

# Mission-based Performance Compact

**2018-2021**

*between*

**Dublin Institute of Technology**

*and*

**The Higher Education Authority**

**Date of final document: 20 December 2018**



# Context

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This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Dublin 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 Dublin 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 Dublin Institute of Technology. It sets out how Dublin Institute of Technology's mission and goals aligned 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 Dublin 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 Dublin 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 Dublin Institute of Technology.	
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Includes a statement of Dublin Institute of Technology's mission and strategy. The Dublin Institute of Technology also agrees to inform the Higher Education Authority of changes to its mission and profile.	
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Sets out Dublin Institute of Technology's 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.	
<b>5. Annual Compliance Statement</b>	<b>53</b>
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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Contains confirmation of the agreement between the HEA and Dublin Institute of Technology, to be signed upon conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.	
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Where necessary, this includes additional material supplied by Dublin Institute of Technology, 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

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The Higher Education Authority and Dublin 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

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

## 2. Performance Funding Framework

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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 Dublin 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

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Dublin 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 Dublin Institute of Technology acknowledge that Dublin Institute of Technology's mission and strategy may evolve.

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

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#### DIT – BACKGROUND

**Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)** is a leader in higher technological education in Ireland. Located in the heart of Ireland's capital city, the mission of DIT is to provide an innovative, responsive and caring learning environment for a diverse range and level of programmes to students of all ages and backgrounds. In doing so, DIT:-

- combines the academic quality of a traditional university with career-focussed learning, discovery and the application of knowledge
- emphasises excellence in learning, teaching, scholarship, research and support for entrepreneurship,
- contributes to technological, economic, social and cultural progress, and
- is engaged with and within our community.

With a history of over 130 years, DIT has developed and evolved to meet the every-changing challenges of higher education and currently has a student population of 20,000. It has a significant track record in delivering career-oriented education, research & innovation, and community/civic engagement, and is now poised to address the current and future needs, challenges and opportunities of a complex modern knowledge society. Key drivers in the higher education environment have been identified and these have helped inform the development of priorities within the DIT Strategic Plan to 2019. (see Appendix 1)

As an independent higher education institution DIT has retained a unique place in the Irish Higher Education landscape since its foundation. Its positioning and performance over many years provides DIT with a robust platform from which to deliver its new strategic plan.

DIT:-

1. Has been a leader in higher technological education in Ireland, with history going back to 1887
2. Has had full degree awarding powers (NFQ level) up to PhD level, since 1998
3. Is the only Irish multi-level HEI to appear in global university rankings = top 3-5% of world universities (Times Higher & QS); in the top 50 youngest universities; and with strong performance in U-Multirank
4. Is a member of European University Association

5. Continues to support and deliver its model of practice-based and research informed education
6. Has recognised quality in programme provision through accreditation by professional and statutory bodies
7. Has a current student population, across NFQ levels 6-10 of 19,191, (*academic year 2017/18*); this will rise to over 27,000 for the combined TU Dublin
8. Has a Graduate Network of almost 100,000 members world-wide, enjoying highly successfully careers in Ireland and abroad
9. Is the only national provider, or one of two providers, in a number of areas of programme offering
10. Has a strong established track record in widening participation
11. Has research strengths in a number of key fields;- Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise
12. Has strong output of research publications that have high citations impact
13. Has highly successful award-winning activity in technology transfer and new venture creation
14. Is the largest provider of part-time and corporate education in Ireland
15. Is renowned for its extensive community and civic engagement
16. Has commenced, and is committed to completing, the development of its campus in Grangegorman that will provide 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of state-of-the art facilities in a modern 21<sup>st</sup> century campus, in the heart of Dublin city.

