

NATIONAL OFFICE FOR EQUITY OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

**HEA**

Higher Education Authority  
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas

# ANNUAL REPORT 2005 AND OUTLINE PLANS 2006

JANUARY 2006



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**ANNUAL REPORT 2005 AND  
OUTLINE PLANS 2006**

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## CONTENTS

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Foreword by Michael Kelly, Chairman of the HEA	4
Summary of main achievements in 2005	5
Introduction	6
Review of progress 2005	7
Issues arising	14
Outline plans for 2006	16
Appendix 1	
Members of advisory group 2005	18
Appendix 2	
National Office publications and work in progress	19

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## FOREWORD

We are very pleased to publish the first annual report by the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education in the HEA. Significant progress has been made in 2005 and there is an ambitious plan of work for 2006.

We are all aware of the opportunities that higher education brings to individuals and to our society and economy. Promoting equity of access to those educational opportunities is a national priority. Learners of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds must have the opportunity to enter and participate in higher education and to play a full part in a dynamic society and economy.

There are many people in our society who still do not have adequate opportunities to progress to higher education and reach their full potential. There are still areas of our country where less than 10 per cent of young people go on to higher education. Boys in particular do not seem to be progressing in the numbers that they should. Students with a disability are still very under-represented. We are behind other OECD countries in the participation of mature students. Only a tiny number of students from the Traveller community make it to higher education. We also have a growing immigrant population as new members of our community whose needs must be addressed.

The higher education institutions are key players in ensuring that equal educational opportunity is a feature of our system. Hand in hand with equity of access for groups is access to the highest quality of education. This involves, in addition to financial resources, innovation in teaching methods and ongoing work on the structures and culture in higher education institutions to ensure that they provide a supportive and inclusive environment for students.

Great credit is due to the institutions and other key actors for the many worthwhile measures already in place. However, working together we will need to re-double our efforts in the period ahead as we work towards greater equity of access for all members of the community.

The advisory group to the National Access Office has been an important source of support and advice and we warmly thank them for their work in 2005. We look forward to continued collaboration in 2006, in close co-operation with students, parents, education and social partners.

### **Michael Kelly**

Chairman, Higher Education Authority, December 2005



**Michael Kelly, HEA Chairman**

## SUMMARY OF MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2005

2005 was a busy year for the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education. A number of initiatives were undertaken, some of which will lead to positive outcomes in the short term while others will have a longer term impact. The main achievements in 2005 are set out below under each of the six goals in the national action plan.

### 1 Communicate the rationale for equity of access

- Conference held to launch the action plan
- Plan circulated to over 500 education, community and social partners and Departmental officials
- Detailed briefings held on plan for students, higher education institutions, Departments, public agencies
- Substantial media coverage secured for the plan
- Audio visual DVD produced and sent to over 900 schools and education centres

### 2 Develop a national framework of policies and initiatives

- Twenty-eight higher education institutions surveyed to map existing links with primary, second level, further education and community/adult education
- Work on a framework of equity of access policies and initiatives advanced through an evaluation of existing programmes

### 3 Create routes of access and progression to higher education

- National framework of qualifications promoted through meetings, briefings and publications
- In collaboration with the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, review of current progression routes from further to higher education
- Range of new arrangements and progression routes from further to higher education

### 4 Introduce a broader range of teaching and learning strategies

- New teaching and learning strategies supported through the HEA Strategic Initiatives Scheme
- Contacts established with teaching and learning co-ordinators and networks
- National policy on recognition of prior learning agreed and published (NQAI)

### 5 Provide the necessary financial support and resources

- Funding allocated in time for incoming students through the Student Assistance, Disability and Millennium Partnership Funds
- Improvements in funding guidelines and support
- Further strategic development of access funding through the Strategic Initiatives Scheme
- Publication of review of current funding programmes to achieve equity of access
- 14% increase in students benefiting from the Disability Fund
- New HEA funding model with core and strategic funding for equity of access

### 6 Evaluate and learn from what works

- Evaluation of access programmes under way
- Evaluation guidelines developed
- Work on development of new student records database to gather data on student participation
- Work on defining and targeting students from under-represented groups in higher education

## INTRODUCTION

This report reviews progress made during the first year of implementation of the three-year national action plan *Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education in Ireland*. It also identifies issues arising during 2005 and presents outline plans for 2006.

