

Mission-based Performance Compact

2018-2021

between

Limerick Institute of Technology

and

The Higher Education Authority

Date: 31/01/19

HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

Context

This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Limerick Institute of Technology and is the outcome of a process of strategic and performance dialogue between the two bodies.

The purpose of strategy and performance dialogue is to align the missions, strategies and profiles of individual Limerick Institute of Technology's 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 Limerick Institute of Technology 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 Limerick Institute of Technology 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 Limerick Institute of Technology. It sets out how Limerick Institute of Technology's mission and goals align with national goals for higher education.

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 Limerick Institute of Technology 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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Where necessary, this includes additional material supplied by Limerick Institute of Technology, including details of how objectives might be objectively verified. This appendix will include a quantitative data sets developed by the HEA and HEIs over the coming months. Institutions will be required to validate and finalise these institutional baselines by September.	

1. Establishment of the Compact

The Higher Education Authority and Limerick Institute of Technology agree that:

- This Compact consists of this document and the accompanying data report on the performance
- The term of this Compact is from September 2018 to September 2021 unless terminated earlier by agreement

Limerick Institute of Technology 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 Limerick Institute of Technology agree that if changes need to be made to the Compact because of such a review, the Higher Education Authority will notify Limerick Institute of Technology of this in writing and will consult with Limerick Institute of Technology accordingly.

2. Performance Funding Framework

Higher education Performance Funding will provide incentives for Limerick Institute of Technology's to improve overall performance in accordance with their own strategies and with their place in the overall system.

Performance Funding will be allocated by the HEA based on performance by reference to high level targets set out in the Framework. Targets must be agreed in strategy and performance 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 strategy and performance dialogue.

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

3 Mission and Strategy Statement

Limerick Institute of Technology'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 Limerick Institute of Technology acknowledge that Limerick Institute of Technology's mission and strategy may evolve.

Limerick Institute of Technology and the Higher Education Authority recognise that Limerick Institute of Technology 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.

Changes to the mission and strategy statement

The Higher Education Authority acknowledges that Limerick Institute of Technology may adjust its mission and strategy from time to time. Limerick Institute of Technology agrees that the following will be the subject of strategy and performance 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.

Limerick Institute of Technology is a regionally focused Higher Education Institute with a national and international outlook. We empower our diverse student body by providing a quality higher education experience enabling economic, social and cultural development.

4. Development Plans and Key System Objectives

Section summary

Institutions are required to set out a description of their proposed approach to deliver on each of the six key system objectives, with reference to the national targets as set out in the Framework.

- Institutions should detail a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six framework headings.
- Each strategic priority should be accompanied by a description of the strategic initiatives, currently being implemented, or to be implemented over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018–2021).
- These strategic initiatives should be described with reference to the high-level targets as set out in the framework.

Objective 1	Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
Objective 2	Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
Objective 3	Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe.
Objective 4	Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population
Objective 5	Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
Objective 6	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

4.1 Key System Objective 1

Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase to 10% the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning by 2020 and to 15% by 2025 National Skills Strategy Target; current base line is 6.7%;
2. Increase the numbers of HE entrants studying on a flexible basis by 25% by 2021 (baseline 2016/17 20% or 45,018 of total enrolments are flexible learners);
3. Increase tertiary attainment among 30-34 years olds to 60% by 2020 (52.9% 2016);
4. All students will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their course by 2025 (baseline to be established and tracked);
5. Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines in all HEIs by 2020 (baseline to be established and tracked);
6. Increase number of available Springboard places by 30% by 2021 in both universities and institutes of technology;
7. Double target to 9,000 annual new apprenticeship registrations by 2020 (over 4,500 in 2017) with 78 separate apprenticeships in place;
8. Increase the proportion of the higher education cohort studying a foreign language, in any capacity, as part of their course to 20% by 2026 (new baseline to be established and tracked);
9. Achievement of the targets in the new ICT Action Plan.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 1. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) has identified growth in student numbers and diversification of the student population as one of the key strategic priorities over the life of this Performance Compact.

Priorities:

One of the ways LIT will achieve this is through the *enhancement of our flexible model of education (Appendix 1-P.1.3)* to achieve new online and blended programmes which increase student enrolments, support continuous professional development (CPD) and enable life-long learning.