DIT is represented broadly by the following infographic

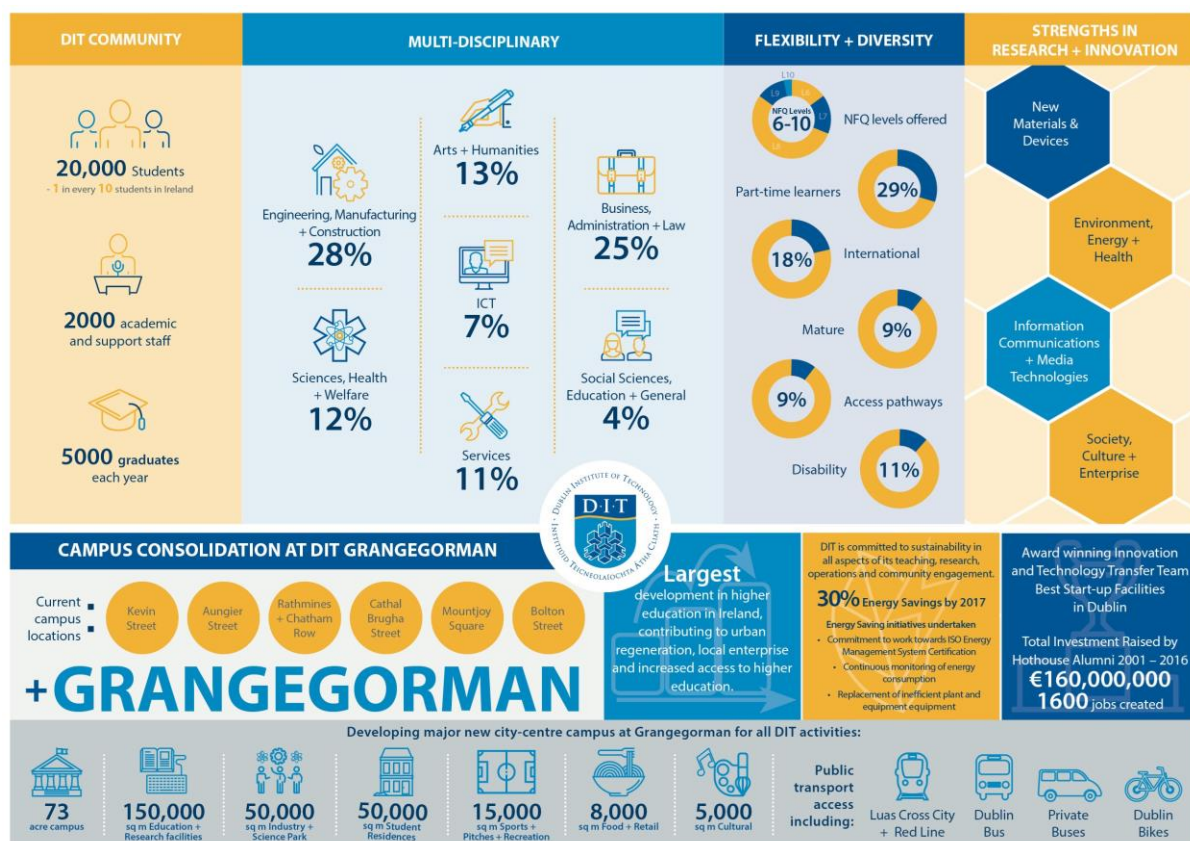


Figure 1 – DIT - a snapshot

## DIT - PLANS TO 2019

- DIT has worked with partner Institutes of Technology, Blanchardstown and Tallaght, to create a technological university for Dublin, one of the first of this new type of university in Ireland. With designation achieved under statute, Technological University Dublin (TU Dublin) will deliver an enhanced cohesive offering of relevant technological education in the Greater Dublin region, at all levels of higher education. The TU Dublin provision will comprise career-oriented teaching, learning, and research & innovation promoting engagement and exchange that contributes meaningfully to individual, cultural, community and societal development, and that supports enterprise creation and growth and economic progress in the region.
- DIT will progress the development of the Grangegorman Campus, that will facilitate 300,000 m<sup>2</sup> of knowledge-intensive activity in the heart of Dublin city. Incorporating leading edge design, educational innovation and technology, and enabling the consolidation of DIT from 30 buildings to a single urban campus, the Grangegorman facility will support an enhanced learner experience for the DIT /TU Dublin community and will contribute to urban regeneration and regional development for the city region.
- DIT will maintain and enhance the academic enterprise and the effectiveness of operations so as to deliver high-quality learning that supports individual, societal and economic needs.

The DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 is based around 8 major themes, within which a set of goals and objectives have been developed.



**Figure 2 – DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 : Strategic Themes**

The strategic themes centre on:-

- ⊙ Providing a distinctive, high quality, experiential student experience
- ⊙ Ensuring flexibility & diversity in provision to provide a range of learning opportunities and address regional skills needs
- ⊙ Being a force for research and innovation
- ⊙ Being a truly international institution
- ⊙ Promoting an innovative workplace, with ‘people at its heart’ that nurtures and supports colleagues
- ⊙ Having organisation arrangements that are effective in delivering the dynamic, entrepreneurial and innovative environment of a Technological University; with an appropriate balance of resources and efficient systems to underpin streamlined operations and create an outstanding learner experience



- ⊙ Being a truly engaged institution, working closely with and communicating effectively with internal & external stakeholders
- ⊙ Creating graduates that have positive impact on the economic, social, cultural and environmental fabric of the region, nationally and globally

A copy of the full plan is provided in Appendix 1 and at:- [DIT Strategic Plan](#)

## **DIT - SIGNIFICANT CHANGES ANTICIPATED**

- DIT is on the verge of something extraordinary in the history of Irish higher education, as a result of the two major change initiatives – TU Dublin and the development and relocation to the Grangegorman Campus. Both of these interlinking projects will have a dramatic impact on DIT's ability to enrich the learning experience and learning opportunities for future generations. It further enhances DIT's overall contribution to the national higher education landscape. Naturally, these major initiatives involve the coordination of considerable resources within DIT and indeed, from external sources.
- DIT with its partners in the TU4Dublin Alliance, made a successful application to be a technological university, with the formal establishment to take place from January 1 2019. This brings the three partners into a new single legal entity as a technological university. The Technological Universities Act 2018, states that the university will be required to produce and publish a new strategic plan as soon as practicable after the appointed day of its formation. This inevitably means that a new Performance Compact will be required between HEA and the new technological university, consistent with its strategic plan. Therefore DIT is alerting the Higher Education Authority that this change will take place during this Strategic Dialogue cycle.
- In terms of the practicalities of delivering its overall mission, DIT has identified that TU designation and a consolidated campus provide unprecedented opportunities for the Institute. To allow these two key strategic priorities to be delivered effectively over the coming years, the Institute has decided to avoid any major shifts in its current academic focus and provision. This means that, save for accommodating some national projected demographic growth in full-time student numbers, DIT will continue broadly to maintain its current level of provision across the different student cohorts, different NFQ levels, and different disciplines. Quality enhancement, leading to better retention, will continue to be the major focus within taught programmes, as will DIT's support for research and innovation activities and engagement with industry, community and wider civic society.

DIT is the largest provider of part-time education in Ireland. It will continue to deliver this provision, but will not grow its contribution in this area further during the initial period of this Compact. With technological university designation achieved and the establishment of a modern, digitally-enabled Grangegorman campus, a greater focus on life-long and flexible learning will then be pursued.

## 4. Development Plans and Key System Objectives

### Section summary

Institutions are required to set out a description of their proposed approach to deliver on each of the six key system objectives, with reference to the national targets as set out in the Framework.

- Institutions should detail a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six framework headings.
- Each strategic priority should be accompanied by a description of the strategic initiatives, currently being implemented, or to be implemented over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018–2021).
- These strategic initiatives should be described with reference to the high-level targets as set out in the framework.

<b>Objective 1</b>	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
<b>Objective 2</b>	Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
<b>Objective 3</b>	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.
<b>Objective 4</b>	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
<b>Objective 5</b>	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
<b>Objective 6</b>	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

To assist in understanding the mapping of the strategic priorities from the DIT Strategic Plan to the Higher Education System Performance Framework and thus form the content of this Performance Compact, a table of all the strategic priorities and their reference point within the DIT Strategic Plan is provided on the following page (Table 1). The reference numbers relating to the high-level targets within the Higher Education System Performance Framework are provided in Appendix 2.

