Work Plan 2017

Introduction and Context

The HEA Strategic Plan 2012–2016 sets out the overarching objectives and key performance indicators for the HEA for the period to the end of 2017. The Strategic Plan was itself amended following a mid-term review. The development and approval of a new Strategic Plan for the HEA will take place in early 2017. Therefore, this draft 2017 work plan is set within the framework of the HEA Strategic Plan 2012-2016 and the associated mid-term review.

Three overarching outcomes continue to be the drivers for the work of the HEA in 2017. All of our plans and activities underpin the delivery of these outcomes for the higher education sector:

- A higher education system that is optimally structured and governed.
- A higher education system that is responsive to social and economic needs, that provides high quality graduates, that gives a quality student experience and that is financially sustainable.
- A HEA and set of HEIs that set and attain exemplary standards of governance, performance and accountability.

Six strategic objectives underpin the achievement of these outcome. In the next section, these strategic objectives are explained and the high-level outcomes and key performance indicators under each strategic objective in 2017 are specified. The timeframes will be clarified following finalisation of the 2017 budget for the HEA and any modifications needed to take account of the SLA with the Department of Education and Skills. The organisation goals for the HEA in 2017 have been included as a final area.

An indicative budget has been included for three actions (2.2, 2.6 and 6.3); when an update on progress is provided mid-year, this will include the expenditure on these areas.

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CEO

(1) Funding and Sustainability

The outcome under this strategic objective is a higher education system that is funded sustainably on the basis of performance against national outcomes. The HEA has repeatedly advised the Minister for Education and Skills of the need for a sustainable funding strategy, and the associated risk. The Expert Group chaired by Peter Cassells reported in 2016 and emphasised the same issue. The key objectives planned for 2017 and the key performance indicators representing achievement and success in each objective are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
1.1	To manage and support the review of the allocation model for HEI funding.	 Review completed within the agreed terms of reference and timeframe New funding model developed responsive to local and national social and economic needs and aligned with system goals Implementation plan agreed for funding allocation process for 2018 and future years 	Q3	AB
1.2	To allocate the grant for 2017, agree budgets with each institution and review and monitor ongoing HEI financial stability.	 Grants allocated and budgets agreed with all funded HEIs Regular reporting on financial position of individual HEIs 	Q2	AB

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
1.3	To agree and monitor three year financial plans with HEIs classified as financially vulnerable to ensure progress towards a balanced budget.	 Agreed plans in place with all vulnerable HEIs, and monitoring and reporting structures in place 	Recurrent	AB
1.4	To report on the financial health of the higher education sector following the budget process.	 Report completed and presented to the Finance and Governance Committee 	Q3	AB
1.5	To implement a new management information framework for universities, colleges and IoTs	 New framework implemented as part of the budget process to ensure more timely and robust information to facilitate HEA and institutional decision-making 	Q2	AB
1.6	To make a submission to the Capital Review process for needs of HE sector and needs of the Irish Research Council	 Capital prioritisation exercise completed Preparation of case for HE based on ongoing survey/consultation Compelling and comprehensive case submitted on behalf of HEA and IRC, resulting in significant allocations for the sector 	Q1	AB & EM
1.7	To manage capital, PRTLI and access funding programmes	 PRTLI Cycle 5 programme successfully completed and all monies allocated 	Q2 Ongoing	AB AB

	 Funding allocated efficiently in a transparent manner delivering on system strategic goals 		
Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
1.8 To monitor staffing levels across the sector and oversee the implementation of the Delegated Sanction Agreement	 Delegated sanction agreement established with sector, allowing for controlled and strategic recruitment Staffing monitored and reported on a quarterly basis with timely follow up of breaches of sanction 	Q1 Ongoing	AB AB

(2) System Development

The outcome under this strategic objective is a coherent system of higher education that is optimally structured and governed and that delivers improved performance to achieve the national objectives as set out by Government. The key objectives and KPIs towards achievement of this outcome in 2017 are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
2.1	To prepare the System Report arising from Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3	 The final report, including the evaluation of all the HEIs is approved by the HEA for submission to the Minister 	Q1	FC
2.2	To manage final round of strategic dialogue discussions with HEIs	 Final round completed with high level of institutional engagement and support for the process Report on HEI categorisations 	Q4 40K	FC
2.3	To prepare system report arising from the final evaluation of first set of strategic dialogue compacts	- Preparation of report for HEA approval	Q4	FC
2.4	To continue process of landscape reform	 Agree process with DES for the allocation of €4 million ring-fenced funding for TUS Funding allocated for TU consortia and other merging institutions Monitoring and reporting of progress of merging institutions Engagement with DES on progress on regional clusters 	Q1 Q2 Ongoing — reports to Board July and December	FC

