

Mission-based Performance Compact

2018-2021

between

Athlone Institute of Technology

and

The Higher Education Authority

Date: 20/12/2018



Context

This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Athlone 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 higher education institutions 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 Athlone 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 higher education institutions 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 Athlone Institute of Technology. It sets out how Higher Education Institution'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 Athlone 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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Provides for the establishment of the Compact and its term, and for the Higher Education Authority to inform Athlone Institute of Technology of any actual or prospective changes to policy.	
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Sets out the Performance Funding Framework within which the HEA will allocate performance funding to Athlone Institute of Technology.	
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Includes a statement of Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy. Athlone Institute of Technology also agrees to inform the Higher Education Authority of changes to its mission and profile.	
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Sets out Athlone Institute of Technology strategic intentions and objectives using standardised templates aligned to the published framework. These strategic intentions / objectives <i>must</i> align with the institution's own properly formulated strategic plan.	
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Where significant or urgent governance or compliance issues arise, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.	
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Where necessary, this includes additional material supplied by Higher Education Institution, 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 Athlone 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

Athlone 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 Athlone 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 Athlone Institute of Technology of this in writing and will consult with Athlone Institute of Technology accordingly.

2. Performance Funding Framework

Higher education Performance Funding will provide incentives for higher education institutions 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 Athlone 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

Athlone 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 Athlone Institute of Technology acknowledge that Athlone Institute of Technology’s mission and strategy may evolve.

Athlone Institute of Technology and the Higher Education Authority recognise that Athlone 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 Athlone Institute of Technology may adjust its mission and strategy from time to time. Athlone 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.

Vision, Mission, Value

Athlone Institute of Technology’s vision is to become a Technological University distinguished by outstanding learner experience and distinctive regional contribution, while maintaining our global orientation. Our mission is to provide contemporary and relevant student centred, career focused education, training and applied research programmes for our diverse cohort of learners. The activities of Athlone Institute of Technology are guided by core values of Professionalism, Inclusive Focus, Excellence, Partnership, Transparency and Accountability.

Vision	To become a Technological University distinguished by outstanding learner experience and distinctive regional contribution, while maintaining our global orientation				
Mission	To provide contemporary and relevant student centred, career focused education, training and applied research programmes for our diverse cohort of learners				
Strategic Themes	Enhanced Industrial Engagement	Build Research Capacity and Scale	Connecting Research and Teaching	Access, Progression, and Success Strategy	Internationalisation Strategy
Foundational Priorities	Quality Culture Enhancement			Excellence in Operation and Governance	
Values	Professionalism	Inclusive Focus	Excellence	Partnership	Transparency and Accountability

Figure 1 Synergy between AITs Vision and Values

Strategic Themes

Athlone Institute of Technology identifies five Strategic Themes that build on the success of the current Strategic Plan

2014-2018: *Global Focus – Regional Impact*

1. Enhanced Industrial Engagement
2. Build Research Capacity and Scale
3. Connecting Research and Teaching
4. Access, Progression, and Success Strategy
5. Internationalisation Strategy

The synergy between identity, vision, function, and experience culminates in identifying our strategic priorities. (Figure 1) Building on the current strategic plan, this compact acknowledges the connectedness of priorities that defines the ecosystem of Athlone Institute of Technology as an ambitious and evolving institution. One that will significantly contribute to system based objectives and associated High Level Targets (HLT)

