



# Mission-based Performance Compact

*between*

Cork Institute of Technology

*and*

The Higher Education Authority

Date: February 2014



# Context

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This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) and is the outcome of a process of strategic dialogue between the two bodies.

The purpose of strategic dialogue is to align the missions, strategies and profiles of individual higher education institutions with national priorities, and to agree strategic objective indicators of success against which institutional performance will be measured and funding allocated.

This Compact demonstrates a shared sense of the balance that is required between institutional autonomy and public accountability and a recognition that a diverse range of strong, autonomous institutions is essential for the overall higher education system to respond effectively to evolving and unpredictable societal needs.

The Compact recognises that CIT is an autonomous institution with a distinctive mission, operating within a regional, national and international higher education environment.

The Compact recognises that there is a tension between providing a transparent framework of public accountability for performance in relation to funding, and risks of unintended behaviours related to measurements. It addresses this tension by requiring higher education institutions themselves to propose the qualitative and quantitative indicators against which their performance should be assessed by the Higher Education Authority.

The purpose of this Compact is to provide a strategic framework for the relationship between the Higher Education Authority and CIT. It sets out how CIT's mission and goals align with national goals for higher education.

By detailing HEA funding commitments and reciprocal CIT commitments, this Compact also contributes to creating a transparent and accountable system of administration of State funding. To support this purpose, the Higher Education Authority and CIT agree that this Compact will be published.

## The principles of State funding support

The principles under which State funding for higher education is provided are:

- Institutional autonomy balanced with public accountability for high quality outcomes; and
- Core funding allocations that are predictable, fair and transparent, and that provide reasonable stability from year to year and in which funding follows the student.

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Sets out CIT's development plans and objectives using standardised templates. These development plans / objectives <i>must</i> be taken from the institution's own properly formulated strategic plan. The quality of the institution's strategic planning process will be evaluated.	
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# 1. Establishment of the Compact

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The Higher Education Authority and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) agree that:

- This Compact consists of this document and the accompanying current and planned profiles
- The term of this Compact is from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2016 unless terminated earlier by agreement

CIT acknowledges that policy underlying some or all of this Compact is subject to review by the Minister for Education and Skills or by the Higher Education Authority from time to time. The Higher Education Authority and CIT agree that if changes need to be made to the Compact because of such a review, the Higher Education Authority will notify CIT of this in writing and will consult with CIT accordingly.

Some or all of the funding arrangements may be updated from time to time. Either party may propose changes to this Compact at any time.

## 2. Performance Funding Framework

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Higher education Performance Funding will provide incentives for higher education institutions to improve overall performance in accordance with their own strategies and with their place in the overall system.

Performance Funding will be allocated based on performance against agreed targets and indicators of success proposed by the institution across a range of outcome domains. The targets and indicators of success must be agreed in strategic dialogue with the HEA. The intention is both to improve the performance of the institution in key areas and to steer the institution closer to its agreed mission and profile and to its position in the overall higher education system. The degree of challenge and of realism inherent in the targets proposed will be evaluated and discussed in strategic dialogue.

The Higher Education Authority and Cork Institute of Technology agree to review annually the effectiveness of implementation of the strategies and goals for achieving the agreed national and institution outcomes.

As a condition of Performance Funding, in accordance with this agreement, CIT must:

- Agree performance targets as outlined in section 5 below
- Supply performance data to the Higher Education Authority for the relevant indicators
- Achieve the relevant targets agreed

The assessment of progress against the agreed indicators of success and the allocation of Performance Funding against them will be notified annually to CIT.

### 3 Mission and Strategy Statement

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CIT's mission and strategy sets out its values and aspirations, what it does and how it can best serve the interests of its students, staff and key stakeholders. The Higher Education Authority and CIT acknowledge that CIT's mission and strategy may evolve.

CIT and the Higher Education Authority recognise that CIT is an autonomous institution that is responsible for determining its mission, its aspirations and its strategies for their achievement.

However, the Higher Education Authority must ensure that together the missions and profiles of the different institutions will lead to overall coherence of the higher education system as a whole and to completeness, ensuring that national needs are being met and without unnecessary duplication.

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#### **CIT Mission**

We are proud of our distinct mission and role in the provision of higher education for the region and beyond. Our mission is:

**To provide student-centred, career-focused education and research for the personal, professional and intellectual development of the student and for the benefit of the broader society in the region and beyond.**

#### **CIT Commitments**

The Institute is committed to its role within the region and nationally. As we pursue our mission across our full range of activities we are focused on fulfilling the following commitments which encapsulate the Institute's priorities, ethos and values.

##### **CIT is a student-centred institution:**

- CIT develops and fosters the talents of its students in a supportive environment which challenges them to succeed and prepares them to make a positive contribution in their chosen careers and as members of society regionally, nationally and internationally.
- CIT is committed to respecting and protecting the dignity and rights of individuals through practices which promote fairness and equal treatment for all.

##### **CIT delivers career-focused education and research:**

- Through the delivery of career-focused education, training and professional development, CIT produces graduates who are professionals and practitioners, distinguished in their chosen career by their ability to effectively create and apply knowledge, engage in ongoing learning and act in entrepreneurial and innovative ways.
  - Engagement with enterprise and the extension of the campus into the workplace (and the wider community) is a key defining characteristic of CIT.
  - CIT engages in research in a manner that supports and enhances its core mission. Research is an essential core activity and it informs all the activities of the Institute including teaching and enterprise engagement.
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**CIT provides inclusive access to higher education:**

- CIT provides education opportunities which empower all motivated individuals to pursue personal, intellectual and professional enhancement.

**CIT plays a regional, national and international role:**

- CIT provides education, research, innovation and other services which are aligned to regional, national and international needs and priorities.
- CIT makes a positive contribution to the academic, economic, industrial, social and cultural life of the region and beyond. Furthermore, its staff, students and graduates are aware of the importance of ethical behaviour and social responsibility across all economic, social and cultural domains.