System Objective	System Targets* being Addressed	DIT Related Goals	DIT Compact Strategic Priority Reference No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective Description
1	1-8	1 & 2	1.1	1.1	Ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment
			1.2	2.3	Extend practice/ work-based/ apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels
2	2,3,5 & 6	3 & 4	2.1	4	Advancing the institution to be a truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities
			2.2	3.2	Achieve sustainable growth in research & innovation outputs in designated research fields
3	1,3 & 5	3	3.1	3.1	Build capacity in Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise through growth in and enhancement
4	1-6	2	4.1	2.1	Enhance access and ensure clearly articulated entry and progression pathways and distinctive offerings at levels 6-10 of NFQ, to grow participation rates in Widening Participation (WP) cohorts and to support life-long learning
5	1,3,4,5	1	5.1	1.1	Delivery of specific elements of the consolidated campus at Grangegorman, to ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment
			5.2	1.2	Development of the Digital Campus to provide a modern and responsive academic and service experience for all students, supporting appropriate transformation of learning
6	1,2,3,9 & 10	5 & 6	6.1	6.3	Implement arrangements for TU designation
			6.2	5	Attract, recruit, develop and retain the highest calibre of staff, to build a multidimensional diversified and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community
			6.3	-	Commitment to obligations under governance

\* reference numbers relating to the high-level targets are provided in Appendix 2

**Table 1 - Mapping of DIT Strategic Plan to Higher Education System Performance Framework**

## 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 1. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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### Strategy summary:

DIT is a major contributor to Ireland's talent pipeline, accounting for 4,500 – 5,000 graduates annually. With a base of around 20,000 students, DIT continues to support the needs of Irish enterprise, public service and community sectors in a significant way. A key feature of DIT's educational philosophy is to provide experiential learning opportunities, where academic study intersects with practical application and close links to enterprise, community and wider society are critical.

- DIT has provision in all the main disciplines, except for medicine, with a strong focus on career-oriented programmes for industry and the professions. It accounts for 9% of all higher education enrolments nationally<sup>1</sup> and around 17% of those in the Greater Dublin region (GDR)<sup>2</sup>. Programmes are provided at NFQ levels 6- 10. In 2016-17, DIT accounted for almost 1 in 3 of all level 6 & 7 enrolments in the GDR. Almost 13% of GDR students on post-graduate taught programmes studied at DIT, whilst a further 9% pursued postgraduate research degrees in DIT.
- A large provider of STEM education in the country and with 44% of DIT students in these disciplines, DIT accounted for 12% of all STEM enrolments in GDR in 2016-17.

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<sup>1</sup> HEA Statistics for 2016-17

<sup>2</sup> Here, the Greater Dublin region is defined by the provision in the regional clusters of Dublin/Leinster Pillars I and II as set out in the HE Landscape

- DIT supported a range of cultural and creative industries in 2016/17, with provision to 2,356 students in Arts & Humanities and more generally to enterprise with 5,328 students in Business, Administration & Law. DIT has the largest number of students in the services sectors with 2,245 students on such programmes in 2016/17 (21% of national enrolments)
- Almost 6,000 part-time students were registered in 2016-17, accounting for more than ¼ of all part-time students in the greater Dublin region - DIT has maintained its commitment to flexible and life-long learners.
- DIT had 815 apprenticeship students in 2016-17 across 14 craft areas. This represented over ¼ of the national provision.

Because of its commitment to TU Dublin and the Grangegorman campus major change initiatives, over the period of this Compact, DIT will continue broadly to **maintain its current level of provision** across the different student cohorts, different NFQ levels, the different disciplines, with only some small increase envisaged in the full-time undergraduate population to address demographic growth.