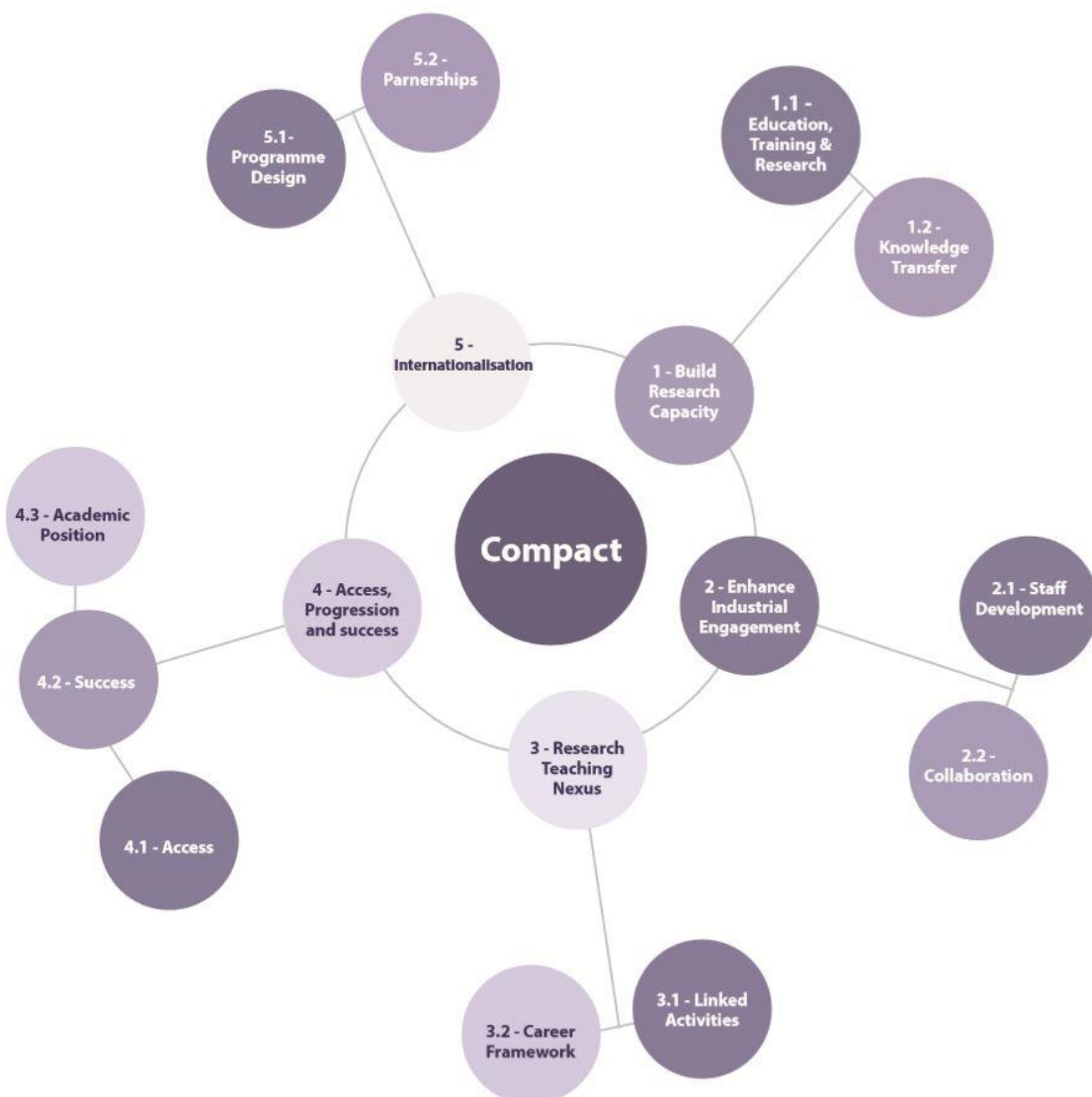


Figure 2 Abridged list of the Institutional priorities considered during framing of compact submission.

This compact serves as a bridging between strategic plans and enables the refocusing of priority areas, while maintaining the momentum generated to date. Athlone Institute of Technology prides itself on the quality of the student experience and acknowledges that the success of our strategic priorities is predicated on the quality of the provision.