Achieving equity of access to higher education is a complex task in that it requires initiatives and interventions from education institutions throughout the educational system as well as from communities, families and society in general. Prior to the publication of the action plan considerable work was already under way to achieve equity of access, but it was fragmented and lacking in strategic direction. The plan provides a framework for co-ordinated work and sets out six goals to be achieved:

- 1 Communicate the rationale for equity of access
- 2 Develop a national framework of policies and initiatives to achieve equity of access
- 3 Create routes of access and progression to higher education
- 4 Introduce a broader range of teaching and learning strategies in higher education
- 5 Provide the necessary financial support and resources
- 6 Evaluate and learn from what works

Progress in 2005 is reviewed under each of the six goals in the action plan.



**National Office team L to R: Justin Synnott, Alan McGrath, Peter Brown, Mary-Liz Trant, Orla Christle, Modesta Mawarire, Brian Johnston, Olive Walsh.**

## REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN 2005

### Communicate the rationale

The rationale for achieving equity of access to higher education was included as a preface to the action plan. At its launch during the Kilkenny conference 'Setting an agenda for action: Achieving equity of access to higher education in Ireland', the plan was circulated to over 500 education, community and social partners and to officials in the Departments of Education and Science, Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Social and Family Affairs, and Justice, Equality and Law Reform. Comments and feedback were received from individuals and agencies that are using the plan to underpin and inform their work. A report of the proceedings of the Kilkenny conference was circulated in February 2005.

Detailed briefings on the action plan were given to officials in the Department of Education and Science during the year. The plan was discussed at a number of seminars and conferences, including those held by the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB), the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, the Dublin Institute of Technology, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Mary Immaculate College, the Wexford campus of IT Carlow, Trinity College Dublin, Clondalkin Partnership, the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD), the Further Education and Training Awards Council, Access Made Accessible (AMA), the registrars' group of the Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology and the registrars' group of the Irish Universities Association (formerly CHIU). Radio interviews took place on the Pat Kenny show and on 'Outside the Box', and an article on the plan appeared in September 2005 in the Garda Review magazine. Key points of discussion included the definition of equity of access and the importance of emphasising not just entry to higher education, but also successful participation and completion. The need for 'push' and 'pull' initiatives was also highlighted – activities that encourage students from under-represented groups to consider entry to higher education and practical measures to keep them there through a more inclusive learning environment.

An audio-visual DVD promoting and communicating the access rationale was launched at the Cork City Lifelong Learning Festival in April 2005. Guidelines and support material for using the DVD were also produced and the pack was sent to over 900 centres, including primary and second-level schools, further education and training centres, adult education centres and community groups. Access personnel in higher education institutions were asked to promote the DVD in their work, and the CEOs of Vocational Education Committees were requested to use the DVD as part of inservice training for new teachers. The contents



of the DVD have also been put on the HEA website and can be accessed by schools and centres with broadband internet access. Feedback has been positive and the DVD is being used with students of all ages. The DVD also featured in national seminars run by the Irish Universities Quality Board and the Union of Students in Ireland.



**Modesta Mawarire and Justin Synnott at the DVD launch in Cork, April 2005.**

### **Develop a national framework of policies and activities**

In order to link disadvantaged regions, schools and communities to at least one higher education institution, a project was initiated to map existing links between higher education institutions and local/regional primary and second-level schools, community education centres and further education and training centres. Drawing on previous work by AMA, the access officer network, the National Office surveyed twenty-eight higher education institutions. A database was developed and the survey information was analysed and matched against lists of disadvantaged schools and community partnerships and groups. Primary and second-level schools and community partnerships that are currently not linked to any higher education institutions have now been identified, and information is available on the number, spread and quality of links that exist between higher education institutions and their local education partners. Information on existing links between higher education institutions and further education and training centres and adult education centres has also been gathered, and analysis of this information has been carried out with reference to the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) database of further education and training centres.

Work on a framework of access policies and activities is being advanced through an evaluation of existing access programmes. Progress on this evaluation is described under the goal on evaluation.