**CIT Vision**

As we look towards the future we have an ambitious and challenging vision for the strategic development of CIT which is that:

**CIT will be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in the provision of career-focused education which produces effective, ethical professionals capable of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.**

Achieving this vision requires the development of learners who are flexible thinkers capable of creativity and innovation, who by the time they graduate from CIT will already possess the attributes and aptitude required to be effective professionals and practitioners in their chosen field. We seek to educate professionals throughout our broad range of undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes across science, engineering, business, the humanities, craft studies, visual arts, maritime studies and music. It is our goal to ensure that every CIT graduate will be recognised as possessing and practising the following strengths and competencies:

- A CIT graduate will have a broad range of relevant discipline-specific knowledge, skills and competencies.
- A CIT graduate will exhibit personal and professional efficacy and integrity, enabled by the development of a broad range of competencies including interpersonal and communication skills, teamwork, ethics and social responsibility.
- A CIT graduate will be motivated and empowered to be a lifelong learner with a passion for learning which is underpinned by the essential skills of inquiry and scholarship.
- A CIT graduate will have the ability to create and apply knowledge in a variety of professional contexts, having participated in an educational programme which fosters problem solving, knowledge discovery, research and the use of knowledge in real-world situations.

This vision sees CIT becoming an international exemplar of good practice in professional education. CIT will pursue this goal through the ongoing adoption of best practice in teaching, learning and research as follows:

- Active and collaborative student-centred learning which engages the student's desire
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to learn and challenges them to take ownership of their learning experience.

- A relevant and flexible career-focused curriculum, developed in close partnership with enterprise.
- Research education which delivers a range of skills including creativity, inquiry, problem solving and innovation, and develops professional researchers capable of pursuing research, innovation and development careers in both enterprise and academic settings.

CIT will continue to be a national and international leader in enterprise engagement and the practice of extending the education campus into the workplace and the wider community.

The CIT approach to campus extension and engagement will be characterised by:

- The development of engagement as an Institute-wide commitment, embracing education, research, innovation and enterprise support.
- The fostering of two-way engagement and knowledge exchange between CIT and external partners.
- The creation of agile and flexible learning pathways in partnership with enterprises and communities, incorporating the recognition of prior learning and work-based learning.
- Enhanced practice and policy frameworks that recognise and support the valuable contribution of enterprises and communities to the curriculum to ensure relevance and currency.

Responsiveness is at the core of our mission and therefore effective campus extension and engagement is an essential activity for CIT. We are seeking to develop a professional outward-facing interface through which external communities, organisations and enterprises can interact with CIT. Through these interactions and partnerships we will ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

In summary, as we seek to make this strategic vision a reality, CIT will strive for excellence in student-centred teaching and learning; excellence in research, creation of knowledge and use of knowledge; and excellence in engagement with enterprise and the broader society.

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### 3.1 Changes to the mission and strategy statement

The Higher Education Authority acknowledges that CIT may adjust its mission and strategy from time to time. CIT agrees that the following will be the subject of strategic dialogue with the Higher Education Authority and may result in a change to the Compact:

- Any significant change that it proposes to make to its mission during the term of the Compact
- Any significant change that it intends to make to its activities that could affect either the content or the practical application of its mission.

## 4. Current and Planned Profile

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The following pages contain:

- CIT's current profile 2010/11 (as supplied by the HEA); and
- CIT's planned profile 2016/17 (completed).

*For hard copy submissions, please bind the current and planned profile after this page.*

*For electronic submissions, please submit the current and planned profiles as PDF and Excel attachments respectively.*



## 5. Development Plans and Objectives

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### 5.1 Regional clusters

#### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to its **regional cluster** is provided below.

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#### Regional clusters: strategy summary

##### Members of Regional Cluster - South Region

Cork Institute of Technology  
Institute of Technology Carlow  
Institute of Technology Tralee  
University College Cork  
Waterford Institute of Technology

##### Governance Arrangements

The following provides a summary of the current agreed position for governance of the Southern Cluster:

- Parity of esteem for all stakeholders is essential to the successful operation of cluster
- Clear terms of reference and an MOU for the operation of the cluster is to be prepared as soon as possible
- The use of a rotating rather than an independent chair has been agreed. The rotation period will be for one year
- Presidents and at least one other member of senior management to be nominated by each institute to the cluster board
- Agreement that industry, further education and other stakeholder participation is required in cluster specific projects
- Compact objectives on clusters will be harmonised across all members of the cluster
- A strategic work-plan including governance structures is to be developed for delivering on cluster objectives by the end 2014
- Arbitration mechanisms will be established as part of the governance structure
- Recommendations which impact on the operation of higher education institutions will require approval by all governing authorities

##### Primary Objectives of the South Region Cluster

- Increase the capacity and responsiveness of the Irish Higher Education system
  - Deepen partnerships and collaborations among the cluster of Higher Education Institutes
  - Provide improved progression pathways between institutions
  - Enhance cooperation across the institutions in support of regional economic, social
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and cultural development

- Build on existing successes in the areas of course development, collaborative research, entrepreneurship and innovation

#### **External Factors**

- Availability of funding and resources to deliver on cluster objectives
  - The potential for lack of agreement among cluster institutions on expected objectives
  - Insufficiently robust or poorly designed processes at a national level that may inhibit the successful creation of regional clusters
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## Regional clusters:

### Institution objectives and performance indicator

1.	Cluster objective	Create a formal regional cluster between the named member institutions.
	Performance indicator	Agree and implement a framework for cluster operation and commence implementation of agreed collaborative projects.
	Baseline	Many inter-institutional relationships exist but no formalised cluster structure is in place.
	Interim target, end 2014	Agree and implement a governance framework for joint activities including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The establishment of a cluster board</li> <li>• Creation of an MOU for operation of the cluster</li> <li>• Development of arbitration procedures</li> <li>• Development of a coordinated work-plan for the implementation of agreed projects.</li> </ul>
	Interim target, end 2015	Complete a progress review in terms of delivery of the work plan and implementation of agreed projects.
	Final target, end 2016	Evaluate the effectiveness of the governance framework in place for the cluster and explore further collaborative opportunities.
2.	Cluster objective	Improve student pathways.
	Performance indicator	Produce a mapping profile which outlines learner opportunities and pathways for all disciplines and levels across the cluster region which will assist in future academic planning and delivery
	Baseline	Many inter-institutional pathways exist but no complete mapping profile is available.
	Interim target, end 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial focus of the cluster is anticipated to be on improving student pathways given priority attached to the transitions initiative</li> <li>• Perform baseline mapping process in terms of student pathways from secondary through to tertiary education and graduate destination (this will require engagement of secondary and FE providers as well student representative bodies)</li> <li>• Final output - mapping profile.</li> </ul>
	Interim target, end 2015	Develop uniform access/progression scheme for the cluster.
	Final target, end 2016	Review pathways profile based on new academic developments.

3.	Cluster objective	Shared academic planning
	Performance indicator	Develop a cluster-wide academic planning structure focused on the delivery of national priority objectives such as the transitions initiative Horizon 2020 and other objectives focused on improving the economic, social and cultural profile of the cluster region
	Baseline	<p>No cluster-wide academic planning structure exists. However there is an understanding that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual institutes will continue to provide a broad base of undergraduate course opportunities up to level 8 to satisfy needs of individual hinterlands given the geographical scale of region</li> <li>• External stakeholders such as regulatory and professional bodies will also influence the planning and delivery process</li> <li>• The number of CAO entry paths is expected to reduce with the collective implementation of the transitions initiative</li> <li>• Agreement that there are benefits to shared academic planning in specialist areas, most notably at Level 9 and above</li> <li>• Acceptance this will lead to the creation of strong thematic areas in individual and cooperating institutes in the cluster.</li> </ul> <p>This activity is particularly relevant to the delivery of Horizon 2020, Government objectives, targets for R&amp;D activity and enterprise and industry development. It is also relevant to the delivery of industry and employer needs, hence engagement with employers in the region is significant to academic planning agenda.</p>
	Interim target, end 2014	<p>Baseline mapping of academic programme provision across the cluster completed</p> <p>Research mapping completed to identify potential research synergies.</p> <p>(Programme and research mapping will provide a profile across the cluster and will inform next steps – complete during academic year 2014/15).</p>
	Interim target, end 2015	Implementation of joint academic developments which are informed by the baseline mapping process across the cluster and targeted at delivering on regional economic and social needs
	Final target, end 2016	Review operation of academic planning process with a view to identifying new areas for collaboration in the next round of institutional compacts

## 5.2 Participation, equal access and lifelong learning

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **participation, equal access and lifelong learning** is provided below.

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#### **Participation, equal access and lifelong learning:**

CIT is committed to the principle of inclusive access to higher education. CIT aims to provide opportunities for all motivated individuals to pursue personal, intellectual and professional development.

CIT is working, alongside regional and national partners to ensure that under-represented groups (including mature learners, non-nationals and those from specific socio-economic groups) are afforded the opportunity to pursue higher education in accordance with their interests and aptitudes. There are a number of programmes and articulation agreements in place to facilitate access to higher education for job seekers and to provide transfer and progression pathways for those who have completed education and training programmes at other institutions.

CIT's Disability Support Service team works hard to maintain and establish links with external organisations and agencies as well as engaging actively in outreach work through Assistive Technology demonstrations, training sessions, events and festivals throughout the year. CIT operates DARE (Disability Access Route to Education) admissions routes for students with disabilities.

As the profile of entrants to higher education changes to reflect national trends, more entrants will continue to come from the non-traditional routes. New progression routes from programmes (e.g. FE and PLC programmes) into programmes within CIT will continue to be developed and mapped.

A significant part of CIT's strategy is the provision of workplace and employability programmes. This provision will take the form of programmes, both mainstream and bespoke, to facilitate continuing professional development (CPD). Alongside this CPD provision will be programmes aimed specifically at individuals who may wish to change career or those who are seeking employment. The commitment of CIT to programmes that are already in place (such as Springboard and ICT skills), as well the successful outcome achieved by graduates, illustrates that there are solid foundations in this area, which will be built upon and enhanced.

With increased personal access to technology, the provision of programmes based fully on an e-learning format can now satisfy the demand for accessible courses of study, and can provide flexibility for learners in how they access and participate. CIT will make extensive use of ICT and emerging technologies to provide higher education opportunities to the broadest possible cohort of learners.

CIT acknowledges that the recognition of prior learning (RPL) can support the socially inclusive purposes of higher education—in the ways that it facilitates entry to programmes, gives credit to or exemptions from [elements of a](#) programme of study, or leads to a full award. The practice of recognising all types of learning is well established in CIT, where applications for recognition of prior learning have grown to over 600 a year. As a leader of the Education in Employment and REAP (SIF) projects, CIT has contributed to the development of RPL policy and practice guidelines for the broader education system in Ireland and beyond and continues to consult with higher education and workplace partners on policy [and practice](#) development for RPL. The inclusion of RPL in learning pathways is of

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particular importance for the experienced worker returning to learning with extensive non-formal and informal learning. RPL also tends to be a significant building block in the development of work-based and customised learning in partnership with enterprise to meet specific business or regional development needs. Currently CIT represents Ireland on behalf of QQI on the European RPL Network reporting to the Structural Reform group of the Bologna Follow-up group, with particular emphasis on the EU recommendation 2012 on the validation of informal and non formal learning.