Therefore, Athlone Institute of Technology has established two foundational priorities that govern all activities:

- Quality Culture Enhancement
- Excellence in Operation and Governance

4. Development Plans and Key System Objective

Overview

The strategic plan for the period 2019-2023 is currently in the process of being finalised by the institution following an exhaustive period of stakeholder engagement. The targets and objectives articulated herein are aligned with AITs strategic priorities and institutional roadmap. Figure 3 depicts the mapping of HEA High Level Targets to the Strategic Themes and Foundational Priorities identified by AIT. The Strategic priorities, initiatives and metrics described in this compact submission are envisioned to be cross-cutting, designed to deliver multiple targets by leveraging synergies between cognate areas, for example initiatives around work based projects at undergraduate level will enhance industry engagement and contribute to growth in applied research at a postgraduate level, in addition to building relationships which will help identify future trends and focus areas for provision of applied industry training.

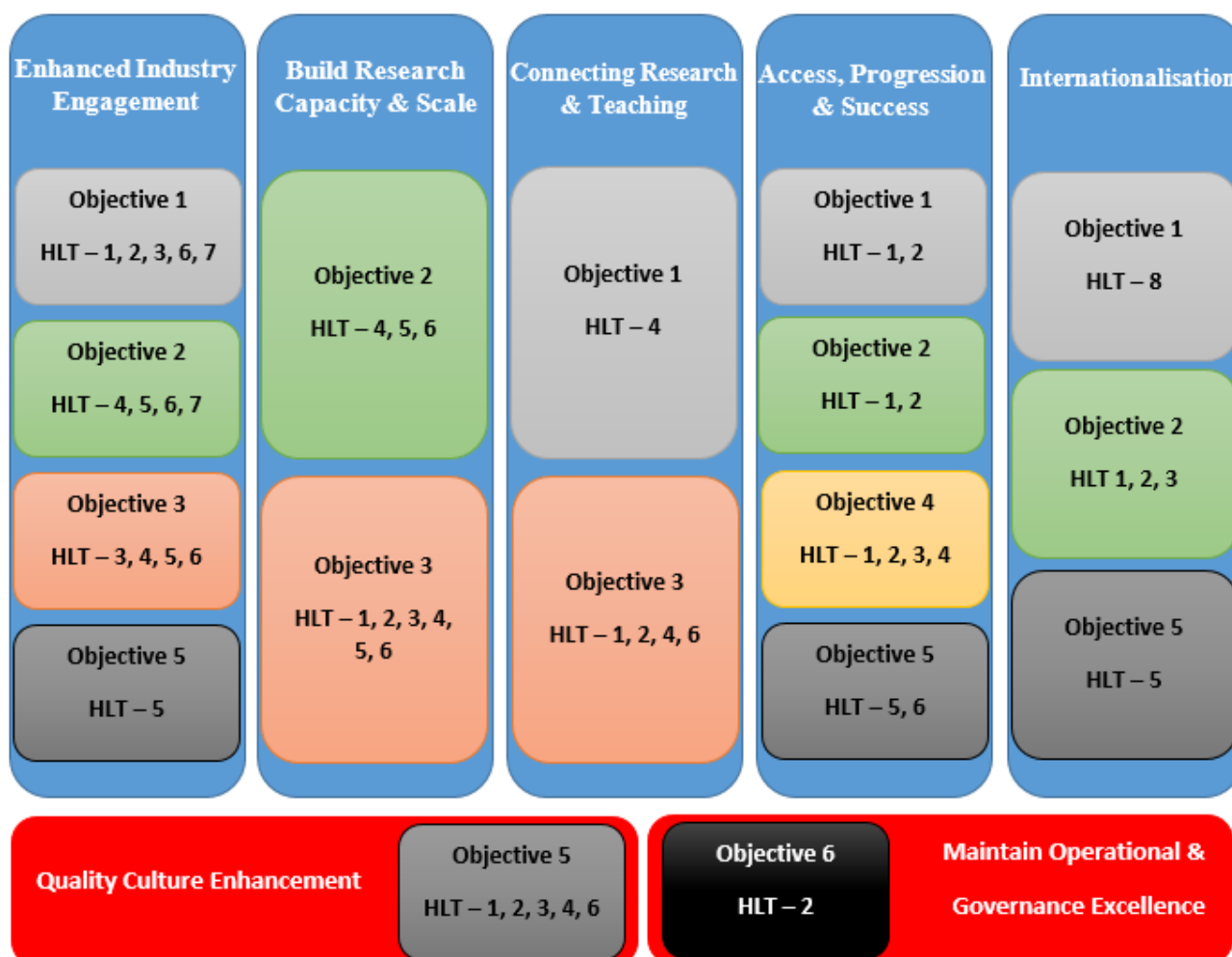


Figure 3 High Level Target Mapping

Sustaining our position and developing stretch targets

Capturing a snapshot, the institutional profile (Figure 4) affirms the strength of Athlone Institute of Technology with respect to key metrics. In addition, it provides an opportunity to identify areas of strategic priority and associated stretch targets. The following thematic strategies and institutional priorities are contextualised with respect to our current activities and stretch ambition.