It is recognised that there will be some shifts in different subject areas as demand changes during the period and DIT will respond accordingly. DIT will also endeavour to respond to skills shortages in particular sectors, such as ICT; to continue to participate in initiatives such as Springboard; and to address industry and citizens' needs as appropriate. To enhance the information provided about our programmes, so as to better inform student choice and employers' understanding of our graduate profile, employability guides will developed and published over the period of this Compact. A dedicated Task Force for Recruitment has recently been established that will develop, support and monitor the implementation of a student recruitment plan. The projected student profile of DIT for 2021/22 is provided here.

	Full-time	Part-Time	Total
<b>Apprenticeship</b>		1,730	1,730
<b>Undergraduate</b>			
Level 6	1,004	1,446	2,450
Level 7	2,208	1,422	3,630
Level 8	10,420	1,186	11,606
	<b>13,632</b>	<b>4,054</b>	<b>17,686</b>
<b>Postgraduate</b>			
Level 9 (T)	851	1,440	2,291
Level 9 (R)	14	49	63
Level 10	420	188	608
	<b>1,285</b>	<b>1,677</b>	<b>2,962</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,917</b>	<b>7,461</b>	<b>22,378</b>

**Table 2 – DIT Projected Student Profile 2021/22**

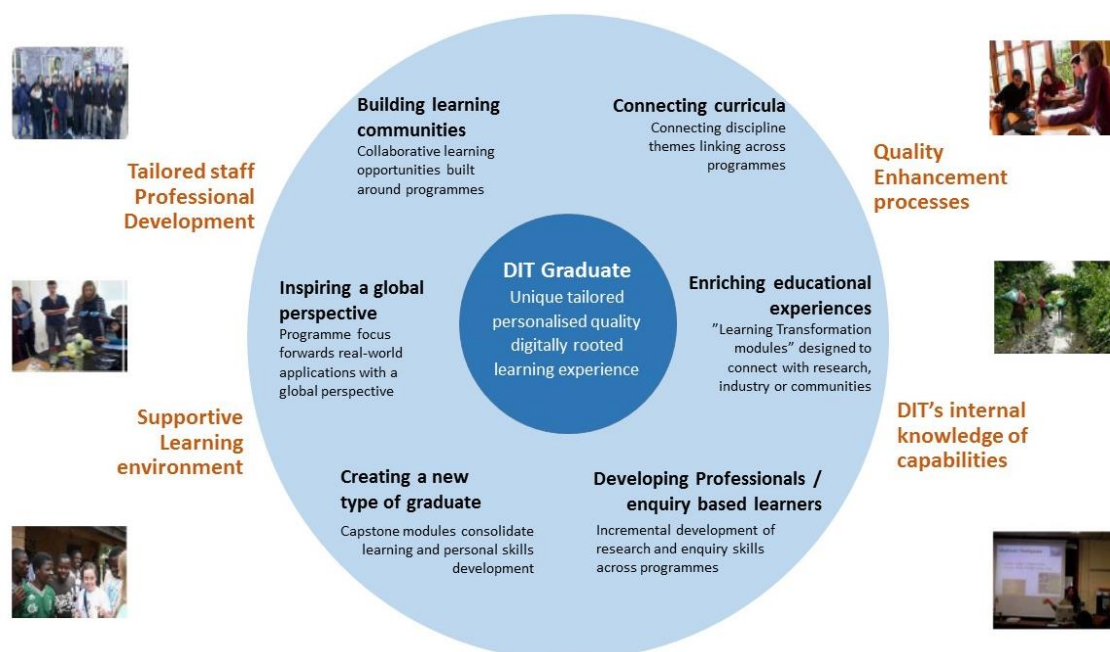
To support this level of provision, quality enhancement and retention will continue to be the major focus and a key goal is to **‘maintain academic excellence in professional programmes whilst promoting and further building on the Institute’s practice based model’**.

The two relevant strategic priorities as set out in the DIT plan are:-

1. **Ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment**
2. **Extend practice/ work-based/ apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.1

The DIT education philosophy is based on a connected and integrated curriculum. This framework is reflected broadly in Figure 3 below.