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## Participation, equal access and lifelong learning: Institution objectives and performance indicators

1.	Institution objective	Increase numbers of mature (full-time) entrants
	Performance indicator	Mature (full-time undergraduate entrants) students as % of new entrants
	Baseline	12%
	Interim target, end 2014	13%
	Interim target, end 2015	14%
	Final target, end 2016	15%
2.	Institution objective	Increase numbers of flexible learners
	Performance indicator	Flexible learners as % of total enrolments
	Baseline	21%
	Interim target, end 2014	23%
	Interim target, end 2015	24%
	Final target, end 2016	25%
3.	Institution objective	Admit increased numbers of students with disabilities
	Performance indicator	Students with disabilities as % of new entrants
	Baseline	7%
	Interim target, end 2014	8%
	Interim target, end 2015	9%
	Final target, end 2016	10%
3.	Institution objective	Increase numbers of students from under-represented (non-manual, semi-skilled and non-skilled) socio-economic backgrounds
	Performance indicator	Entrants from under-represented socio-economic backgrounds as % of new entrants.
	Baseline	24%
	Interim target, end 2014	25%
	Interim target, end 2015	26%
	Final target, end 2016	27%
4.	Institution objective	Increase RPL activity.
	Performance indicator	Number of RPL applications processed and activity in support of RPL in enterprise and other HEIs.

Baseline	We offer 3 'Learning Clinics' – in company RPL/WBL facilitation sessions to grow awareness and stimulate demand. We support and consult on RPL for 3-4 other HEI providers per annum.
Interim target, end 2014	Increase our offering to 4 Learning Clinics per annum. Aim to process 650 PRL applications and continue to support RPL within other HEIs as appropriate. Work with QQI on the development of an RPL network within Ireland.
Interim target, end 2015	Increase our offering to 5 Learning Clinics per annum. Aim to process 675 PRL applications and continue to support RPL within other HEIs as appropriate. Work with QQI on the development of an RPL network within Ireland.
Final target, end 2016	Increase our offering to 6 Learning Clinics per annum and our throughput to over 700 applications continuing to support national and international policy and practice development.

  

5.	Institution objective	CIT will continue to increase the numbers of students admitted via non-standard access pathways.
	Performance indicator	a) Number of students admitted to 1 <sup>st</sup> year b) Number of students admitted to 2 <sup>nd</sup> year
	Baseline	a) 34 b) 33
	Interim target, end 2014	a) 45 b) 40
	Interim target, end 2015	a) 55 b) 48
	Final target, end 2016	a) 67 b) 58

## 5.3 Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience** is provided below.

This sets out:

- 1 Vision underpinning the portfolio of undergraduate programmes
- 2 Approaches being taken to improve overall performance
- 3 How planned provision is aligned to institutional mission

### Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience:

Our mission is to provide student-centred, career-focused education and research for the personal, professional and intellectual development of the student and for the benefit of the broader society in the region and beyond.

Our vision in relation to teaching and learning is that CIT will be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in the provision of career-focused education which produces effective, ethical professionals capable of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity. We seek to educate professionals throughout our broad range of undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes across science, engineering, business, the humanities, craft studies, visual arts, maritime studies and music.

CIT has identified within the following areas specific objectives

#### 1. Developing and Improving the Student Experience

- i. CIT will improve student retention, achievement and completion rates to above international norms
- ii. Arising out of a process of meaningful student consultation followed by appropriate action, CIT will achieve consistently high student satisfaction ratings

#### 2. Engaging and Empowering Staff

- i. To enhance staff knowledge and skills, CIT will develop systems to identify and provide training and development opportunities for all its staff
- ii. CIT will enhance the qualifications profiles of academic and non-academic staff

#### 3. Offering High Quality, Relevant and Flexible Programmes

- i. Through developing and implementing best practice in the area of curriculum design, CIT will continue to enhance the quality of its programmes of study
- ii. The relevance of CIT programmes will be ensured through professional accreditation and ongoing feedback from employer and sectoral stakeholders
- iii. CIT will continue to develop, encourage and enable the employability of its graduates through the incorporation of employability development activities, such as professional practice and enterprise-linked projects, in programmes of learning
- iv. CIT will offer increased flexible learning opportunities by significantly expanding its existing open/distance learning capabilities and programmes across all disciplines and levels

Approaches being taken to improve performance

### **1. 1<sup>st</sup> Year experience and improving student progression rates**

The Institute has identified the 1<sup>st</sup> year student experience and its effect of student progression rate as a key area to address. The Institute has appointed a senior academic to coordinate a series of initiatives in this area, including, inter alia:

- i) A seven-week Good Start programme aimed at all incoming 1<sup>st</sup> years assisting them to transition to higher education
- ii) The pilot of Peer Assisted Student Support initiative in a number of academic departments
- iii) A redevelopment of the 1<sup>st</sup> year Creativity, Innovation and Teamwork module taught in the first semester of all undergraduate programmes

### **2. Staff Development Programme**

The achievement of our strategic goals will depend largely on the committed and talented people who work at CIT. The Institute continues to prioritise the professional development of all its staff. Initiatives in this area include:

- i) The development of an overarching staff development framework
- ii) The establishment of specialist training and development units in the areas of Academic Practice and Technology Enhanced Learning

### **3. High Quality, Relevant and Flexible Programmes**

The Institute continues to ensure that the programmes it offers remain of high quality, are relevant to employers and the needs of the region and beyond and are delivered so as to meet the needs of our diverse student population. Initiatives in this area include:

**The establishment of a Quality Enhancement Unit, to oversee and enhance the design and delivery of curricula within the Institute. The appointment of a Head of Online Delivery to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of programmes via online and blended learning methodologies**

## Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience: Institution objectives and performance indicators