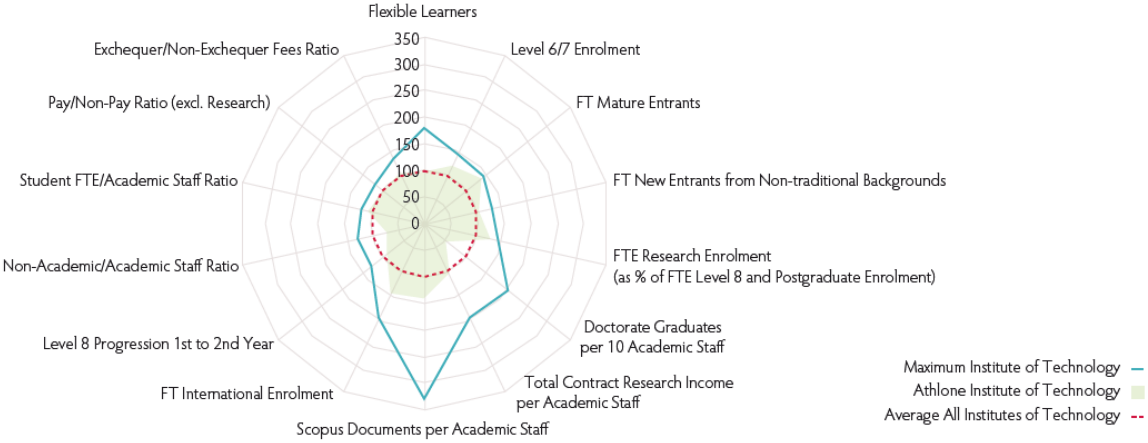


Figure 4 Institutional Profile 2015/16

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

Athlone Institute of Technology as the only HEI in the Midlands makes a significant contribution to the social, cultural, and economic developments of the region. Critically, the relationship between the ambition of Athlone Institute of Technology and the success of Industry in the region is to the forefront of our priorities. The Institute, together with regional business and industry collaborated in a submission to the National Planning Framework. This was instrumental in designating Athlone as a Regional Centre. The Institute has contributed to a successful Midland Regional Skills Forum which has improved and supported links between the Institute and the Regional Business & Industry.

- **Strategic Priority 1.1**

Build on Athlone Institute of Technology's well-established relationship with industry, to maintain, develop and evolve contemporary and relevant educational, training, and research provision.

- **Strategic Priority 1.2**

Transition companies that may not have a formal in-house R&D capacity to innovation activity through collaboration, and to increase the competitive advantage of companies through knowledge transfer.

Strategic Initiatives & Key Metrics

- a. Building on the work of MEND (SME Portal), and Regional Skills Forum develop an institutional database that links regional and national skills needs to better inform systematic programme development at all levels (Objective 1 – HLT 1,6,7 and Objective 2 HLT 4,5,6,7).