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
2.5	To prepare basis for next set of HEI compacts	 Revised guidance material available for HEIs based on the new HE performance framework 	Q2	FC
2.6	To agree new compacts with HEIs for next 3-year cycle	 New compacts agreed with all HEIs informed by new framework and reflecting strategic and regional priorities. 	Q4 40K	FC
2.7	To progress HEA thematic reviews	 Complete background review of engineering Decision on scale and focus of review 	Q2	FC
2.8	To consider any further TU applications (Stage 2 or Stage 4)	- Recommendations for HEA board as per process	As required – dependent or TU legislation Report to Board July to update	ı
2.9	To manage the National Programme for the Inclusion Coordinators for Early Years Services	 First successful graduate cohort and continued enrolments Graduate employability tracked through the Graduate Outcomes survey in 2018 	Recurrent	VP

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility		
Tead	Teaching and Learning/Student engagement					
2.10	To implement agreed actions under three-year HEA-QQI MOU	 Improved alignment of QQI's institutional dialogue with the HEA's strategic dialogue Joint programme of 2017 activity developed to progress Ireland's International Education Strategy Full SMT of HEA/QQI meeting held CEO of each organisation will meet with the Board of the other 	Recurrent Recurrent Q1 2017 Q3 2017	CEO GI FC GI		
2.11	To continue funding and oversight of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning	 Independent review of the National Forum completed and recommendations made A DES/HEA seminar on Forum-funded research projects demonstrates impact of the project Review of the implementation of the <i>Roadmap for Enhancement in a Digital World 2015-2017</i> completed Digital Skills Framework for Irish Higher Education finished Scoping of new phase of research on student non-completion and transitions in partnership with the National Access Advisory Group completed 	Q2 Q3 Q4 Q2 Q2	GI		

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
2.12 To roll out year 5 of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and develop a Postgraduate Research Engagement Survey.	 ISSE conducted and national report published New Postgraduate Research Engagement Survey developed for 2018 pilot. 	Q1- Q2 Survey Live Q2 – Q3 Data Analysis Q4 – Report Launch and Publication	VP
2.13 To assist the Department of Education and Skills in the delivery of key objectives in the roll out of the National Student Engagement Project in partnership with the QQI and USI.	 Successful training of 5 student trainers in the 5 pilot higher education institutions 	Q1-2	VP
2.14 To progress transition agenda through driving broader undergraduate programmes and supporting research and	 Transitions Reform Steering Group meetings attended Summary paper written on HEI progress on transition agenda as outlined in the performance compacts A research and evaluation programme agreed with transition steering group and stakeholders 	Recurrent Q1	GI FC
evaluation	 Increased number of HEIs with broad undergraduate entry programmes 	Recurrent	GI

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
Research, Development and Innova	tion (RDI)		
2.15 To support the work of the DES Higher Education Research Group	 Papers prepared and submitted to HERG for discussion Ongoing support for HERG Work Programme (to be agreed with DES) 	Recurrent	GI
2.16 To implement actions which the HEA is the designated lead under Innovation 2020	 Participated in Innovation 2020 (I2020), H2020, SRPG and HLG meetings resulting in advancement of DES, HEA and IRC deliverables under Innovation 2020, and HEA/IRC contributing to broader progress in implementation of national policy. 	Recurrent	GI and EM
	 Active engagement in the development of the next PRTLI I leads to key roles of the IRC and HEA 	Q1	GI, EM & AB
	 Large items of Research Equipment (LIRE) database upgraded Participated in National Open Access group meetings 	Q2	АВ
	 contributing to broader progress in implementation of I2020 objectives and development of national policy which will benefit the sector. Agreed a standardised categorisation scheme to record public 	Recurrent	GI and EM
	investment in researchDeveloped system-wide tracking of research mobility into	Recurrent	GI and EM
	industry – Graduate Outcomes Survey/CSO data?	Recurrent	VP/FC

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
2.17 To implement the National Framework for Doctoral Education	 Advisory Group for implementation of the National Framework for Doctoral Education established Programme of work agreed 	Q1	GI
2.18 To become the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) National Delegate	- ESFRI National Delegate role successfully transferred from IRC to HEA	Q1	GI
Internationalisation			
2.19 To progress the International Education Strategy	 Contributing to the HLG on International Education Revised model for implementation of the Government of Ireland International Education Scholarship Programme 	Recurrent	GI
	 agreed Internationalisation metrics included in the system performance dialogue process Increased awareness of a broad range of benefit of 	Q4 Q4	
	 Internationalisation for HEIs Closer synergy with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning on 	Q2 Recurrent	
	Internationalisation initiatives	Recuirent	

