

DKIT – comments on preliminary outcome of strategic dialogue cycle 2

Further to the recent discussion in respect of the feedback on the Compact and following a review of the Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 Assessment of Performance for Dundalk Institute of Technology, the Institute makes the following high level observations:

- We agree with the assessment that the HEA Compact cites too many objectives and thus presents as lacking in strategic prioritisation. In the light of the current process for the development of a 3 year financial plan to return the Institute to a balanced budget, it is anticipated that the Compact will be revisited to address this issue. This will be carried out in consultation with the HEA in early 2016.
- Given that the Institute has met or exceeded the vast majority of the targets set out in the Compact, the placing of the Institute in Category 3 is disappointing and does not reflect the achievements to date. Whilst we are mindful of the impact of the current financial position, overall the Institute has performed against the objectives set out in the Compact. As outlined, the objectives will be reduced to a number of more high level strategic objectives that will reflect the intent and direction of the Institute in light of the revised 3 year financial plan.

In respect of a number of specific elements, we comment as follows:

- The weakness of benchmarking: We would consider that this is an issue for the sector overall and would welcome any input from the HEA as to what benchmarks are currently in use by other HEIs that could inform our process or any recommendations on any relevant international benchmarks.
- Given the current financial position, the Institute will review its strategic objectives but cautions against ensuring that they represent “higher risk” or are “re-formulated to stretch”. Our ambition is to return to a balanced budget and all objectives will be reviewed in this context.