1.	Institution objective	To improve the 1 <sup>st</sup> year student experience
	Performance indicator	First year student progression rates (combined level 6, 7 and 8) into the second year of his/her programme.
	Baseline	22% non-progression rate 2011/2012 (combined average for levels 6, 7 and 8)
	Interim target, end 2014	19% (combined average for levels 6, 7 and 8)
	Interim target, end 2015	17% (combined average for levels 6, 7 and 8)
	Final target, end 2016	15% (combined average for levels 6, 7 and 8)
2.	Institution objective	To increase the number of staff with a pedagogical qualification
	Performance indicator	Number of staff with a pedagogical qualification
	Baseline	n/a
	Interim target, end 2014	Establish baseline via staff survey
	Interim target, end 2015	Initiatives including the integration of requirement for pedagogical qualification with staff progression review
	Final target, end 2016	5% increase in staff holding pedagogical qualification
3.	Institution objective	To increase the number of programmes delivered to off-campus students
	Performance indicator	Number of programmes delivered using online technology Number of students enrolled on fully online programmes
	Baseline	4 Programmes / 155 students (2012/2013)
	Interim target, end 2014	8 Programmes / 250 students
	Interim target, end 2015	12 Programmes/ 350 students
	Final target, end 2016	16 programmes / 500 students

## 5.4 High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **high quality, internationally competitive research and innovation** is provided below.

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#### **High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation:**

CIT's Research and Innovation Strategy (2013-2016) is aligned with the Institute's Strategic Plan and takes account of ongoing changes to the landscape of higher education in Ireland, including the criteria for technological university designation.

It is critically important for all of its stakeholders that CIT's research and innovation activities are competitive internationally while serving the needs of its region. Also, as noted in the Institute's Strategic Plan, this research informs and supports teaching and learning as well as innovation, technology transfer and the extensive enterprise support initiatives of the Institute.

The Institute has identified four thematic research areas (TRAs) as areas of research strength and has focussed resources on these.

These thematic areas were chosen based on CIT's traditional strengths in Engineering and Science and their importance to and potential impact for the region. The Institute is currently examining the feasibility of establishing a TRA in the faculty of Business and Humanities.

**The four TRAs are:**

- 1. Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)**
- 2. Life Sciences and Wellbeing**
- 3. Photonics**
- 4. Maritime, Energy and Sustainable Environment (MSE)**

Fundamental to this research strategy is the requirement that each of the TRAs is viable and sustainable both from a funding and capacity perspective.

All four are also focused on delivering research, innovation and solutions for enterprises that drive economic output and growth.

CIT will continue to build on its established research and innovation ecosystem consisting of the underpinning research outputs (including human capital and know-how) of its TRAs, the applications-driven activities of their associated industry-engaged Technology Centres and the formal industry engagements through the Technology Transfer Office and the Rubicon Business Incubator.

An increasing feature of the TRAs is a growing cross-collaboration between them. Examples are the extent of the involvement of ICT researchers in maritime-related research and likewise the contribution of bioinformatics specialists to the Life Sciences.

Embedded in each of the four TRAs is a Research Centre that has achieved critical mass and has a senior researcher as its Head of Centre. Each TRA also facilitates links with research groups that are not part of the embedded Centre (and which have a more focused research activity). A Research Centre typically has been awarded significant external funding by a number of funding agencies (including industry) and forms the major part of each TRA. The Research Centres associated with each of the four TRAs are shown in the following table:

<b>Thematic Research Area (TRA)</b>	<b>Embedded Centre</b>
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	NIMBUS Centre for Research in Embedded Networked Systems
Life Sciences & Wellbeing	BioExplore Research Centre
Photonics	CAPPA – Centre for Advanced Photonics and Process Analysis
Maritime, Energy and Sustainable Environment (MSE)	Halpin Research Centre

Research at CIT is increasingly multidisciplinary and translational in nature, and as such, involves external stakeholders that include not only enterprises and academia but also local government, health services, state agencies and representative bodies.

The Institute's Research and Innovation Strategy recognises that collaboration is central to achieving its goals. CIT will build on its already well-developed strategic research partnerships with University College Cork's research centres of excellence.

Formal agreements are in place linking the Tyndall National Institute (with NIMBUS and CAPPA), the SFI-funded Alimentary Pharmabiotic Centre (with BioExplore) and in the maritime and ocean energy area linking UCC's new Beaufort Research Centre (with the Halpin Research Centre at the NMCI) – and through the IMERC initiative which also includes the Irish Naval Service. CIT is also partnered with UCC in the PRTL-5 funded Ed-4-Life and INSPIRE structured PhD programmes.

It is the intention that this platform of existing research collaborations will be further developed as a priority objective for the southern regional cluster as identified in the HEA's landscape document.

These and other initiatives will ensure that the Institute reaches the researcher and innovation targets required for technological university designation while retaining and developing its distinct mission and role in the region.

As part of an ongoing review of researcher employment and deployment at the Institute, and mindful of the necessity to retain excellent staff, the Institute is in the process of establishing a transparent Researcher Career Framework which will draw on experience nationally. This initiative is regarded as essential to the long-term sustainability of CIT's significant research activity.



## High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation: Institution objectives and performance indicators

1.	Institution objective	Research and Innovation Strategy focusing on excellence with impact
	Performance indicator	<p>Aligns with CIT Strategic Plan</p> <p>Supports sustainable and focused research built on institutional strengths and National Research Priorities</p> <p>Is outward facing and supports strong engagement with industry</p> <p>Supports multidisciplinary and opportunities for commercialisation of knowledge generated through research</p>
	Baseline	<p>Current Research Strategy which identifies the areas of strategic focus, the thematic research areas – TRAs) and the integration of research and innovation with both the teaching and learning activities of CIT and our strong track record of research and innovation with industry</p> <p>Focus on multidisciplinary, translational research, collaboration, commercialisation, the student experience, researcher careers, real-life test beds</p> <p>The wider research and innovation ecosystem</p>
	Interim target, end 2014	<p>Update and consolidate Research and Innovation Strategy</p> <p>Clear targets set for each of the TRAs</p>
	Interim target, end 2015	<p>Implementation of Research and Innovation Strategy</p> <p>Assessment of performance of Research and Innovation Strategy</p>
	Final target, end 2016	<p>Major assessment of research performance feeding into development of follow-on research and innovation strategy beyond 2016 which takes account of the wider educational landscape and the development of MTU</p>