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead
			Responsibility
2.20 To increase student and staff mobility through our role as	- Impact review of Erasmus+ completed and used as input for DES review	Q2	GI
national agency for the	- Completed impact reviews of selected LLP/E+	Q4	
higher education	- System Checks/Audits/Monitoring completed	Q4	
components of the Erasmus+	- Annual Erasmus lecture organised	Q1	
(E+) programme	 Acted as Project Co-ordinator for the Erasmus+ International Education IT Mobility tool working group 	Recurrent	
	 Member of E+ Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) working group 	Q1-Q2	
	 Participation in EHEA (Bologna Follow Up Group, BFUG) groups including the Advisory Group 1 'International 	Recurrent	
	Cooperation' and the 'Working Group on New Goals' to ensure HEA work is informed by relevant developments.	Q1-Q4	
2.21 To engage in BREXIT discussion and activities providing the HE view	 Participation in relevant meetings, conferences, and seminars on BREXIT ensures the strategic development of the HE system in Ireland and the maintenance of a 	Recurrent	GI
	shared academic space with UK HEIs. - Preparation of documentation and advice as needed by Inter-Departmental Group on EU-UK Relations — Education subgroup of the Working Group on the Economy	Recurrent	

(3) Governance and Accountability in Higher Education

The outcome under this strategic objective is an appropriate governance/regulatory relationship between HEIs and the HEA that reflects our new mandate and respects institutional autonomy. The key objectives and KPIs towards achievement of this outcome in 2017 are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
3.1	To continue the implementation of the Governance Framework for Higher Education and ensure effective communication of this framework and associated requirements to all relevant stakeholders	 Governance Framework accepted by all HEIs Governance reporting deadlines to DES met 	Recurrent	AB
3.2	To gather, analyse and report on the Annual Governance Statements from HEIs for 2015/16 and review HEI certified accounts.	 Comprehensive report on the Annual Governance Statements compiled and provided to the DES Appropriate actions agreed with HEIs on all issues identified in audited accounts and governance statements. 	Q4	AB

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
3.3	To engage with HEI chairs/Governing Bodies on outcomes of strategic dialogue	 Engagement with Chairs to ensure that governing bodies are informed on the outcomes of the strategic dialogue process 	Q2	FC
3.4	To ensure a signed financial memorandum is received from each HEI outlining respective responsibilities	 Signed financial memoranda received from all HEIs giving assurances of undertakings and responsibilities 	Q2	AB
3.5	To monitor the implementation of ECF/Delegated Sanction Agreement and Departures Framework across the HE sector	 Delegated sanction agreement established with sector, allowing for controlled and strategic recruitment to improve efficiency and performance Staffing monitored and reported on a quarterly basis with timely follow up of breaches of sanction 	Recurrent	AB
3.6	To commission the second governance rolling review on an appropriate aspect of governance compliance and implement appropriate actions in response to the findings	 Agree the focus of the review with DES Review completed and action plan agreed in response to findings 	Q4	AB

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
3.7	To review and monitor the HEA's protected disclosure policy with regard to disclosures made by HEI employees and manage the process for addressing any such disclosures that arise.	 Protected Disclosure procedures for HEA CEO role as prescribed person reviewed and updated to ensure greater clarity on approach to and treatment of disclosures from HEI staff Annual report prepared on protected disclosures arising and resultant HEA response 	Q1 Q4	АВ
3.8	To develop guidelines for Governing Body members in HEIs on HEA expectations on the role of Governing Bodies and their membership.	 Guidelines completed and disseminated to all HEIs giving greater confidence that members of governing bodies are aware of their responsibilities and role 	Q1	АВ
3.9	To liaise with the Comptroller and Auditor General to share knowledge regarding governance and accountability issues and facilitate early intervention.	- Quarterly meetings held with the C&AG.	Recurrent	AB

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
3.10 To implement the recommendations of the Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions	 The 12 recommendations outlined for the HEA in the report are progressed HEA is recognised as leading implementation of the review and has organised meetings with stakeholders Ireland is recognised internationally as leading on this agenda 	Recurrent	GI, AB, & FC