AIT Key Metric:

Designation of staff for Skills for Growth Programme

- b. Include work placement or 'live project' as an element of all Level 8 awards (Objective 1 – HLT 4)

AIT Key Metric:

Number of level 8 programmes with work placement or live project	Baseline	2019	2020	2021	2025
	65%	70%	80%	90%	100%

- c. Continue to develop agile programme architecture and associated QA processes to respond to bespoke industry needs from Level 6-10 (Objective 1 – HLT 3,6)
- d. Develop an Online Distance Learning strategy to deliver education and training needs that are flexible and accessible to support a broader student demographic (Objective 1 – HLT 1,2 and Objective 5 HLT 5)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Creation of New Faculty & Dean Q1 2019
- II. Online Distance Learning Strategy Q3 2019
- III. Creation of New Programmes:

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
Faculty of Business & Hospitality	0	2	5	9
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics	1	4	9	11
Faculty of Science & Health	1	2	9	15
Department of Lifelong Learning	2	3	7	12

- e. Strengthen the link between Undergraduate and Postgraduate activities, including linked capstone activities, work placements, shared learning spaces and dissemination activities (Objective 1 – HLT 4)

AIT Key Metric:

L8 Programmes with Linked Capstone Activities	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
	15%	25%	50%	75%

- f. Develop an Online Distance Learning unit to support Part-time, Life Long Learning, Flexible and international access **(Objective1 – HLT 1,2)**

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Creation of New Faculty & Dean Q1 2019**
- II. Online Distance Learning Strategy Q3 2019**

- g. Offer international language as either an integrated element of programmes or additional credits across all faculties **(Objective 1 – HLT 8)**

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

Athlone Institute of Technology recognises the bi-directional relationship between teaching and research as being of significant importance. Our commitment to contemporary and relevant provision supports research informed practice and sustained discipline expertise. Athlone Institute of Technology is not only committed to delivering contemporary understandings, but also the creation of knowledge.

The Institute also supports a significant internationalisation strategy and will continue to build on a number of very successful international collaborations and agreements. International students studying at Athlone Institute of Technology have enriched the experience of our campus community. A number of collaborative exchanges for both staff and students have been developed with partner Universities in priority international markets and with long established European partners with support from Erasmus+ funding and AIT International Scholarship Programme.

Strategic Priority 2.1

Design and develop programmes to enhance internationalisation amongst students, researchers and staff, creating greater awareness of mobility initiatives to priority international markets, European partner institutes and Enterprises thereby increasing international student numbers on undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes; offering modules on-line to international partner institutes and supporting the expansion of joint programmes. In addition, outward mobility opportunities will support diversified career frameworks that create rich opportunities for mobility of excellent researchers and staff.

Strategic Priority 2.2

Formally embed research excellence with teaching and learning activities to support staff development, student progression, and knowledge creation.

Strategic Initiatives

- a. Increased provision of a broad range of knowledge intensive services with a focus on start-ups and SMEs , increasing Innovation Voucher projects with industry (Objective 2 – HLT 4,6)

AIT Key Metric:

Increase number of Innovation Voucher Projects (or projects for a commensurate sum):

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
<i>Number of €5K projects Completed</i>	40	44	48	52

- b. Increased technology transfer to enterprise, increasing Licence Options Assignments (Objective 2 – HLT 5)

AIT Key Metrics:

	Baseline	2019	2010	2021
LOAs	3	3	4	4

- c. Expand delivery of cultural awareness training to staff in all faculties and offer modules to all students interested in study/placement abroad to further increase outward mobility of both students and staff (Objective 2 – HLT 3)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Staff who have received Cultural awareness training.

Baseline	2019	2020	2021
0%	30%	60%	80%

II. Assess opportunities for outward student mobility and staff exchange with established partner universities in European and non-European countries.

