

CIT Agreed Minute

The HEA acknowledges and appreciates the work undertaken by CIT in preparing the Compact Documentation submission in the context of this the first cycle of Strategic Dialogue.

Documented feedback on the draft compact has been conveyed to CIT. This feedback has been informed by an extensive HEA exercise of evaluation of the submission, including analysis by an external panel set up to provide an independent assessment of the overall performance of the institution, against the backdrop of its mission.

HEA recognises that this is the first year of strategic dialogue and this is a developmental process. In year 2, the HEA will have regard to the agreed outcomes of the dialogue process this year, including not only specific objectives and indicators proposed, but also any feedback to institutions regarding the overall composition of the compact. Institutions are expected to have regard to this feedback and to demonstrate that they have incorporated it into their processes for next year's cycle.

Subject to the above, the HEA and CIT agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as now set out in the accompanying Compact, are consistent with the national objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to the place of CIT within the system. This agreement takes full cognisance of the written responses to HEA feedback and of the strategic dialogue meeting which took place on 14th January 2014. **The following issues are taken from the Strategic Dialogue Meeting held on 14th January 2014. It is recognised that this does not represent a full minute of the meeting but focuses on issues of particular importance.**

Strategic Dialogue Process

CIT expressed their support for the process and noted that they were engaged in an ongoing process to improve their ability to generate and use data to improve institutional performance. In this context, CIT noted HEA's wish for all institutions to engage in more benchmarking and outcomes focus to their compacts and agreed to work towards this in future compacts.

Meeting Ireland's Human Capital Needs

The HEA noted the central importance of job creation for the Government and the important role Higher Education plays in that domain. CIT agreed and expressed their full commitment to this objective, noting that it is exactly in line with their mission as an institute. Their participation includes, but goes beyond, involvement in LMA, Springboard. All CIT programmes in any case have assessment of graduate demand, and academic and professional standards assessment. CIT also sees its role as both meeting identified needs but working to anticipate future skill needs.

Proposed Targets

CIT noted HEA concerns about how CIT set their level of ambition. CIT noted that, given the very difficult financial environment, they considered that the objectives set in the compact were appropriate. As above, HEA also noted the desirability of using external benchmarks to inform and provide further confidence as to the quality of the institutional strategy.

High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation

CIT noted that their research ambitions are well grounded in long engagement, and focussed around niche areas. They are developing research structures including the structured PhD in line with national guidelines. They are also seeking to grow PhD qualifications, but focussed in their specific thematic areas. CIT have benefited from a very good relationship with UCC in research and would expect this to continue and to improve.

CIT specifically noted that they have set an ambitious target of 25% of research income attributable to industry.

Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange

CIT noted their strong record in engagement to date, building on SIF and other funding to create capacity and expertise. In respect of some HEA feedback, CIT agreed that in the longer term, CIT's aim is to have an integrated engagement strategy to underpin the compact. They also noted the significant role of RPL already in CIT and its role in further enhancing CIT's ability to support up-skilling.

HEA acknowledged the leadership demonstrated by CIT over recent years in advancing the engagement mission of higher education at both institutional and national level.

Enhanced Internationalisation

CIT explained that in the last year they have moved to enhance capacity in this area and that this has already led to increased international student enrolment. In terms of Erasmus, there has not been any growth in outgoing student numbers, but they do plan to integrate the EU and non-EU internationalisation office fully to deliver more efficient results. The change in capacity has allowed CIT to engage more fully with Enterprise Ireland to exploit marketing opportunities. CIT see the consolidation/cluster arrangements as a major opportunity to sell the region better.

Institutional Consolidation

CIT has an ambitious agenda in terms of consolidation with IT Tralee, seeking recognition as TU and engaging in the full regional cluster and is committed to all of these objectives. They note that consolidation with IT Tralee will provide more opportunities for contacts with industry, which they see as central to the TU mission.

They suggested that cluster discussions need to focus on the benefits accruing to members and expressed concern that clusters might be perceived solely as a means to reduce costs.