LIT aspires to being a leading provider of high quality teaching and active learning which reflects the needs of industry and, with that in mind, has identified the *expansion of work based learning and work placement opportunities (Appendix 1-P.2.3)* across all academic programmes including apprenticeships as another key strategic priority.

Initiatives:

To enable the achievement of both of these objectives we have recently completed a comprehensive review of management structures within the Institute with the objective of aligning the priorities of the strategic plan with the roles and responsibilities of LIT's senior team. Resulting from this, we have recently appointed LIT's first ever:

- Dean, Flexible Learning;
- Dean, Work Based Learning;
- Director of Apprenticeship Development.

A plan to implement the strategic objectives in the area of flexible learning has been developed and is currently being rolled out across the Institute. It identifies a number of specific initiatives designed to drive growth in flexible learning participation, namely:

- Development of a Flexible Learning Programme Portfolio Plan for each academic department;
- Establishment of a development fund to assist in the execution of this Flexible Learning Programme Portfolio Plan;
- Establishment of guidelines for the development of new Flexible Learning programmes;
- Development and roll out of Level 9 Postgraduate Certificate in Online & Blended Learning.

The Institute will establish a work based learning unit under the leadership of the Dean, Work Based Learning. The unit will provide for the active interaction between the academic departments and the business and industry sector. The unit will support the provision of real-life work experiences to students where they can apply their academic and technical skills to enhance their discipline competencies and employability.

An implementation plan is also currently in progress within the Work Based Learning Area aimed at developing an operational model for the running of the newly established unit. It will include the following elements:

- Identification of a baseline following a comprehensive analysis of LITs current academic programme portfolio;
- Benchmarking exercise against best practice in other HEI's (national and international);
- Assessment of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) options;
- Stakeholder consultation process (internal and external).

The establishment of this unit represents an opportunity to professionalise existing placement practices, further embed placement into courses and re-evaluate the Institute's wider strategic approach to engaging with industry. An operating model for the new unit has been developed and, in order to demonstrate progress and increase acceptance from stakeholders, implementation will take place on a phased basis over the coming years.

The Institute's vision of the unit is a service which will:

- Support all LIT students to identify their career objectives and achieve their full personal and professional potential;
- Work in partnership with academic and other Institute departments to support students in the attainment of real life work experiences where they can apply their academic and technical skills, and enhance their discipline competencies and employability;
- Enable enhanced collaboration between LIT and external employers and communities;
- Provide support for the development of international opportunities for the students and the Institute.

LIT is currently engaged in a number of initiatives aimed at increasing the provision of both the traditional craft based apprenticeships and new apprenticeships. Details are provided in Appendix 4.

Measures:

LIT is committed to increasing the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning and also increasing the numbers of higher education entrants studying on a flexible basis. While definitions for 'lifelong learning' and 'studying on a flexible basis' will serve to enable the Institute to set specific targets, an initial high level target of increasing the number of students pursuing flexible learning programmes by 30% over the life-time of the new Strategic Plan has been set.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Flexible Learning student numbers	1,134	1,210	1,325	1,450

The baseline establishment exercise referred to above has now been completed and indicates that 65% of academic programmes in the Institute contain some element of work based learning (either work placement or a work based project). LIT aims to increase this to 75% after programmatic review is rolled out in 2019 and to 80% by 2022. The Institute ultimately aims to be in a position where it can offer all students (100%) the opportunity to undertake a work placement and/or work based project by 2025 in line with the high level target set in the HE System Performance Framework.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Percentage of Programmes containing an element of WBL	65%	75%	76%	80%

4.2 Key System Objective 2

Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase the output value of internationalisation to €1.15bn per annum by 2020 (International Education Strategy baseline €819m in 2014/15);
2. International students to represent 15% of full-time students by 2020. (In 2016/17, 11.6% of all fulltime students in HEA-funded Higher Education Institutions were international students);
3. Progress towards Bologna target of at least 20% of those who graduate in 2020 to undertake a study or training period abroad;
4. Number of innovation vouchers project agreements with industry to increase by 12% by 2020 (487 in 2016);
5. Increase number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) by 20% by 2020 (163 in 2017);
6. Increase number of spin-outs established during the year by 40% by 2020 (Innovation 2020 target, 29 in 2014);
7. Improve Employer satisfaction rates with HEI collaboration with enterprise by 25% as tracked in National Employer Survey (companies < 50 employees – 55% rated collaboration as good/very good; companies with 51 – 250 employees – 60% and companies > 251+ employees – 75%);
8. Participation in Erasmus+ in Higher Education and other Study and Work Placements Abroad to reach 4,400 by 2022 (3,135 in 2016) in accordance with international strategy.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 2. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

LIT recognises the strategic importance of enriching the student learning experience through innovative course delivery methods supported by technology, internationalisation and positive student-staff engagement.