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
Staff	15	17	22	30
Students	30	33	37	45

- d. Offer international language as either an integrated element of programmes or additional credits across all faculties (Objective 1 – HLT 8)
- e. Expand transnational education offering at existing and new partner universities in priority markets (Objective 2 – HLT 1,2)

AIT Key Metric:

Utilise network of 80 EU and 120 Non-EU MOUs to develop transnational education offerings. Assess opportunities to establish Joint institutes with established partner universities in China and Malaysia - Q3 2020

- f. Offer international students registered at international partner universities the opportunity to complete a module of Athlone Institute of Technology approved programme on-line with the goal of transferring to Athlone Institute of Technology to complete the final year of study or postgraduate studies (Objective 2 HLT 1,2)

AIT Key Metric:

Students groups offered online modules by AIT

Baseline	2019	2020	2021
0	5	20	30

- g. Continue to develop student success supports for International students (Objective 2 – HLT 1,2)

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

Building on the success of our research enrolments and research income, AIT continues to see building research capacity and scale as a key strategic endeavour. This crosscutting theme specifically addresses the investment in Faculty, Level 9 and Level 10 throughput, Industry Innovation, and research collaboration.

Strategic Priority 3.1

Continue to expand support for staff time release and funding initiatives, which have significantly contributed to the current institutional profile and associated TU agenda.

Strategic Priority 3.2

Link core research expertise with industry needs via market informed collaborative applied R&D, while in parallel, aiming to diversify our R&D funding sources towards increased EU funding.

Strategic Initiatives

- a. Continue to build further capability to deliver relevant solutions to our industrial partners through increased, focused, collaboration with state funded research centres such as SFI funded centres (CONFIRM, AMBER) and Technology Centres such as IMR and ICOMP (Objective 3– HLT 3,4,5,6)
- b. Build on Athlone Institute of Technology’s very successful Research Institutes and Technology Gateways to increase applied research with enterprise and increase income derived from industry (Objective 2 – HLT 4,5,6)

AIT Key Metric:

Increase Research Income derived from Industry:

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
<i>Total Value (€,000) of industry contribution to research projects</i>	470	500	565	640

- c. Grow the number of industrial projects through our Technology Gateways, COMAND and APT, increasing research revenue (Objective 3 – HLT 6)

AIT Key Metrics:

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
<i>Total Number of applied research projects with industry</i>	130	145	155	161

- d. Develop a more agile metric driven time-release programme that supports all stages of researchers’ development by building supervision, examination, and disciplined research competencies (Objective 3 – HLT 1,2)

AIT Key Metric:

Number of Staff on Time Release:

Baseline	2019	2020	2021
12	13	24	30

- e. Support research development by developing a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework to include research capacity building (Objective 3 – HLT 3,4)

AIT Key Metric:

Percentage of Full time academic staff who hold level 10 Qualification or equivalent as per TU Criteria (currently 34 Staff Completing PhDs):

Baseline	2019	2021	2025
34%	48%	53%	60%

- f. By balancing targeted seed funding and external funding, increase postgraduate student numbers and funded postdoctoral positions in areas aligned with current and evolving areas of expertise, while addressing national priority areas (Objective3 – HLT 1)

AIT Key Metric:

Registered Postgraduate Research Students	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
	72	80	90	110

- g. Develop a strategy to increase the number of high value projects between enterprise and Athlone Institute of Technology (Objective 3 – HLT 6)
- h. Build on EU funding success to increase funding through international research collaborations (Objective 3 – HLT 5)
- i. Develop an operational plan to integrate research excellence with teaching and learning that encompasses dual participation by research institutes and faculties (Objective 3 – HLT 2,4)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Pilot Senior Leadership Team structure (composed of 30% Research Staff) in one Faculty Ongoing
 - II. Roll out Structure to all Faculties - Q1 2020
- j. Demonstrate the impact and contribution of applied research to the campus, industry, and global competitiveness (Objective 3 – HLT 6)
- k. Expand initiatives to incentivise research, including inter alia promoting researcher ‘champions’ and time release from teaching (Objective 3 – HLT 1,2)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Review existing time release structures and implement KPI’s and Deliverables - Q1 2019
 - II. Creation of Best Publication Initiatives - Q2 2019
 - III. Expand take up of staff time release - See Initiative ‘D’
- l. Support targeted research exchange programmes and inter-institutional research agendas, including mobility, supervision, examination and grant writing (Objective 3 – HLT 4)