### **Create routes of access and progression**

The national framework of qualifications is the principal mechanism to enable access, transfer and progression for learners in Ireland. The National Office has promoted the qualifications framework in its work with educational institutions, staff and students. In addition, briefings have been provided to guidance personnel and education co-ordinators. Collaboration with those managing initiatives such as Qualifax and the guidance counsellors networks has also been initiated. An evaluation of current access and progression routes to universities by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and the National Office is also under way and the report and findings will be made available early 2006. New links between further and higher education have been explored; the institutes of technology significantly expanded access, transfer and progression routes from further education and training in 2005, and two Dublin-based universities began link programmes with further education colleges.

### **Introduce broader teaching and learning strategies**

Teaching and learning strategies were supported through the HEA Strategic Initiatives Scheme in 2005; these included additional learning support in areas such as mathematics, science and study skills, peer mentoring and tutorial systems, and additional strategies for people with specific learning difficulties. The National Office also developed contacts with teaching and learning co-ordinators in higher education institutions through meetings and correspondence. In June, national policy and operational guidelines on recognition of prior learning were agreed by a working group that was convened by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland and included a National Office representative. The policy and guidelines are now being implemented by all education and training providers.

### **Provide adequate financial support and resources**

The National Office took the following steps during 2005 to improve financial support to students. Firstly, there was timely allocation of the HEA Strategic Initiatives funding, the Student Assistance Fund, the Millennium Partnership Fund and the Students with a Disability Fund. Secondly, in the case of the Disability Fund, the National Office worked with the further and higher education sectors to provide support to students, and 1,696 students with a disability were approved for funding in 2004-5, an increase of over 200 students, 14 per cent, from the previous year. Thirdly, the applications process for the Disability Fund was refined so that students would not have to submit a fresh application each year for ongoing requirements, and funding rates for equipment and services were increased in a number of areas. Fourthly, the database to manage the Disability Fund was

developed so that queries and appeals could be more quickly dealt with. Fifthly, a small increase in the Student Assistance Fund was secured and the guidelines for the fund were reworked and clarified for administrators and students.

A comprehensive review of access funding was launched by Minister Mary Hanafin TD in December 2005. The findings were based on an analysis of current data and practice and through consultation with students, institutional and community representatives and officials in the Department of Education and Science. The report contains ten recommendations to be implemented over the next three years. An evaluation of the Millennium Partnership Fund was completed in April 2005 and the recommendations are currently being implemented. These include effective targeting of students in need of support, identifying and agreeing good administrative practice and ensuring that the Fund complements other sources of funding. The report also sets out plans for funding to achieve equity of access through the new HEA funding model which will be phased in from January 2006.

A review of the reporting systems in higher education institutions for the European Social Fund was completed in June 2005. The review noted the difficulties being experienced in complying with the reporting requirements and suggested that the National Office could provide guidance on streamlining the reporting process to reduce the administrative burden. A number of practical recommendations emerged from the review and are currently being agreed and implemented with further and higher education institutions.

Work on a revised recurrent funding model was completed within the HEA in December 2005 and will be phased in from 2006. The new model will allocate a proportion of institutions' core budget on the basis of performance in achieving equity of access as well as research.



**Michael Kelly, Minister Mary Hanafin TD, Mary-Liz Trant and Tom Boland at the launch of the review of access funding, December 2005**

## Evaluate and learn from what works

Work has been under way since March 2005 on an evaluation of access programmes for under-represented groups in higher education. The five aims of the evaluation are to:

- identify principles and examples of good practice in the structure and content of existing access programmes aimed at increasing the participation of students from four specific under-represented target groups – (i) students who are socio-economically disadvantaged; (ii) members of the Traveller community and ethnic minorities; (iii) students with a disability; and (iv) mature students;
- make recommendations about the development of a framework of policies and activities for successful access programmes;
- make recommendations about the development at all education levels of partnerships and collaborative measures to support access programmes;
- suggest a basis for agreeing and evaluating local and national access targets;
- recommend ways in which students, staff and practitioners can participate actively in the evaluation of access programmes.

A central element of the project is a self-evaluation by each higher education institution, and detailed background and guidelines documents were produced to explain the process. A briefing meeting was held in early October with over 70 attendees, and general support was expressed for the proposed evaluation. The completion date for the self-evaluation process is 20 February 2006. The results of the self-evaluations will then be analysed and discussed and a draft final report will be prepared.