**Figure 3 – DIT Integrated Curriculum Framework**

This Framework aims to provide a unique, tailored, digitally rooted learning opportunity for students, significantly enhancing the overall student experience and having a greatly positive impact on retention. It is intended that through the ‘connectedness’ approach students will be provided with the relevant knowledge, skills & employability characteristics that help create graduates ready to address Irish economic, cultural and wider societal needs. The curriculum relates to the overall education design and intent that guides students through a set of learning, teaching and assessment experiences towards the achievement of explicit learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

Elements of the Framework have already been adopted by different areas across DIT. It is intended that the adoption of more of these elements will become much more pervasive over time, taking account of the need for discipline/ programme customisation. Drawn from the Framework, Table 3 on the following page, provides a number of key indicators and targeted success that DIT wishes to achieve during the period of this Compact, in respect of the student learning experience and retention. These targets also help to address a number of the high-level targets for participation in higher education, as set out by HEA in this section of the Compact.

Performance Indicator	Current	2021/22
<b>1. Teaching &amp; Learning Excellence:</b> Indicators drawn from Irish National Student Survey (ISSE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Overall student evaluation of educational experience at DIT. (ISSE: How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?)</li> <li>b) Student Engagement across the following indices:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Higher Order Learning</li> <li>II. Reflective &amp; Integrative Learning</li> <li>III. Learning Strategies</li> <li>IV. Quantitative Reasoning ( maintain KPI)</li> <li>V. Collaborative Learning ( maintain KPI)</li> <li>VI. Student Faculty Interaction</li> <li>VII. Effective Teaching Practices</li> <li>VIII. Quality of Interactions</li> <li>IX. Supportive Environment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Good + Excellent= 75%</p> <p>Varies across the indices</p>	<p>Good + Excellent = 85%</p> <p>At or above national average</p>
<b>2. Student Retention/ Progression :</b> Undergraduate Programmes: non-progression Rates by NFQ level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Level 6</li> <li>b. Level 7</li> <li>c. Level 8</li> </ul>	At national average for some programmes; some specific programmes below average	All programmes, at or above national average
<b>3. First Year Student Experience</b> Implementation of Checklist for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Student Success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Early Orientation</li> <li>b. Extended Induction</li> <li>c. Peer Engagement &amp; Mentoring;</li> <li>d. Assessment &amp; Feedback</li> <li>e. Graduate Attributes</li> <li>f. Learning Spaces/ Environment</li> </ul>	Implementation varies across programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Full implementation</li> <li>b. 75% of Programmes</li> <li>c. 50% of all schools</li> <li>d. full implementation</li> <li>e. full implementation</li> <li>f. 50% implementation</li> </ul>
<b>4. Enhancing Student Engagement:</b> - Formal Curriculum Every student will in the course of a year engage in at least one of the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Group research project</li> <li>b. Site visit or industry related engagement</li> <li>c. Students learning with communities initiative</li> <li>d. Undertake an international experience (placement/internship abroad, study abroad, - Erasmus etc., international research project, etc.)</li> <li>e. Undertake a placement/internship in industry/community</li> <li>f. Completion of an Institute-wide student placement model</li> </ul>	Varies across the Institute	Full implementation – every programme to ensure student engagement in at least one of the activities:
<b>5. Enhancing Student Engagement - Co Curriculum</b> Every student will in the course of a year engage in at least one of the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Volunteering</li> <li>b. Member of a DIT Club or Society</li> <li>c. Member of a sports activity</li> <li>d. Participate in a DIT SU activity</li> <li>e. A student leadership activity (e.g. SU class rep, LEAD Module, Access Student Support etc.)</li> </ul>	Varies across the Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 500 students /150 mentors</li> <li>b. 9,200 to 10,000</li> <li>c. Increase by 10% to 2,250</li> <li>d. 30% of students</li> <li>e. 700 students</li> </ul>

**Table 3 – Targets for student success**

- In terms of teaching & learning excellence, as measured through the Irish National Student Survey (ISSE), DIT has adopted an annual cycle of review, action planning and implementation under its quality enhancement agenda. Led by Academic Council, this process asks all sections (academic schools/colleges and professional services units) to consider the outcomes of the survey and put in place interventions and actions to address areas of particular concern. Academic Council provides ongoing monitoring and review to ensure progress on these dimensions. To date this has worked well, with DIT seeing year on year increases in the survey indicators. Table 4 below shows the year-on-year progress achieved, with all indicators increasing over the three year period. The focus on ISSE outcomes will continue in this cycle of the Compact.