AIT Key Metric:

Utilise network of 80 EU and 120 Non-EU MOUs to increase Researcher Exchange and International Co-Supervision and collaborative grant writing by 10% year on year.

- m. Establish a graduate school to further support integration of research with teaching and develop articulated pathways to structured MSc and PhD programmes (Objective 3 – HLT 1)

AIT Key Metric:

Complete external panel review and deliver by Q3 2019.

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

Athlone Institute of Technology is noted for its excellent student experience and is committed to student success. Building on the positive feedback from ISSE, Athlone Institute of Technology continues its commitment to developing access pathways, increasing progression rates, and enhancing the student experience. These initiatives are guided by the National Access Plan. The concept of access is long established and embedded in the Institute and the approach taken by the Institute has always been to mainstream equity of access. Initiatives such as the development of Universal Design Principles, and a range of supports such as mentoring (Peer Assisted Student Support), Tutors, the Institute Academic Writing Centre and Learning and Development modules are available to all students. The range of supports and initiatives undertaken by the Institute and their continued review, evaluation and development will result in meeting the targets under the National Access Plan. AIT has joined HEAR, providing a new pathway for students from lower socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds and also providing the opportunity to target students in need of supports prior to entry. Further pathways will be explored under PATH 3.

Strategic Priority 4.1

Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to supporting access and fostering an environment of diversity, inclusion and social integration to all people and communities regardless of their gender, nationality or social status.

Strategic Priority 4.2

Ensuring the success of all students is a priority for Athlone Institute of Technology. The Institute will continue to evolve institutional policies, procedures, and activities in light of stakeholder input, contemporary data, and international best practice.

Strategic Initiatives

- a. Build on the success of the MEND PATH 2 and PATH 3 funding to develop strategic knowledge, partners, and policies to support sustained access to Athlone Institute of Technology by underrepresented groups (Objective 4 – HLT 2,3)
- b. Promote articulation agreements with Further Education providers and demonstrate pathways from Further Education to Higher Education, aligned in areas defined by regional and national skills needs (Objective 4 – HLT 4)

AIT Key Metric:

Review and Re-articulation of Existing MOUs

Q1 2020

- c. Continue the Institute of Sanctuary bursary scheme to support refugee access (Objective 4 – HLT 4)

AIT Key Metric:

I. First IoT to achieve University of Sanctuary Status - Complete

II. Intake of Students:

Baseline	2019	2020	2021
9	12	15	17

- d. Develop a student success strategy which incorporates increased access via HEAR, DARE and other underrepresented groupings that access AIT while also continuing our commitment to working with DEIS schools. (Objective 4 – HLT 1)
- e. Build on the success of the PASS, AIT Inspire, Student Success Advisors and Academic Tutors initiatives to enhance success rates, experience and retention specifically targeting vulnerable groups. (Objective 4 – HLT 1,2)
- f. Continue the strong partnerships between all stakeholders (quality office, students union, academic and support staff) so as to continue to strategically utilise ISSE feedback to enhance the student experience (Objective 4 – HLT 1)
- g. Use student data to understand student profiles, programme pathways, and HE perceptions, with a view to informed decision-making with respect to programme viability, opportunity, and factors that may influence success (Objective 4 – HLT 1)

AIT Key Metric:

Implement Schedule of Reporting of Access, Progression and Retention Data - Q1 2020

- h. Continue to systematically review provision and explore in particular cross-faculty opportunities (Objective 4 – HLT 1)

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

Athlone Institute of Technology considers Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement as foundational priorities and as such underpins all institutional decisions and strategies.