Priorities:

Enriching the student learning experience through internationalisation (Appendix 1-P.2.2) and attracting additional non-exchequer income generating international students (Appendix 1-P.1.4) are regarded by LIT as key components of the Institute’s Strategic Plan.

LIT views the enhancement of its capacity in areas which have a clear economic and social impact for the region as one of the key priorities for the current strategic cycle. Critical to this is the further *development of enterprise activities (Appendix 1-P.3.4)* within the Institute which foster innovation and entrepreneurship and help shape the entrepreneurs of the future.

Initiatives:

This strengthening of LIT’s internal and external focus on internationalisation is evidenced by the Institute’s recent appointment of a new Vice-President International as an outcome of the management structure review referred to previously in this document.

Following on from this an extensive review and restructuring of the Office of International Engagement has been undertaken which will allow the Institute to continue to actively pursue a targeted internationalisation strategy in existing markets (eg. Canada, China, Malaysia,) as well as diversifying into emerging new markets (eg. Nigeria and India). LIT will be adopting a “boots on the ground” approach to promoting the Institute overseas and this strategy will be informed by extensive research of international markets as well as intelligence received from Enterprise Ireland (“Education in Ireland”) and other sources.

Specific initiatives will include the signing of one to one articulation agreements with international HEI’s (LIT currently has 67). LIT is currently undertaking a review of all of these agreements as some may have subsequently become obsolete as programmes are modified or replaced. Also, a number of these agreements relate solely to staff exchanges and would not necessarily lead directly to growth in international student recruitment. The relationship with one particular partner may generate numerous agreements with a view to implementing them as the relationship develops.

Other planned initiatives include engagement with international agents, direct recruitment and international scholarships.

LIT will also establish a course development competitive fund to facilitate development of new programmes which are particularly suitable to the international market or which contribute to the internationalisation of the Institute.

In the enterprise space, LIT is in the process of developing commercialisation and entrepreneurship training opportunities for all staff and students and expanded enterprise boot camp activities for second and third level students.

Measures:

While the high level target set out in the System Performance Framework (15% of full-time students by 2020) may not be achievable within the timeframe set out given LIT’s relatively low baseline, the Institute plans to grow international student numbers significantly over the coming years:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of International Students*	179	225	275	325

**An international students in this case is defined as "a non-EU, fee paying student"*

LIT is also committed in increasing participation in Erasmus+ and aims to achieve growth of at least 40% in this space by 2022 in line with the high level target set for the HE sector:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Erasmus + (Work Placement)	70	83	95	105
Erasmus + (Study Abroad)	9	12	18	23

Increasing the number of innovation vouchers, commercially relevant technologies and spin-outs form an important part of our enterprise strategy and LIT is committed to meeting or exceeding the high level targets by 2020 as laid out in the Framework (12% increase in innovation vouchers, 20% increase in licences/options/assignments, 40% increase in spin-outs):

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Innovation Vouchers	25	26	28	32
Licences/Options/Assignments	1	2	2	2
Spin-Outs	0	0	0	1

4.3 Key System Objective 3

Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an innovation Leader in Europe.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase of 500 new postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (baseline 2,235 in 2014/15);
2. Increase by 30% the number of funded postdoctoral positions in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (Innovation 2020 target);
3. Double overall Higher Education research income derived from industry to €48m (Innovation 2020 target - €24m in 2014);
4. Increase research projects between enterprise and the public research system by 20% by 2020 (2014 Baseline is 878);
5. Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020 (over €200m secured by end of 2016);
6. Increase applied research in the Institutes of technology.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 3. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

LIT's vision is to be a leading provider of higher education which is student centred, research informed, industry relevant and accessible for all. The advancing of key research priorities relevant to the region is central to this and features prominently throughout the Institute's Strategic Plan.

