

National University of Ireland Galway Agreed Minute

The HEA acknowledges and appreciates the work undertaken by NUIG in preparing the Compact Documentation submission in the context of this the first cycle of Strategic Dialogue. The HEA commends the quality of the submission. Documented feedback on the draft compact has been conveyed to NUIG. 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 process.

Subject to the above, the HEA and NUIG 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 NUIG 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 the 11th December 2013. **The following issues are taken from the Strategic Dialogue Meeting held on the 11th 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. NUI Galway agreed and noted the range of efforts underway to support this objective.

Benchmarking

HEA notes the process of benchmarking being used by NUIG and looks forward to seeing how this will inform future compact submissions.

Regional Cluster

The role of NUIG in progressing the development of the regional cluster in a collaborative way was emphasised and in particular the role of NUIG in relation to provision of structured PhD education in the region was noted as a focus for collaboration.

Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning

The HEA suggested that targets proposed for equity of access seemed conservative and included a projected drop in full-time mature students as well as a low proportion of current and planned number of students with disabilities. NUI Galway advised that, despite targeted recruitment efforts at these student cohorts, applications and registrations had declined in recent years, related, it was considered, to a reduction in financial supports. It stated that it was its intention to maximize its intake of students in this category and would continue its directed recruitment activity.

High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation

HEA noted the realism of overall research numbers targets in NUIG and the ambition in relation to EU research funding targets. While there is capacity to expand taught Masters level, there is limited demand following changes in student support, despite provision on a flexible basis.

Institutional consolidation

Work is ongoing with St Angela's College with target dates of June 2014 for final heads of agreement and 31 January 2015 for agreement and signing of a full incorporation agreement. The actual incorporation is envisaged as taking place between February and December 2015. Some areas of concern remain to be resolved, in relation to the merger, which are being discussed with St. Angela's at present. The involvement of the HEA in the process will be required related to NUI Galway's requirement that it not be adversely affected by the integration, academically or financially.