

IT Carlow Agreed Minute

The HEA acknowledges and appreciates the work undertaken by IT Carlow 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 IT Carlow. 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 IT Carlow agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as higher education system and are appropriate to the place of IT Carlow 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 16th January 2014. **The following issues are taken from the Strategic Dialogue Meeting held on 16th January 2014. 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. IT Carlow agreed and outlined how it is contributing to job creation, skills, job support and graduate employability. It is increasing mature participate, flexible provision and STEM provision. It participates in Springboard and tracks its graduate outcomes. IT Carlow has developed a suite of graduate attributes in the context of its new strategic plan. It maintains a suite of level 8 postgraduate conversion diplomas and has a strong performance in knowledge transfer and commercialisation.

Regional Cluster

HEA noted that the cluster is at a very early stage of development and has not yet met or agreed objectives.

Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of the Student Experience

IT Carlow stated that all conditions and recommendations from the institutional review of 2010 had now been closed off as recognised in granting of Level 9 DA and it could now move to a more strategic focus in quality enhancement. IT Carlow clarified that its staff development targets for PhDs excluded pedagogical qualifications and were aligned with strategic research priority areas and that staff PhDs could only be pursued in an external institution.

HEA noted IT Carlow's intention to review its CAO footprint. The HEA looks forward to further developments to give effect to agreed national commitments to review and reduce the number of level 8 programmes; to broaden entry routes to higher education; and to improve the transition for learners between second-level and higher education.

High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation

In relation to research targets, HEA advised that the projected growth in research numbers and research income should be set so to be achievable in the current highly competitive environment, that it should be well aligned with priority areas and deliverable through a structured framework for doctoral education, capable of providing both transferable skills and discipline specific components. IT Carlow clarified that while its targets were a stretch they had been worked out in consultation with WIT, they were associated with research partners, and were related to the industry needs of the region and could be delivered leveraging the new physical infrastructure of the Dargan Centre.

Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange

HEA noted the IT Carlow model of industry engagement as reflected in its relationship with UNUM which had been highlighted by IDA as a model of best practice covering involvement in programme design and delivery, work placement, innovation research and knowledge transfer.

Enhanced Internationalisation

HEA noted that IT Carlow strategy was focused on EI tier 1 markets, reducing dependence on the Chinese market and included improving the balance between incoming and outgoing ERASMUS.

Institutional Consolidation

HEA noted the extraordinarily challenging timelines taking into account progress to date. IT Carlow reaffirmed its commitment to a new successful institution.

Resourcing

IT Carlow acknowledged recent adjustments to the funding model, which had a positive effect on their funding, but noted that further progress needs to be made. The employment control framework however was the main barrier to responding to increasing student demand in a way that would maintain reasonable staff student ratios.