Priorities:

LIT is prioritising the need to ***promote a research culture (Appendix 1-P.3.2)*** across the Institute in order to achieve our stated strategic objective of increasing Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) capacity in targeted areas.

LIT will ***grow the quantity, quality and impact of its RDI activities (Appendix 1-P.3.1)*** from competitively won RDI funds.

Initiatives:

LIT will continue to target EU funding success through H2020 in Science, Engineering, Arts, Food development, Social Sciences and Humanities disciplines including the Erasmus+ and Interreg programmes as well as other national funding bodies including Enterprise Ireland, Irish Energy Research Council, Irish Research Council, Science Foundation Ireland and the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine.

Research capacity building can only be achieved through the identification and support of research active staff who will be tasked with advancing our key research priorities relevant to the region. LIT will continue to build up its research supervision capacity through staff development to PhD qualification level and targeted recruitment.

Other planned initiatives include:

- Engagement with external stakeholders to identify further collaborative opportunities including: Limerick for Engineering, Limerick for IT, PTMA, AEC, ISAX, RDI Advisory Board, Foundation Advisory Board, Innovate Limerick, Regional Chambers and City and County Councils, EVA, Foroige, Youth Work Ireland;
- National Partnering with organisations who can provide fees and stipends for postgraduate students and co-locating Postgraduate researchers in partners/stakeholder facilities;
- International partnering with selected Universities and Organisations as sources of postgraduate students and funding e.g. UTFPR, FioCruz and UFSJ in Brazil, Dex in Spain;
- Identification and facilitation of advocates and champions of research within faculties and departments;
- Utilisation of the Graduate Research Office (GRO) Bursaries in selected areas to grow research activities in key strategically important areas;
- Appropriate incentivisation of support staff to engage in research and research supervision;
- Streamlining of administrative procedures around postgraduate admission and progression;
- Facilitation of postgraduate fora including progression colloquia and peer support groups.

Measures:

LIT aims to grow RDI activity in excess of the System Performance Framework high level target which refers to 22% increase in postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to national needs by 2020. The Institute targets a 27% increase in postgraduate taught students numbers over the life of the Strategic Plan and a 120% increase in postgraduate research student numbers over the same period:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Post-Graduate Research numbers	93	110	130	150
Post-Graduate Taught numbers	85	90	99	108

4.4 Key System Objective 4

Significantly improve the equality of opportunity through education and training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

High Level Targets:

1. All HEIs will have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 which will embed whole-of-HEI approaches to institutional access strategies;
2. Implement new data initiatives and indicators to support the development and implementation of evidenced based National Plans for Equity of Access by 2019;
3. Implement the strands of the Programme for Access to Third Level (PATH) Fund to support the implementation of the National Plan for Equity of Access 2015-2019;
4. Sustain the expansion from underrepresented groups with 2,000 additional enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and 1,000 from Further education access programmes;
5. Increase in enrolments from DEIS schools by ensuring that every such school will be participating in a HEI led access programme;
6. Completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts will be specifically targeted for improvement.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 4. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

The Institute is committed to promoting equitable access to and successful participation in higher education for all. It flows from a philosophy of integration and social inclusiveness and aims to support the widening of access for traditionally underrepresented learners by delivering targeted strategies to promote, facilitate entry to and successful participation in higher education.

Priorities:

LIT recognises that our stated strategic objective of growing and diversifying the student population can only be achieved through *maintaining and enhancing appropriate pathways and necessary supports to enable students continued progression through their educational journey (Appendix 1-P.1.2).*

A central part of our access strategy involves *using all available data resources (Appendix 1-Enabler 4)* to identify students from underrepresented learner groups who are most in need of our support.

Initiatives:

The pathways referred to above are represented in LIT through a series of strong and long standing relationships with DEIS schools and Further Education Colleges in the region. LIT plans to continue strengthening these existing relationships, as well as identifying and developing new ones, over the life of this Performance Compact.

Through our involvement with the Shannon Consortium cluster LIT has been successful with applications to the HEA through the PATH 2 & 3 funding initiatives. The Institute will continue to pursue initiatives which encourage participation by students from sections of society which are significantly under-represented in higher education. Under PATH 3 LIT will further support entry from four local DEIS schools and will specifically target recruitment from the Traveller Community and Early School Leavers.