Theme	Engagement Indicator	2016	2017	2018	▲
Academic Challenge	Higher Order Learning	33.9	35.2	35.8	+ 1.9
	Reflective and Integrative Learning	28.9	29.7	28.9	+ .0
	Quantitative Reasoning	18.9	19.8	20.8	+ 1.9
	Learning Strategies	28.5	29.4	29.8	+ 1.3
Learning with peers	Collaborative Learning	31.4	32.3	31.9	+ .5
Experiences with Faculty	Student-Faculty Interaction	13.3	13.5	14	+ .7
	Effective Teaching Practices	32.4	33.1	34.1	+ 1.7
Campus Environment	Quality of Interactions	34.7	37.6	37.9	+ 3.2
	Supportive Environment	23.6	26.6	26.8	+ 3.2

**Table 4 – DIT ISSE Indicators Scores –2016-2018**

- Student retention has been a major goal for DIT in recent years, with much success achieved at individual programme level. This will be an area of continued focus for the period of this Compact, with a dedicated Task Force for Retention being established to support colleagues' efforts in tackling non-progression in difficult areas. The development of the Digital Campus (an identified Strategic Priority under Objective 5 - Compact Ref No. 5.1), which will provide enhanced learning analytics over time, will offer valuable guidance to programme teams. Such enhanced technology-enabled services will also help to support the critical engagement of students in their academic and co-curricular experience. Existing supports (academic and student development supports) will continue to be targeted at those students identified as 'at risk'.
- An emerging area of concern is amongst 'access' students, where heretofore the progression rates was at or above the DIT average. In recent years there has been a slight decline in this success rate, depending on the programme and the year of the programme. This is something DIT wishes to address, particularly as a leader in this area, and it has been included as a specific target under the Strategic Priority for Objective 4 (Compact Ref No. 4.1).
- The implementation of the DIT '1<sup>st</sup> year Framework for Success', designed to enhance the first year student experience and support new entrants in making a successful transition into college and academic life, has had a significant impact where introduced. The aim now is to make this more pervasive and support colleagues in rolling out the elements of the framework appropriate to their particular students and programmes. The checklist for this framework is provided in Figure 4 and is used as a guide by programme teams. The implementation of this, in enhancing student engagement in the formal curriculum and in co-curricular activity, will be monitored by the DIT Student Experience Committee, with reporting required through the quality enhancement processes.

Priority Area	1. Early Orientation (before classes begin – traditionally, described as 'induction')	2. Extended Induction (as soon as classes begin)	3. Peer Engagement/ Mentoring	4. Assessment and Feedback	5. Graduate Attributes: Engaged, Enquiry based Enterprising, Effective, Expert in subject discipline	6. Learning Spaces
<b>High Priority Actions</b> (core to student success)	<input type="checkbox"/> All incoming students are informed of induction/ orientation dates as early as possible. <input type="checkbox"/> All key staff who teach and are involved in supporting first year students meet and welcome students (albeit briefly) during early orientation process. <input type="checkbox"/> All students receive a handbook with key information they need to succeed during their first year. <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement activities between peers are integrated here or within the first two weeks of semester one. <input type="checkbox"/> Students have adequate information on first year module choices and opportunities for progression	<input type="checkbox"/> Sessions outlining key steps and skills for success on each programme are provided (with reference to the student handbook) <input type="checkbox"/> 'Supporting your learning' workshops with links to online resources are provided by staff from (e.g. AWC, library, MLSC careers, counselling, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Key dates for success are confirmed with students (e.g. review week, withdrawal, assessments etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Core information related to first year programmes is made available online <input type="checkbox"/> A strategy for the early identification of students who might not progress into year two is in place (e.g. formative assessment attendance monitoring).	<input type="checkbox"/> Engagement activities with peer mentors/ students from later years of the programme are integrated within the first semester. <input type="checkbox"/> A Peer Mentoring scheme is implemented in at least one programme in each School. <input type="checkbox"/> Each School has a Peer Mentoring Coordinator (this is not necessarily a first year tutor). <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional support and training is available through a peer mentor coordination network.	<input type="checkbox"/> A clear assessment and feedback strategy is outlined in the programme handbook. <input type="checkbox"/> All students receive an assessment schedule for their programme (during the first two weeks). <input type="checkbox"/> All students have an assessment with formative feedback on their learning for each module within the first seven weeks of their programme.	<input type="checkbox"/> All students are made aware of what it means to be an employable graduate within their discipline. <input type="checkbox"/> All students are provided with information about modules where they can develop and get feedback on graduate attributes and skills for success during their first year. <input type="checkbox"/> Students have early engagement with external communities e.g. alumni, an Industry visit (or guest lecturer from industry/ graduate employer for large class sizes) or community-based learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> Baseline activities are supported through a Webcourses or equivalent online space for each module e.g. student communication, submission of assessments etc. <input type="checkbox"/> All students have access to study space and links to resources to support their learning over their first year. <input type="checkbox"/> Students are encouraged to utilise informal learning spaces by becoming involved within external/ co-curricular activities e.g. local communities, clubs, societies etc.