The staff of the National Office also liaised with colleagues in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on a new student record database. In addition, meetings were held externally with officials in the statistics section of the Department of Education and Science, Professor Pat Clancy of UCD and representatives of the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) in the UK. In May 2005 the National Office produced a position paper “Towards comprehensive data collection and evaluation on access to higher education”. The next steps will involve identifying and targeting students from under-represented groups, applying a sector-wide definition of students with a disability and agreeing local and national targets for students from the Traveller and refugee communities. A survey is currently being completed on the participation of higher education entrants according to socio-economic status and it is expected that the findings will assist in targeting students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

A large part of the work of the National Office involves evaluation, and draft guidelines have been developed and are currently being tested. They include a commitment to inclusive, participative methods of consultation and to providing opportunities for all groups to be involved in the work to develop national policy and practice on access.



**Loman Conway, former CEO, Sligo VEC and David Leahy, current CEO, Tipperary North Riding VEC at the launch of the review of access funding, December 2005**



**Cynthia Deane, Educational Consultant, Professor Brian Norton and Dr Tommy Cooke, DIT at the launch of the review of access funding, December 2005**



**Seán Gannon and Gaye Conroy, Trinity College and Ann Heelan, AHEAD at the launch of the review of access funding, December 2005**



**Patricia Byrne, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Thomond Coogan and Sheila Purcell, UCD at the launch of the review of access funding, December 2005**

## ISSUES ARISING

During 2005 a number of broad issues or problems arose that had an impact on progress. They were discussed with the advisory group assisting the National Office and were also highlighted in papers and publications produced during the year (Appendix 2). These issues are long-standing and will take time to resolve; nevertheless, it is worth summarising them in this document and working towards possible solutions in 2006.

### **1 Access to quality higher education**

This concerns the view held by some that the quality of education may be lessened by efforts to achieve equity of access. Such a result would do a disservice to the students involved, the institutions, and the higher education system. The aim of the National Office is to secure not merely equity of access for groups now under-represented but also access to the highest quality of education. This involves, in addition to financial resources, innovation in teaching methods and ongoing work on the structures and culture in higher education institutions to ensure that they provide a supportive and inclusive environment for students.

### **2 Colleges and their local communities**

Higher educational institutions do not always operate as an integrated part of their communities. Sometimes they can be isolationist, with limited opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. As a result, communities can feel excluded and ignored.

### **3 A fragmented education system**

There are barriers between the different parts of the education system. For example, there are few opportunities for primary, second-level, further education and training and higher education to collaborate together on a system-wide project such as widening access. There is also insufficient co-ordination between the agencies and units responsible for different parts of the education system. There is a need for more collaboration and clarity of purpose in programmes and between agencies to promote educational opportunity from pre-primary through to higher education.

### **4 Equity of access on the margins**

Equity of access remains for the most part on the margins in higher education. It is not yet part of the day-to-day practical agenda of institutions. This slows progress in attracting and retaining students from diverse backgrounds and in introducing inclusive teaching and learning strategies into the higher education curriculum.

## 5 A maze of financial support systems

The maze-like structure of financial support means that students have to navigate through a range of funding programmes, including the state grants. For students and their families this can constitute a significant deterrent to progressing to higher education.

## 6 Variations in institutional funding to achieve equity of access

At present, there is considerable variation in the amount of funding allocated within institutions to achieve equity of access. This limits activity and development in some institutions and inevitably limits the opportunities available to students from under-represented groups.

## 7 Lack of core student data

We are hampered at present by the lack of essential data on student participation. We do not know how many students from under-represented groups enter higher education each year. We do not know how many of these students successfully complete their course of study and achieve an award. This makes it difficult to assess adequately the progress we are making. It is also difficult to make the case for continued and increased resources to achieve equity of access.



### Advisory group 2005

L to R (standing): Tommy Cooke, Peter Brown, Edwin Mernagh, Conor Maguire, Mary-Liz Trant, John MacGabhann, Paula Fitzell, Loman Conway, Modesta Mawarire.

L to R (seated): Ann Heelan, Bernie McDonnell, Cathal Kelly, Patricia O'Malley.