2.	Institution objective	Align researcher and postgraduate student metrics to technological university criteria
	Performance indicator	Researcher enrolment at Level 9/10 not less than 4% of FTE of enrolments at Levels 8-10  % of staff with Level 10 qualifications to be in excess of 80% in thematic research areas (TRAs)
	Baseline	Researcher enrolment at level 9/10 is 3.5% of FTE enrolments at levels 8-10  Within TRAs the % of staff with doctorates averages approximately 60%
	Interim target, end 2014	Researcher enrolment at level 9/10 will be 4% of FTE enrolments at levels 8-10  In TRAs the % of staff with doctorates to reach 65%
	Interim target, end 2015	Researcher enrolment at level 9/10 will be 4.5% of FTE enrolments at levels 8-10  In TRAs the % of staff with doctorates to reach 72%
	Final target, end 2016	Researcher enrolment at level 9/10 will be 5% of FTE enrolments at levels 8-10  In TRAs the % of staff with doctorates to reach 80%
3.	Institution objective	Enhance the researcher environment
	Performance indicator	Formal training for all staff, academic and contract, engaged in supervision of postgraduate students and/or research  Structured PhD fully integrated into postgraduate regulations and operational across CIT
	Baseline	Initial availability of (i) postgraduate-supervisor and (ii) researcher training modules  Postgraduate regulations incorporate all the key elements of the Structured PhD
	Interim target, end 2014	Agreed suite of comprehensive training modules for all postgraduate supervisors and researchers  Mandatory participation in “Approved Learning” (min of 30 credits) for all new PhD applicants across the Institute
	Interim target, end 2015	Continued implementation, feedback and improvement cycle of training  60-credit programme in generic skills to lead to special purpose award diploma for PhDs

	Final target, end 2016	Continued implementation, feedback and improvement cycle of training  Structured PhD programmes mandatory across CIT  major review of operation of Structured PhD programmes
4.	Institution objective	Grow number of research projects delivered with industry
	Performance indicator	Number of research projects involving an industry partner (including collaborative research agreements and research contracts)  % of research income attributable to industry projects
	Baseline (2012)	95 collaborative research agreements and research contracts  20% of research income for industry projects
	Interim target, end 2014	105 collaborative research agreements and research contracts  22% of research income for industry projects
	Interim target, end 2015	110 collaborative research agreements and research contracts  25% of research income for industry projects
	Final target, end 2016	115 collaborative research agreements and research contracts  25% of research income for industry projects
5.	Institution objective	CIT will maintain its significant technology transfer/exchange activity. This objective reflects the existing high level of performance, targets agreed with Enterprise Ireland, and current resourcing levels
	Performance indicator	a) Patents b) Spinouts c) invention disclosures d) collaborative research agreements with companies
	Baseline (2012)	a) 3 b) 0 c) 19 d) 29
	Interim target, end 2014	a) 5 b) 1 c) 20 d) 30

Interim target, end 2015	a) 5
	b) 1
	c) 20
	d) 30
Final target, end 2016	a) 5
	b) 1
	c) 20
	d) 30

## 5.5 Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange** is provided below.

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#### **Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange:**

CIT's long-standing commitment to higher-education/enterprise engagement is evident throughout the institution's history and has resulted in our involvement in a number of international projects and our leadership of a number of national projects in this space. CIT's Strategic Plan views our engagement with enterprise and the extension of the campus into the wider community as a key defining characteristic. This is embedded in many of our goals ensuring that the development of high quality, relevant and flexible programmes and the growth of research, innovation and entrepreneurship activities are informed by our partnerships with regional enterprises, public bodies and community groups in the context of regional social and economic development. In making a positive contribution to the academic, economic, social and cultural life of the region and beyond, CIT is committed to a partnership approach which recognises and values learning and knowledge creation wherever it occurs and which views the workplace as a valid and valuable centre for learning. Our strategy drives this partnership mode of activity through supporting mechanisms providing the framework conditions within which operational interactions with enterprises and community groups are stimulated and valued.

Through the establishment of the CIT Extended Campus, CIT has provided a dedicated agency to coordinate efforts internally and to facilitate external organisations (public, private or not-for-profit) in their interactions with CIT and to collate business intelligence on engagement to further inform local and national strategy. The CIT Extended Campus acts to develop and support engagement as an institute-wide commitment, embracing education, research, innovation and enterprise support.

This acts to support partnership approaches to graduate formation through curriculum co-development, in the building of good practice guides to work-placement and internship and in supporting the development of entrepreneurial skills and employability.

Another important aspect of our engagement is our work to anticipate and meet the training and development needs of employees and to support the unemployed in reskilling and upskilling to re-enter the labour force. In developing these flexible pathways to learning we work closely with organisations in the development of content and in making use of the recognition of prior learning and work based learning.

Working to support incubation activities of new enterprises as well as supporting technology and knowledge exchange through mobility, applied and contract research, licensing and other interactions remain a strong pillar of our engagement strategy and are central to our contribution to regional economic development activities. The Rubicon centre is a recognised leader in new business development and support activities as well as business incubation. Working with our Higher Education partners in the region (IT Carlow, IT Tralee, University College Cork and Waterford IT) CIT has developed a proposal on aligned engagement for regional economic development under the Strategic Innovation and

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Development Fund which provides the framework for a comprehensive and operational approach.

