

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology Agreed Minute

The HEA acknowledges and appreciates the work undertaken by GMIT 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 GMIT. 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, 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 GMIT agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as now set out in the Compact, are consistent with the national objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to the place of GMIT 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 12th December 2013.

The following issues are taken from the Strategic Dialogue Meeting held on 12th December 2013. It is recognised that this does not represent a full minute of the meeting but focuses on issues of particular importance.

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. GMIT agreed and noted the range of efforts underway to support this objective.

Benchmarking

HEA notes the commitment by GMIT to further develop the benchmarking element of the compact, and its decision to align its strategic planning process with the compact timeframes. HEA also notes the concern of GMIT that the compact requires additional resources in terms of strategic planning and particularly, data analysis and evaluation. HEA also notes that the compact process should be used as an opportunity to reduce the reporting burden on the institution.

Regional cluster

HEA notes the work of GMIT and partners to agree 12 principles for the cluster and commends this as a way forward. HEA will raise this further with the partnering institutions at the cluster meeting. GMIT's stated ambition with partner institutes in the Connaught Ulster Alliance is to become a Technological University. GMIT consider that an institutional merger and application for TU status go hand in hand and that the latter will be sought when it is satisfied that it is on a clear trajectory to achieve the relevant criteria.

Participation, equal access and lifelong learning

HEA requested the cluster to consider the development of targets for access and lifelong learning.

Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience

HEA notes and welcomes the very strong commitment by GMIT to continue in its role as a major provider of level 6 and 7 provision in its region, as well as its commitment to provide for appropriate level 6 and 7 exits for those pursuing level 8 programmes.

GMIT supports the commitment given by the IoT sector in the *Directions* report to review its programmes to ensure a mixed portfolio of programmes with denominated and generic/common entry routes; to broaden entry routes to higher education; and to improve the transition for learners between second-level and higher education. HEA noted that they will continue to engage with the sector on this issue into the future.