(4) Strategic Planning

The outcome under this strategic objective is that the HEA is effective in anticipating trends in higher education development nationally and internationally and also enhances the data/evidence base that supports our policy advice to the Minister for Education and Skills. The key objectives and KPIs towards achievement of this outcome in 2017 are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
4.1	To continue implementation of the Data and Knowledge Management Strategy	 Completion of an interactive Statistics Section on the new HEA website Publication of a full study of completion rates and 	Q2 Q3	VP
		enhancement of our evidence base for policy development		
		Working with the Finance and governance section, opportunities have been explored for more efficient interface with HEI's.	Q2	
4.2	To collect student data on an	- Completion of Nov and March data collections from HEIs	Q4	VP
	annual basis and report such	 Key Facts and Figures published, focusing on key strategic 	Q4	
	data in a comprehensive set	themes		
	of statistical publications.	- Publication of the First Destination of Graduates Survey	Q1	
		 Results for 2016 graduates and Non Progression Analysis published 	Q4	
4.3	To implement the Graduate Outcomes Survey	 Development of a database and web interface for data collection completed 	Q1-Q3	VP/FC
		 New graduate outcomes survey piloted in 		

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead
				Responsibility
4.4	To implement the staff database	 Scoping exercise on data extraction options for the new staff database is completed Steering and Sub Groups are put in place to develop database content and development in place Database development and data fields are agreed by all stakeholder groups Pilot phase of implementation underway 	Q1-Q4	VP
4.5	To continue development of key institutional statistics	 The metrics for the Institutional Profiles for inclusion in the System Performance Framework are further developed, with particular focus on strategic priorities 	Recurrent	FC/VP
4.6	To perform a review of national and international impact assessment models	 Impact assessment models relevant to teaching and learning, research and engagement are reviewed Recommendations about metrics and impact assessment models relevant to measurement of system performance are made to the Department of Education and Skills to assess the impact of higher education on enterprise and society 	Q1	VP/GI
4.7	To maintain ongoing review of trends in higher education to support medium to long term policy development	 Participation and/or organising of seminars, conferences and international to inform all HEA work and debate about the future direction of the HE sector Forward Look Forum held and future direction and format of these events a considered as part of strategic planning process 	Recurrent Q2 & Q4	GI

(5) Equity of Access in Higher Education

The outcome under this strategic objective is that the HEA, through policy direction and strategic dialogue, facilitates the development of a higher education system that is characterised by equality of opportunity, with clear access, transfer and progression pathways and flexibility in modes of learning well mainstreamed into the higher education system. The key objectives and KPIs towards achievement of this outcome in 2017 are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
5.1	To continue implementation of National Access Plan	 Access targets are included in new DES System Performance Framework and HEA/HEI Compacts 	Q1 and Q3	CR
5.2	To monitor progress on access targets	 Access performance is part of every strategic dialogue meeting and informs the overall performance report for each HEI 	Q3	CR
5.3	To conduct mid-term review of National Access Plan	 Completed mid-term review with actions and targets revised as appropriate 	Q4	CR
5.4	To allocate and monitor funds PATH Strand 1	 Path funding allocation announced and projects begin leading to increased access to initial teacher education from access target groups 	Q1 Recurrent monitoring	CR

5.5 To complete strategy for	 Agreed strategy with the HEIs that is informed by the 	Q3	CR
non-completion among the	National Forum for Teaching and Learning		
target groups	 Long-term KPI is increased completion rates for 		
	students from target groups		

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
5.6	To develop a strategy for improved access data indicators	 Completed policy study to inform approach Pilot study underway of geo-coding new entrants to higher education Final strategy agreed 	Q4	CR
5.7	To implement recommendations arising from the review of the Student Assistance Fund (SAF)	 Designation of change manager in HEA to manage implementation of the SAF Review recommendations. 	Q1	CR
5.8	To complete review of Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD)	 Completed review including clear recommendations on the future development of the Fund and followed by process of recommendations implementation 	Q1	CR
5.9	To liaise with DES on the application of the equity of access budget measures introduced in Budget 2017	 Finalised approach on the application of the measures and various roles and responsibilities 	Q1	CR
5.10	To support the DES and HEIs in the implementation of	 To be determined, following completion of review in early 2017 	Q1	CR

(6) An Enhanced Partnership with Enterprise

The outcome under this strategic objective is that the HEA, through policy direction and strategic dialogue, facilitates the development of a system of higher education institutions that are closely connected with their regions and with enterprise so that skills and enterprise research needs can be anticipated and addressed and so that graduates emerge from higher education with the appropriate skills sets to be effective in the workplace. The key objectives and KPIs towards achievement of this outcome in 2017 are:

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timef	rame	Lead Responsibility
6.1	To continue active engagement with enterprise agencies	 Active strategic engagement with agencies such as EI, IDA, IBEC and AmCham strengthens the relationship between higher education promotion and future employment and innovation. Institutions are required to develop employability statements for courses and/or disciplines as set out in the National Skills Strategy 	Recurre	ent	VP
6.2	To manage the 2nd intake of Springboard+ 2016	- Remaining places available for 2016/17 filled	Q1-Q2		VP
6.3	To manage the rollout of Springboard+ 2017	Programme evaluation process underwayProgramme and marketing campaign launched	Q2-3	<mark>250k</mark>	VP