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## **Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange:**

### **Institution objectives and performance indicators**

1.	Institution objective	Continue as practice leader in engagement with external organisations at a local, national and international level
	Performance indicator	Consolidation of CIT's role as leader of an aligned regional approach to engagement for economic development informed by national and international best practice
	Baseline	Leading the REAP project – contributing to the development of National forum for engagement Collaborator in the university-business collaboration ecosystem model of the UIIN and on the Ireland Country report developed from the study undertaken for DG Education and Culture at the European Commission CIT extended campus established and model for CRM for engagement piloted
	Interim target, end 2014	Map the institute-wide range and extent of engagement with a number of key partners in the region Build on feedback mechanisms and forums for external organisations engaging with CIT Continue to contribute to the development of regional and national approaches to engagement Develop an institute-wide, integrated engagement strategy informed by current national and international practice
	Interim target, end 2015	Feedback and mapping exercise used to inform practice and structures Institute-wide commitment to collating and sharing of knowledge on engagement channels and processes
	Final target, end 2016	CIT's engagement strategy informed by practice contributing to regional and national economic development and international scholarship
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2.	Institution objective	Enhance the opportunities for enterprise and community groups to engage with CIT in graduate formation

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Performance indicator	Improvement in practice and extent of external organisational involvement in guest lectures, seminars, placements, student projects, entrepreneurship and employability skills development and recruitment opportunities
Baseline	Significant levels of interaction in all stages of course proposal, development and delivery No clearly aligned view of interactions and little sharing of information to contribute to organisational learning
Interim target, end 2014	Collate information on current level of interactions with enterprise and community groups and develop an institutional and regional perspective Increase participation in initiatives aimed at building employability and entrepreneurial skills in undergraduates
Interim target, end 2015	Increase the opportunities for interactions and review structures to support engagement in curriculum development Increase participation in initiatives aimed at building employability and entrepreneurial skills in undergraduates
Final target, end 2016	Institute-wide view of engagement in graduate formation contributing to practice and strategy locally and regionally Improved structures and experience for the external partner in engagement
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3. Institution objective	Enhance the opportunities for enterprise and community groups to engage with CIT in employee development and lifelong learning
Performance indicator	Enhanced channels to cooperate with higher education and enterprise partners in the region to forecast and anticipate skills and development needs and the development of customised and flexible learning opportunities including recognition of experiential and work-based learning
Baseline	Significant levels of engagement and pathways to learning developed in responsive and flexible modes No clearly aligned view of interactions and little sharing of information to contribute to organisational learning and strategy Varying experiences for the external partner in engagement

	Interim target, end 2014	Collate information on current interactions and identify sectors or areas for improvement Complete mapping process Implement structured guidelines for course development and aligned service level agreements
	Interim target, end 2015	Mapping process used to inform structures and strategy Greater alignment with higher education partners in the region
	Final target, end 2016	CIT seen as strategic partner for emerging learning needs for key sectors within the region Institute-wide view of engagement in employee development contributing to practice and strategy locally and regionally Improved structures and experience for the external partner in engagement
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4.	Institution objective	Promote technology transfer activities and work to consolidate support mechanisms for enterprise start and development
	Performance indicator	Enhanced opportunities to collaborate with organisations to support entrepreneurship training, knowledge exchange, research and development needs, contract research and licensing
	Baseline	Significant interaction with enterprise in entrepreneur development, applied research activities, technology transfer, innovation vouchers Rubicon is nationally recognised successful business incubation centre
	Interim target, end 2014	Increased participation in initiatives aimed at entrepreneurs and new enterprise development Increase level of applied and industry focused research engagement
	Interim target, end 2015	Work to consolidate support mechanisms for new enterprise developments within an informed regional context
	Final target, end 2016	Growth in applied research income and increase in participant numbers in enterprise development activities Enhanced collaboration within the region on support mechanisms



## 5.6 Enhanced internationalisation

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **enhanced internationalisation** is provided below.

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#### Enhanced internationalisation:

CIT has been long been engaged in the development of international relationships for the benefit of its students and other stakeholders. Over many years, CIT has developed strong relationships with international institutions (primarily European) which have provided student exchange opportunities, staff development avenues and research outlets that would otherwise not have been available locally. In more recent years, CIT has developed a number of highly promising strategic relationships with institutions in non-EU countries (e.g., India, Canada, Brazil) and is actively exploring new opportunities. Based on experience accumulated to date, analysis of whole-of-Institute strengths from an international perspective, consideration of internationalisation positioning of other HEIs in its regional cluster and review of the Higher Education System Performance Framework 2014-2016 (with a particular focus on Key System Objective 5), CIT has decided that its internationalisation enhancement strategy will align with its niche positioning and prioritise the achievement of a number of highly targeted outcomes in this context, details of which are provided below:

1. CIT will continue to establish significant strategic partnerships with selected overseas higher education institutions
    - Rationale: The establishment of such partnerships provides opportunities for high quality student recruitment, collaborative research and staff exchange
  2. Equip staff, students and graduates of CIT to participate in the international professional environment and global society
    - Rationale: While CIT has been extremely successful in developing a model of operation which caters well for the needs of a diverse range of regional and national stakeholders, it will be increasingly important for CIT to ensure that all aspects of its programmes, processes and development plans enhance its ability to produce international graduates
  3. Increase international student intake by 60%
    - Rationale: The recruitment of international students helps CIT to truly internationalise its model of operation and generate non-exchequer revenue to support the operation and development of the Institute
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## Enhanced internationalisation: Institution objectives and performance indicators