We at LIT already consider ourselves leaders in terms of access provision to these underrepresented learner groups including:

- Learners experiencing socio-economic disadvantage;
- Learners with disability and/or specific learning difficulty;
- Mature learners;
- Travellers and ethnic minorities.

PATH 2 will target the above groups, adding Lone Parents as a new target grouping. There are multiple examples of other initiatives which demonstrate the Institute's ongoing commitment to Access: Go4IT, GIVE Project, Skills @ Work programme, Leaders@LIT Access Scholarship Programme, Transition to Higher Education programme, Aontas Adult Learners Festival, Summer Camps and the Tallories Network. Because those in Direct Provision seeking refugee status are specifically excluded from PATH 2, LIT will introduce a Direct Provision Scholarship under the LIT Institute of Sanctuary initiative.

Development of a Student Success Strategy by 2020 in line with the high level target set for the sector will help to further develop this access agenda across the Institute by supporting students of all backgrounds throughout and beyond their LIT experience. LIT has plans to design an integrated App to support this Student Success Strategy on an institute-wide basis. A recent funding application under the HEA Higher Education System Innovation and Transformation Call to support the development of this App was not successful. However, the Institute remains committed to this important component of its student success strategy and is currently exploring alternative resourcing options.

LIT recognises the role that data analytics can play in understanding and addressing access and retention issues within the HE sector. The Institute fully supports the principles behind the Data-Enabled Student Success Initiative (DESSI) developed by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and, should appropriate funding be made available, will put in place the necessary staff and ICT resources to ensure it is adopted across LIT. It is universally acknowledged that the issue of retention in higher education is a complex one and demands a multifaceted response from HEI's. While insightful data analytics of course plays an essential role in identifying potential issues and facilitating early intervention where necessary, a much broader approach will be required if this issue is going to be tackled in a meaningful way. In LIT this includes, but is not limited to, the appointment of a dedicated retention officer, targeted learning support, adoption of a student-centric approach to timetabling, peer mentoring and other supports. In the absence of the required resources it will prove difficult for LIT to deliver on all of the innovative and ambitious initiatives planned over the coming years. However, the Institute remains committed to prioritising any action which addresses the issue of access and retention in LIT.

Measures:

In the 2018/19 academic year 268 students with FET qualifications enrolled in LIT with further growth targeted over the life of this Compact:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
QQI/FET Qualified Enrolments	268	270	275	280

Overall, LIT currently exceeds the HEA targets set for 2019 pertaining to our current participation rates for mature students, students with disabilities and students from Ethnic Minorities and the Traveller Community. The HEA National Access targets set for full-time mature students is 16%, LIT currently stands at 23%. The target for participation by students with disability is set at 8%, LIT currently stands at 9.3%. Based on the last statistical report provided by the HEA (2014) LIT has seven students from the Traveller Community, from a national total of seventeen.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Mature Students	262	265	270	275
Students with Disabilities	106	108	110	112
Students from Traveller Community	8	9	10	11

The data driven approach referred to above will improve LIT's decision making process and allow us to support the development and implementation of an evidence based National Plan for Equity of Access by 2019 in line with the high level target outlined in the System Performance Framework. This will include a significant improvement in the overall non-progression rate in LIT over the life of this performance compact using the baseline data provided by HEA (27% in 2014/15).

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
LIT non-progression rate	21%	20%	20%	19%

4.5 Key System Objective 5

Demonstrate consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence.

High Level Targets:

1. Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff in all HEIs;
2. All HEIs to engage in International benchmarking by 2020;
3. Improve problematic non-progression rates by 10% (overall baseline of 15% for 2014/15);
4. Improve non-progression rates in STEM disciplines by 10% (differing discipline baselines);
5. All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019;
6. The HEA will develop guidelines to steer the process of total quality management, in line with best international practice.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 5. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

In response to the priorities outlined in our Strategic Plan, LIT will focus on a number of key enablers which will support the delivery of the Institutes ambition of being a leading provider of higher education by providing our students with a high quality education experience.

Priorities:

One of those key enablers identified by LIT relates to ***effective staff engagement and development (Appendix 1-Enabler 1)*** and the Institute is determined to attract, develop and retain a high performing, talented, diverse and flexible workforce to deliver quality teaching, learning, research, services and support.

The ***development of a policy on Blended and Online Learning (Appendix 1-P.1.3)*** by 2019 will also further support the Institutes vision of providing student centred and accessible learning opportunities.