Group members not pictured: Berni Brady, Brian McGonagle, Brendan Goggin, Declan Treanor, Aine Hyland, Gary Granville, Jane Rooney, Lewis Purser, Philip Watt, Sarah Craig, Carmel Quinlan, Daithí McSithigh.



## **OUTLINE PLANS FOR 2006**

The plans for 2006 build on work achieved in the past year and aim for resolution of the issues identified as barriers to progress.

### **Communicate the rationale to achieve equity of access**

The equity of access rationale and the need to reconcile the quality and equality dichotomy will be promoted through meetings and dialogue with senior administrators. Strategies to establish equity of access as a central part of the practical agenda in higher education institutions will be developed and agreed. Data will be gathered on the participation and achievement of students from under-represented groups and on the richness and positive impact of a more diverse student community. Equity of access will continue to be promoted through the text media, radio, TV and the HEA website.

### **Develop a national framework of policies and activities**

A framework of effective initiatives and partnerships will be produced following completion of the evaluation of access programmes. A basis for agreeing and evaluating local and national access targets and indicators of progress will also be put forward. Expanded links will be created between disadvantaged schools and community groups and higher education institutions. Further links between further and higher education will be encouraged. The data from the 2005 mapping project will be used to promote equity of access throughout the education system and will be discussed with interested parties, including the Social Inclusion Unit of the Department of Education and Science.

### **Create routes of access and progression**

Extended progression routes from further to higher education will be created with reference to the national framework of qualifications and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). Foundation courses and direct entry routes for socio-economically disadvantaged students and students with a disability will be explored with a view to developing a national policy in these areas. The National Office will also work with the Social Inclusion and Further Education Units in the Department of Education and Science to enhance co-ordination of educational initiatives throughout the system. Progress will also be made through collaboration with other agencies, including the Further Education and Training Awards Council, the Higher Education and Training Awards Council, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Council for Special Education and the National Educational Welfare Board.

### **Introduce broader teaching and learning strategies**

The National Office will engage in further work with higher education institutions on new strategies to support successful participation and completion among all students. It will also assist in introducing initiatives on teaching development, inservice and qualifications for higher education teachers and lecturers. Higher education institutions will also be encouraged to introduce guidelines on inclusive teaching and learning and curriculum development strategies. Teaching and learning networks and co-ordinators, where these exist, will be important sources of contact. A paper on new developments will be presented by the National Office at the fourth annual conference of the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) in Galway in June 2006.

### **Provide adequate financial support and resources**

During 2006 the National Office will implement the recommendations in the 2005 review of access funding. These include a comprehensive survey on the cost of going to college for different kinds of students, including those with childcare and family responsibilities and those with particular learning needs. In collaboration with the Department of Education and Science, clear and comprehensive information will be produced in a range of formats on the financial support available to students, parents and communities. A proposal on support for mature students in part-time education will be developed as well as a review system for students in danger of losing their grant through no fault of their own. Revised guidelines on local funding will also be agreed and implemented. The National Office will also assist with implementation of the new HEA funding model and support higher education institutions in developing their access plans and setting quantitative and qualitative targets for progress.

### **Evaluate and learn from what works**

Access to data on student participation is a key action point for the National Office and during 2006 work will be completed on a comprehensive student records system that provides a means of tracking the participation of students from diverse groups in higher education. New targets for participation by under-represented groups will also be set. The National Office will liaise with the Department of Education and Science on data collection and monitoring of student progress in primary and second level, and with the Further Education and Training Awards Council and the Central Applications Office on progression from further to higher education. The findings of all evaluation work will be fully disseminated and discussed, and ongoing local evaluation of progress in access work will be encouraged and supported.