1.	Institution objective	CIT will continue to establish significant strategic partnerships with selected overseas higher education institutions
	Performance indicator	Number of high quality partnerships with overseas higher education institutions
	Baseline	A detailed survey across all areas of CIT (academic departments, research centres, innovation/incubation centres, commercial services, constituent colleges) is to be performed to determine the baseline for this performance indicator
	Interim target, end 2014	Increase above baseline by 10%
	Interim target, end 2015	Increase above baseline by 20%
	Final target, end 2016	Increase above baseline by 30%
2.	Institution objective	Equip staff, students and graduates of CIT to participate in the international professional environment and global society.
	Performance indicator	Percentage of CIT programmes (taught and research) which feature a significant international dimension (e.g., international language taught, international work placement, international student exchange option, collaborative international programme development)
	Baseline	A detailed survey across all areas of CIT (academic departments, research centres, innovation/incubation centres, commercial services, constituent colleges) is to be performed to determine the baseline for this performance indicator
	Interim target, end 2014	Increase above baseline by 10%
	Interim target, end 2015	Increase above baseline by 20%
	Final target, end 2016	Increase above baseline by 30%
3.	Institution objective	Increase international student intake by 60%
	Performance indicator	Number of non-EU students enrolled Number of EU international students enrolled
	Baseline	246
	Interim target, end 2014	297
	Interim target, end 2015	348
	Final target, end 2016	400

## 7 Institutional consolidation

### Strategy summary

A brief summary of CIT's strategy and chosen objectives in relation to **institutional consolidation** is provided below.

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#### **Institutional consolidation:**

The institutes of technology in Cork and Kerry share a common vision for the establishment of a strong regional technological university. This is evidenced in the fact that we have been in discussions and working together towards the creation of a technological university since 2009.

The creation of a technological university sector in Ireland is, we believe, a necessary and natural progression in the development of Irish higher education. The establishment of the institutes of technology (then the regional technical colleges) in the 1970s was a response to an identified lack of skilled manpower at technician and technologist level to meet the economic expansion of that time. As Irish economic and social development continued apace over the following decades, the institutes of technology remained responsive to the needs of the broader society and expanded the breadth and level of their course provision. This enhanced mission was recognised and facilitated by enabling legislation, in 1992 and again in 2006, which among other things provided for the development of the Institutes' research activities. The *National Strategy on Higher Education* acknowledges that "the high calibre graduates produced by the higher education system have been critical to the development of high technology, indigenous industry and to the attraction of very substantial FDI into the country." The report goes on to state "however, what has served us well in the past will not serve us well in the future without significant change". The acceptance by the Government of the *National Strategy* points the way towards a technological university sector. The institutes of technology in Cork and Kerry are fully committed to, and very proud of, their history and mission and we believe that the creation of the Munster Technological University will allow enhanced delivery of that mission as envisaged in the *National Strategy*.

The Munster Technological University, born out of a merger of strong partners with shared philosophies, will make a vital and positive contribution to the society and economy of the region through:

- its enhanced critical mass facilitating the high quality distributed provision of focused and relevant research and taught programmes
  - improved effectiveness and efficiency, through the accompanying economies of scale
  - a reinforced spirit of enterprise and entrepreneurship across all parts of the institution, including:
    - the capacity to generate funds from non-traditional sources
    - incubation centres in partnership with relevant agencies supporting spin-in and spin-out start-up companies
    - closeness to the world of work and the professional readiness of graduates
    - a staff base which will be as engaged with the business, industrial and professional community as it is with academia
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- a focused research mission that stresses application and enterprise collaboration
  - a renewed national and international perception of capability in research, innovation and entrepreneurialism
  - enhanced international collaborations including fee-paying incoming students, student and staff exchanges, research projects and combined courses of study
  - full awarding powers at NFQ Levels 6–10 supported by demonstrably robust quality assurance processes underpinning taught and research degrees, and appropriate administrative services
  - its explicit channels of access, transfer and progression through and from all levels
  - the enhanced portability and recognition of graduates' qualifications nationally and internationally

The merged institution will be well positioned to reach the necessary criteria for the establishment of a TU. Furthermore, it is expected (based on the experience of newly designated universities at home and abroad) that redesignation will result in a significantly enhanced capacity that will allow the new university to surpass quickly the level required by the relevant criteria.

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**Institutional consolidation:**  
**Institution objectives and performance indicators**

1.	Institution objective	Achieve designation as a technological university through merger with IT Tralee
	Performance indicator	The establishment of the Munster Technological University
	Baseline	n/a
	Interim target, end 2014	Stage 3 of the process towards technological university designation successfully completed
	Interim target, end 2015	Merger of CIT and IT Tralee substantially completed (70%)
	Final target, end 2016	Merger of CIT and IT Tralee completed

## 6. Annual Compliance Statement

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As the strategic dialogue process develops, the HEA will take into account ongoing compliance with important foundational requirements such as:

- Statutory quality assurance processes
- Providing an annual statement required under their Code of Governance and with all other requirements of that Code
- Providing details of satisfactory financial outturn, budget and financial plan
- Employment control framework
- Data returns to the HEA

Where significant or urgent compliance issues arise (such as unacceptable financial deficit, weakness in financial plans or major omissions or delays in returns, they will be discussed as part of the strategic dialogue).

## 7. Performance Funding

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Having regard to the performance of Cork Institute of Technology in the strategic dialogue process leading to this compact, performance funding of

**€ 257,000**

has been allocated to the Institute.

## 8. Agreement

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**To be completed following the conclusion of the strategic dialogue process.**

Having regard to the agreed minute of the strategic dialogue meeting attached, the HEA and Cork Institute of Technology agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as set out in the foregoing sections of this Compact, are consistent with the objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to Institute.

Signed:

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Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Date:

Signed:

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Chief Officer, Cork Institute of Technology

Date:



## Appendices

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We CIT include the following appendices with our performance compact.

List the appendices here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 1: Regional clusters
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 2: Participation, equal access and lifelong learning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 3: Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 4: High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 5: Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 6: Enhanced internationalisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 7: Institutional consolidation

Other Appendices

Appendix 8:

Appendix 9:

Appendix 10:

*Add more rows as necessary*

## Appendix 1: Regional clusters

## Appendix 2: Participation, equal access and lifelong learning

## Appendix 3: Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience

## Appendix 4: High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation

## Appendix 5: Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange

## Appendix 6: Enhanced internationalisation

## Appendix 7: Institutional consolidation