Initiatives:

The implementation of the Continuous Professional Development Framework from 2018 will support staff to plan for their professional development needs in the context of the framework, with the development of engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning and digital learning as integral components.

The Nine High Level Principles which will guide LIT's Teaching and Learning Initiatives are:

- Academic Excellence through *active learning*;
- Best practice in *curriculum design*;
- Effective *assessment* that embeds and enhances learning;
- Development of the *whole person* and *work readiness*;
- Technology Enhanced, blended and online learning (*TEL*);
- Developing Capacity with knowledge and *research skills*;
- Coherent and effective *Continuous Professional Development* pathways;
- Development of the learning environment;
- *Quality enhancement* in teaching and learning supported by evidence.

A commitment to excellence through continuous improvement is a core value of the Institute. Quality enhancement activities need to be informed by evidence and empirical data.

This is evidenced in a number of its activities:

- It is particularly relevant for the quality of the learning experience. The Institute is committed to continued national and international benchmarking as a means of informing itself of best practice and identifying areas for improvement. This commitment to quality enhancement and academic excellence will be directed to improve student engagement and progression in line with targets indicated;
- It is relevant to the evidence-based approach undertaken by LIT academics in new programme development and re-validation of programme activity. The Institute, through its policies, procedures and programme validation/revalidation processes, ensures that its education programmes address real employment opportunities, particularly in the STEM, Apprenticeship, and evolving job market areas;
- Quality benchmarking audits of modules and programmes are conducted through objective external engagement with employers, industry representatives, alumni, academics, and professional bodies to ensure that graduates are equipped with the knowledge, skills and competencies to succeed regionally, nationally and internationally.

Other specific initiatives designed to improve the overall quality of the LIT learning environment include:

- Supporting staff to develop their skills in designing active learning across all areas of the curriculum;
- Development of a CPD pathway in teaching, learning and assessment for all staff in accordance with the framework proposed by the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning 2016;
- Collation and dissemination of best practice examples of active learning through communities of practice, staff CDP and the Centre of Excellence in Teaching and Learning;
- Further development of the international dimension and the potential for increasing the number of outward study trips for staff;
- Embedding the findings of the ISSE survey in the institute quality enhancement processes (with particular emphasis on teaching and learning functions);
- Process changes designed to improve the collation of academic material in LIT (Exam Management System, academic quality related documentation repository);
- Facilitation of knowledge transfer from research active staff to the wider LIT learning community through accessible research reports, publications, case studies and conference presentations and information sessions.

Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) can facilitate and enrich authentic learning in a student centred manner and can be a significant enabler of life-long learning in new and innovative contexts. The Institute is committed to the development of this capacity in TEL and plans the following specific initiatives:

- Investment in appropriate infrastructure and platforms to facilitate the use of TEL;
- Provision of training and support to academic staff and students to enable development of digital literacy skills;
- Facilitation of a community of practice to develop a culture of academic collaboration and knowledge sharing of TEL activities across the Institute.

Measures:

- The Technological Higher Education Quality Framework specifies a set of principles that underpin quality assurance and enhancement in technological higher education. In this context, measurement and evaluation of the impact of teaching and learning activities can be evidenced by gathering and analysing both qualitative and quantitative data from a broad range of sources. Examples of these data sources may include:
 - Institutional-level assessment such as student engagement surveys which will provide evidence of the impact that the development of teaching and learning improvements have had in LIT;
 - Student feedback mechanisms which increasing student representation on key quality assurance fora such as Programme Boards and Programme Validation Panels;
 - Comments and recommendations of external examiners during annual assessment to programme boards, programme review and new programme design processes;
 - Completion, retention and progression statistics;
 - Data from student withdrawal forms and interviews;
 - Learning analytics which will inform potential improvement strategies for student engagement.