- Surveys of participants and trend analysis carried out and reported

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
6.4	To continue collaboration on key government strategies	 HEA makes a significant contribution to the implementation of the Action Plan for Jobs, the ICT Skills Action Plan and the National Skills Strategy to ensure that HEA strategic goals are reflected in and supported by a range of initiatives Calls for funding are successfully managed for additional ICT places, ICT summer camps and ICT retention measures 	Recurrent	VP
6.5	To develop and implement new apprenticeships in collaboration with Solas	 Assistance provided to in the development and funding of new apprenticeships in higher education Support is provided to the Apprenticeship Council A memorandum of understanding is agreed with SOLAS to support mutual co-operation in this new area of work. 	Recurrent Q3	VP
6.6	To liaise with HEIs and Solas on the delivery of the off the job	 Effective engagement with HEIs in the provision of the off the job phases of apprenticeships to meet the increasing demand for places 	Recurrent	VP

phases of existing	
apprenticeships	

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
6.7	To manage a call for the delivery of summer camps in Entrepreneurship	 Develop a call for the provision through higher education institutions of entrepreneurship camps for second level students Fund successful proposals and receive reports on initiatives run. 	Q1-Q3	VP
6.8	To run the National Employers Survey	 Develop an approach in collaboration with the Regional Skills Fora and enterprise and state agencies to run the third national employer's survey Survey to be carried out in 2017 	Q3	VP

(7) HEA as an organisation – Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The delivery of the work programme agreed by the Board is achieved by the executive. The key objectives and KPIs that will support the successful delivery of the work programme in 2017 are:

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
7.1 To enhance Board capacity	 Digital Board Papers introduced and running smoothly to enhance effectiveness of Board deliberations 	Q1	PM
	 New CEO is appointed and induction programme put in place 	Q1	
	 New members are provided with strong induction programme to ensure they are fully appraised of the work of the HEA and their role as members. 	Q1	
	 Training needs of members are reviewed having regard to Q3 2016 and Q1 2017 induction. 	Q3	
	 Terms of reference for Board self-evaluation agreed Board self-evaluation exercise to enhance capacity of Board to carry out its functions is completed 	Q4	

	Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
7.2	To ensure HEA accountability	 New strategic plan in place following extensive consultation with sector 	Q3	GI
		- SLA with DES agreed	Q1	CEO
		 2016 annual report approved and published 	Q2	CR
		 HEA compliance with new Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies reviewed having 		
		regard to its effective date 1/9/16.	Q3	PM
7.3	To ensure an appropriate system of internal financial controls	 2017 HEA Administration Budget and draft 2016 outturn are approved to ensure effective management of voted grants 	Q1	PM
		 2016 Accounts for Audit approved to ensure accountability for funding allocated 	Q1	
		 Audit Committee review of management of risk in HEA completed to satisfy the Board that Executive is pro-active in the management of risks 	Q3	
		 Audit Committee considers internal audit report on the System of Internal Financial Controls 	Q3	

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead
7.4 To enhance capacity of HEA Executive	- PMDS role profiles agreed and staff	Q2	Responsibility PM
7.4 To enhance capacity of the Accounter	development plan implemented to enhance skills of HEA staff	α2	
	 Review of past year's PMDS work and development plan carried out 	Q2	
	- PMDS evaluations completed for all staff	Q4	
7.5 To enhance IT services in the HEA	 Broadband capacity enhanced to improve experience of Board members and visitors to the HEA 	Q1	PM
	 MS Office SharePoint rolled-out to enhance capacity of staff to collaborate on work and support increased digitisation of work processes 	Q2	
7.6 To enhance HEA communications	 New HEA website in place enabling smoother and better quality engagement with stakeholders and public 	Q3	CEO
	 Centralised events calendar developed and in use by all sections, providing greater clarity on the communications response required by each section for their upcoming events and better planning and co-ordination across the organisation 	Q1	GI

Objective	Key Performance Indicator	Timeframe	Lead Responsibility
	 Media monitoring service provider changed to ensure better media intelligence and targeting Review of Sponsorships / Partnerships completed New social media strategy and policy completed Regular reports provided to management and Board on website and social media analytics Regular internal newsletter outlining key events / activity of sections Standardised slide pack developed with info on HE sector 	Q1 Q1 Q1 Recurrent Recurrent Q1	