outside visibility at industry, political and educational levels are required. Industrial Design is an attractive but relatively unknown discipline. This is more than a public relation job but is a projection of work and aims for which wider and lasting support at all levels must be gained. The PRG recommends that resources be made available and that this become a dedicated task in the future.

28. The PRG sees advantages in profiling the Department more clearly. The recruitment of staff and students should be more pro-active. The PRG recommends a more concerted effort to draw in

industry sponsorship, visiting lecturers, money, equipment, talented students and tap into external resources and programmes.

29. In the development of a Masters in Design, a two-year programme, the PRG recommends that, during the first year, the emphasis be on research methods in design, which could be achieved through cross-faculty collaboration. Specialisation, led by both the aims of the Department and the experience of the students could take place in the second year. It would be necessary to recruit experienced and varied talents both at student and teaching levels and to give them the forum for furthering research and for making a strategic input to the programme.

30. However the PRG recognises that better equipment and facilities are required to attract the best. The attraction of foreign students could lead to a higher profile and to the future success of the Department.

31. The PRG recommends the cohesiveness of office space should be maintained as College is further developed. There needs to be clarification on the future building/development of the College and how it may affect the Industrial Design spaces.

32. The PRG recommends increased contact /development with external resources.

33. Equipment needs external financial input. Group sales of equipment would alleviate resource limits e.g. laptop purchase by students would be facilitated by a College contact and reduced prices for students.

34. The PRG sees the advantages of possible external sponsorship of computer equipment, peripherals, I.T. services and workshop equipment.

APPENDIX-The Site Visit

Timetable of the site visit: 22nd –23rd February 2004

Day	Location	Time	Action
21st	Board Room	9.30 – 10.00 a.m.	PRG meet Director, Colm O Briain, Registrar, Ken Langan & QA/QI Officer, Nicky Saunders for short briefing.
21st	Board Room	10.00 – 11.00 a.m.	PRG meet with Head of Design Faculty, Angela Woods & Head of Industrial Design, Paul Fortune. PRG discuss self-assessment report and clarify what further information they would like to receive in light of the report. Schedule of events and roles of each member of PRG are confirmed.
21st	Board Room	11.00 – 11.30 a.m.	Coffee
21st	College/School of Design	11.30 – 1.00 p.m.	PRG, Head of Design & Head of I.D. tour College and School of Design facilities.
21st	Board Room	1.00 – 2.00 p.m.	Lunch with Head of Design, Head of I.D., I.D. Staff, Student Representatives & QA/QI Officer.
21st	G04, School of Design	2.00 – 3.15 p.m.	PRG meet with Department staff individually.
21st	G04, School of Design	3.15 – 4.15 p.m.	PRG meet with student representatives.
21st	G04, School of Design	4.15 – 4.30 p.m.	Coffee
21st	G04, School of Design	4.30 – 5.00 p.m.	PRG, Head of I.D. & QA/QI Officer review day 1 and agree schedule for day 2.
21st	Mermaid Café	6.30 p.m.	Dinner with PRG, Head of Design, Head of I.D., QA/QI Officer.
22nd	Board Room	9.30 – 1.00 p.m.	PRG draw up draft report.
22nd	Board Room	1.00 – 2.00 p.m.	Lunch
22nd	Board Room	2.00 – 3.00 p.m.	PRG present findings of draft report to Head of Design, Head of I.D., Director, Registrar & QA/QI Officer.

End