Strategic Priority 5.1

Develop a Total Quality Management Strategy and subscribe to becoming a data driven organisation to enhance decision-making capacity. AIT commits to rolling reviews of the academic position to include; level, discipline, architecture, and delivery method for all programmes ensuring offerings are contemporary, relevant, and fit for purpose.

Strategic Priority 5.2

Building on the success of the Sunday Times Higher Education Ranking and ISSE benchmarking, Athlone Institute of Technology aspires to become an internationally ranked (U-Multirank) institution.

Strategic Initiatives

- a) Support the Professional development of staff as critical decision makers both with respect to academic excellence and quality assurance/enhancement (Objective 5 – HLT 1)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. Percentage of Full time academic staff who hold level 10 Qualification or equivalent as per TU Criteria (currently 34 Staff Completing PhDs):

Baseline	2019	2021	2025
34%	48%	53%	60%

- II. Review existing time release structures and implement KPI's and Deliverables - Q1 2019

- III. Number of Staff on Time Release:

Baseline	2019	2020	2021
12	13	24	30

- b) Develop a dashboard of critical data, compliant with a schedule of reporting that is accessible to relevant faculties and units with a focus on Access, progression and retention (Objective 5 – HLT 3,4,6)

AIT Key Metric:

Implement Schedule of Reporting of Access, Progression and Retention Data Q1 2020

- c) Using QS metrics, internally model Faculties and subject areas to determine priority area for comparison and ranking (Objective 5 – HLT 2)
- d) Develop a strategy and action plan to improve performance relevant to QS metrics (Objective 5 – HLT 2)
- e) Incorporate Universal Design Principles in new curricula design (Objective 5 – HLT 6)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. First Intake of pilot course exemplifying universal design principles on CAO - September 2019
- II. Roll out Universal Design Principles across faculties - Q2 2020

- f) Further develop the Online Distance Learning strategy to respond to learner needs and emerging opportunities (Objective 5 – HLT 5 and Objective 1 HLT 1,2)

AIT Key Metrics:

- I. **Creation of New Faculty & Dean** **Q1 2019**
- II. **Online Distance Learning Strategy** **Q3 2019**
- III. **Creation of New Programmes:**

	Baseline	2019	2020	2021
Faculty of Business & Hospitality	0	2	5	9
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics	1	4	9	11
Faculty of Science & Health	1	2	9	15
Department of Lifelong Learning	2	3	7	12

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

Unlike System Objectives 1-5, the Institute considers System Objective 6 and its' High Level Targets as mandatory and not an area where we can prioritise some over others.

The Institute has a record of accomplishment of compliance with Governance issues. Athlone Institute of Technology works closely with external stakeholders such as HEA, Comptroller and Auditor General Etc. to ensure that the Institute has not only proper policies and procedures in place, but also an ethos of and culture that promotes good governance.

The Institute will continue to work in partnership with the HEA in continuing to develop a governance model, which will hold good ethics, integrity and best practice in high regard.

Strategic Initiatives

- a. Achieve Athena Swan Bronze Status (Objective 6 – HLT 2)

AIT Key Metric:

Submit Application by end of Q4 2018

- b. Implement recommendations outlined in the HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutes (Objective 6 – HLT1)
- c. Embed the Athena Swan Committee as a permanent Institute committee with powers to drive the Gender Equality Agenda (Objective 6 – HLT1)

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 Higher Education Institution 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 Higher Education Institution within the system.

Signed: Paul O'Leary
Date: 14/2/2019

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed: Seamus O'Leary
Date: 6/2/19

President, Athlone Institute of Technology

Signed: Liam O'Leary
Date: 6/2/19

Chair, Governing Body, Athlone Institute of Technology

Appendices

We (Athlone 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 7: Institutional quantitative data return (September 2018)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 8: Presentation