4.6 Key System Objective 6

Demonstrate consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

High Level Targets:

1. Implementation of the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan and the 2016 Expert Group recommendations;
2. HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019 (TUs within 3 years of establishment);
3. All HEIs to submit their annual Governance Statements to HEA on time;
4. 100% compliance by HEIs with public procurement rules;
5. Draft annual financial statements to be submitted by HEIs to C&AG within stipulated C&AG guidelines;
6. Full transparency in HEI financial statements about accounting for Trusts and Foundations;
7. 100% compliance by HEIs with public pay policy;
8. 100% compliance by HEIs with public sector numbers controls;
9. Implementation of recommendations from rolling governance reviews;
10. HEA will develop individual compacts with the HEIs which reflect the overall ambitions of the System Performance Framework and local/regional opportunities;
11. Institutional strategic compacts will be assessed by a panel of experts, including international participants, to assess their coherence and capacity for delivery.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 6. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

LIT fully recognises the importance of a high quality system of Governance both at an Institutional level and a sectoral level and the Institute is committed to fully complying with all elements of the THEA code of governance and the overriding principle of “comply or explain”.

Priorities:

LIT is committed to *ensuring that it adheres to the highest standards in terms of the Governance (Appendix 1-Enabler 4)* in all aspects of its operations.

One of the core values underpinning the Institutes Strategic Plan refers to the promotion of **fairness, equal opportunity, respect and positive outcomes for all of our students and staff**. Advancing gender equality across LIT forms an integral part of helping the Institute live up to this value.

Initiatives:

LIT will continue to play a pivotal role in the coherent development of our region through the development of physical infrastructure as envisaged in our Campus development plan- Campus 2030. In addition LIT will continue to play active leadership role in a range of relevant regional fora in cooperation with other regional stakeholders to maximise local and regional opportunities in keeping with our Institutional strategic objectives.

LIT has implemented many of the recommendations from the Expert Group's 2016 National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, including the recent appointment of a Vice President for Equality & Diversity.

Measures:

Within the context of a governance structure which delivers transparency and accountability LIT is committed to ensuring the following:

- Compliance with relevant submission deadlines for the annual governance statement;
- Compliance with public procurement structures and processes;
- Ensuring that LIT financial statements include the consolidation of foundations/trusts which may operate on behalf of LIT;
- Compliance with public pay policy;
- Compliance with relevant ECF/public sector controls;
- Submission of Financial Statements for audit in keeping with C&AG timelines;
- Implementation of relevant recommendations from rolling sector governance reviews;
- LIT will continue to embed risk management practices and policies as part of an ongoing process to improve decision making through the enabling of an appropriate risk culture;
- LIT will evaluate the possible implementation of a balanced scorecard type methodology to organisational performance management and review which will facilitate operational excellence.

LIT is committed to implementing the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan. The Institute is also actively developing a submission and related structures to submit an application for an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award in November 2019.

6. Annual Compliance Statement

The HEA will take into account ongoing compliance with important foundational requirements such as:

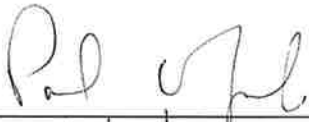
- Statutory quality assurance processes
- Providing an annual statement required under their Code of Governance and with all other requirements of that Code
- Providing details of satisfactory financial outturn, budget and financial plan
- Employment control framework
- Data returns to the HEA.


Where significant or urgent governance or compliance issues arise, such as unacceptable financial deficit, weakness in financial plans or major omissions or delays in returns, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.

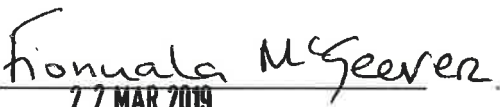
7. Agreement

To be completed following the conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.

The HEA and Limerick 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 the place of Limerick Institute of Technology within the system.

Signed: 
Date: 14/19
Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed: 
Date: 26 MAR 2019
President, Limerick Institute of Technology

Signed: 
Date: 22 MAR 2019
Chair, Governing Body, Limerick Institute of Technology

7. Agreement

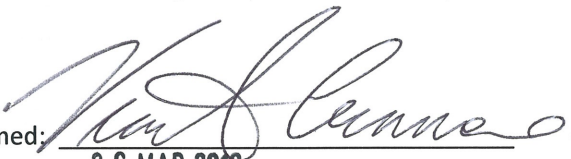
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Signed: _____

Date: _____

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed: 
Date: **26 MAR 2019**

President, Limerick Institute of Technology

Signed: 
Date: **22 MAR 2019**

Chair, Governing Body, Limerick Institute of Technology

Appendices

We (Limerick Institute of Technology) include the following appendices with our performance compact.

List the appendices here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 1: Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 2: Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 3: Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 4: Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 5: Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 6: Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 7: Institutional quantitative data return (September 2018)