# APPENDIX 1

## Members of advisory group 2005

### Member

**Paula Fitzell**

Access Officer Athlone Institute of Technology

**Berni Brady**

Director of AONTAS

**Ann Heelan**

Director of AHEAD

**Brian McGonagle**

Access Officer, Letterkenny IT

**Brendan Goggin**

Registrar, Cork Institute of Technology

**Declan Treanor**

Disability Officer, Trinity College

**Dr Tommy Cooke**

Community Links Education Co-Ordinator

**Professor Aine Hyland**

Head of Educational Disadvantage Committee

**Professor Gary Granville**

Member of board of HEA

**Conor Maguire**

Group Training Manager, Irish Life and Permanent

**John McGabhann**

Teachers Union of Ireland

**Jane Rooney**

Education Officer, Pavee Point

**Lewis Purser**

Assistant Director (Academic Affairs)

**Loman Conway**

Chief Executive Officer, Sligo VEC (retired)

**Philip Watt**

Director of NCCRI

**Sarah Craig**

Research and Policy Analyst, NCSE

**Patricia O'Malley**

Director, National Parents Council

**Edwin Mernagh**

Development Officer, NQAI

**Dr Carmel Quinlan**

Mature Student Officer, UCC

**Bernie McDonnell**

Education Co-ordinator

**Cathal Kelly**

Education Officer, Equality Authority

**Daithí McSithigh**

Education Officer, USI

### Organisation/Network

Access Made Accessible (AMA)

AONTAS

Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD)

Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology

Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology

Disability Advisor Workers Network (DAWN)

Dublin Institute of Technology

Educational Disadvantage Committee

Higher Education Authority

Irish Business and Employers Confederation

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Irish Travellers Movement/Pavee Point/Irish Traveller Womens Forum

Irish Universities Association

Irish Vocational Education Association

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI)

National Council for Special Education

National Parents Council

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland

Network of Mature Student Officers

Pobal (formerly Area Development Management)

The Equality Authority

Union of Students of Ireland

## APPENDIX 2

### National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education Publications and work in progress

#### 2004

- December**     *Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education in Ireland: Action plan 2005-2007* Dublin: HEA
- Towards a National Strategy: Initial Review of HEA Targeted Initiatives to Widen Access to Higher Education* Dublin: HEA

#### 2005

- February**     *Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education: Setting an Agenda for Action in Ireland. Conference Proceedings* Dublin: HEA
- March**         *Evaluation of the Millennium Partnership Fund for Disadvantage* Dublin: HEA
- April**          “Opportunities for All” Package including audio-visual DVD and educational support material
- May**            “Towards comprehensive data collection and evaluation on access to higher education” Position paper
- July**            “Systems review of ESF third level access measure returns”
- October**        “Evaluation of access programmes: Background document”
- “Evaluation of access programmes: Guidelines”
- “Evaluation of access programmes: Template”
- December**     *Progressing the Action Plan: Funding to Achieve Equity of Access to Higher Education* Dublin: HEA

## HEA MEMBERS

### Chairman

Mr. Michael Kelly  
*Chairman, HEA*

Professor Sarah Moore  
*Deputy Chairperson, Dean of Teaching and Learning, UL*

Dr. Maurice Bric  
*Department of Modern History, UCD*

Cllr. Maria Corrigan  
*Member, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council*

Mr. Michael Cotter  
*School of Education Studies, DCU*

Mr. Martin Cronin  
*Chief Executive, Forfás*

Dr. Honor Fagan  
*Department of Sociology, NUI Maynooth*

Professor Gary Granville  
*Faculty of Education, National College of Art and Design*

Ms Carol Herron  
*Home School Community Co-ordinator, Co. Cavan VEC*

Mr. Patrick J. Kirby  
*Group Commercial Director, Alphyra*

Mr. Tony McDonnell  
*President, Union of Students in Ireland*

Professor Ciaran Murphy  
*Department of Accounting, Finance and Information Systems, UCC*

Dr. Thomas Cooke  
*Head of Community Links Programme, DIT*

Dr. Pat Kelleher  
*Former Director, Cork IT*

Ms. Sheila Drumm  
*School Principal*

Ms. Doreen Delahunty  
*Self-employed business-person*

Professor Elizabeth Meehan  
*Queens University Belfast*

Professor Tom Boylan  
*NUI Galway*

Mr. Louis Dockery  
*Solicitor*

## NATIONAL OFFICE FOR EQUITY OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

### The Higher Education Authority

An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas  
Marine House, Clanwilliam Court, Dublin 2.

Tel: +353 1 661 2748

Fax: +353 1 661 0492

Lo-Call: 1890 200 637

e-mail: [info@hea.ie](mailto:info@hea.ie)

website: [www.hea.ie](http://www.hea.ie)