**Figure 4 – Checklist for 1<sup>st</sup> Year Student Success**



## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.2**

With the central tenet of the DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 on career-oriented and practice-based learning, Strategic Priority 1.2 to **'Extend practice/ work-based/ apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels'** is not surprising. This type of activity is part of the DNA of DIT and has featured heavily across all programmes, with recognised innovative best practices occurring in many parts of the Institute.

### **Practice-based Activity**

- By way of example, within the College of Engineering & Built Environment where more than 3,000 students were registered on undergraduate programmes in 2016/17, practical industry projects are common place and over half of all undergraduate programmes involve such projects. Additionally, in the same year, almost 400 lectures were given by external industry guest speakers in the College. In the College of Sciences & Health, a further 308 students engaged in project work with an external body.
- Students Learning with Communities (SLWC) or community-based learning has been a growing aspect of DIT's provision. In 2016/17 the College of Engineering & Built Environment recorded 14 modules in community-based modules, with almost 300 students availing of these learning opportunities. In Sciences & Health over 400 students undertook a community-based learning project as part of the 43 modules with such elements.

During the period of this Compact, a full review of such best practices, in practice-based and work-based activity, will be conducted with a view to their further adoption and extension across the undergraduate provision. This will become part of the TU Dublin programme of work over time.

### **Work-based Activity**

- Internships and student work placements are also common across DIT and today, work-placements occur in around half of all undergraduate programmes. In 2017/18, almost 2,000 individuals or 16% of the full-time undergraduate student population were 'out on placement' during the year. Depending on the nature of the programme, placements take place in different years of a programme and last from a matter of weeks up to 6 months.
- In the College of Business for example, all of the four year honours degree programmes in the college provide a structured work placement module in the second semester of year 3. Approximately 350 students per year participate in this module. Alternatively, students can choose to spend a semester abroad, studying in a partner university - the number of students studying abroad ranges from 160 – 180 in any given year. The college works with a wide variety of placement companies (over 1,000 companies in total) and the college placement officer has primary responsibility for coordinating the work placement programme, whilst faculty from each of the Schools visit students during the period of their placement. Students are required to satisfactorily fulfil the requirements of the work placement module in order to pass Year 3 and progress into year four of the programme.
- Within the College of Arts & Tourism, all students in 'Hospitality Management and Tourism' complete a work placement of between 3- 6 months duration. This accounts for 400-500 students.
- Students in Science & Health commonly are engaged in clinical practice often within the hospital environment and elsewhere. In 2016/17 over 600 students undertook a structured placement as part of their programme.
- Within the College of Engineering & Built Environment around half of the programmes currently offer a work placement element as part of the programme. In 2016/17 over 300 students undertook such placement.

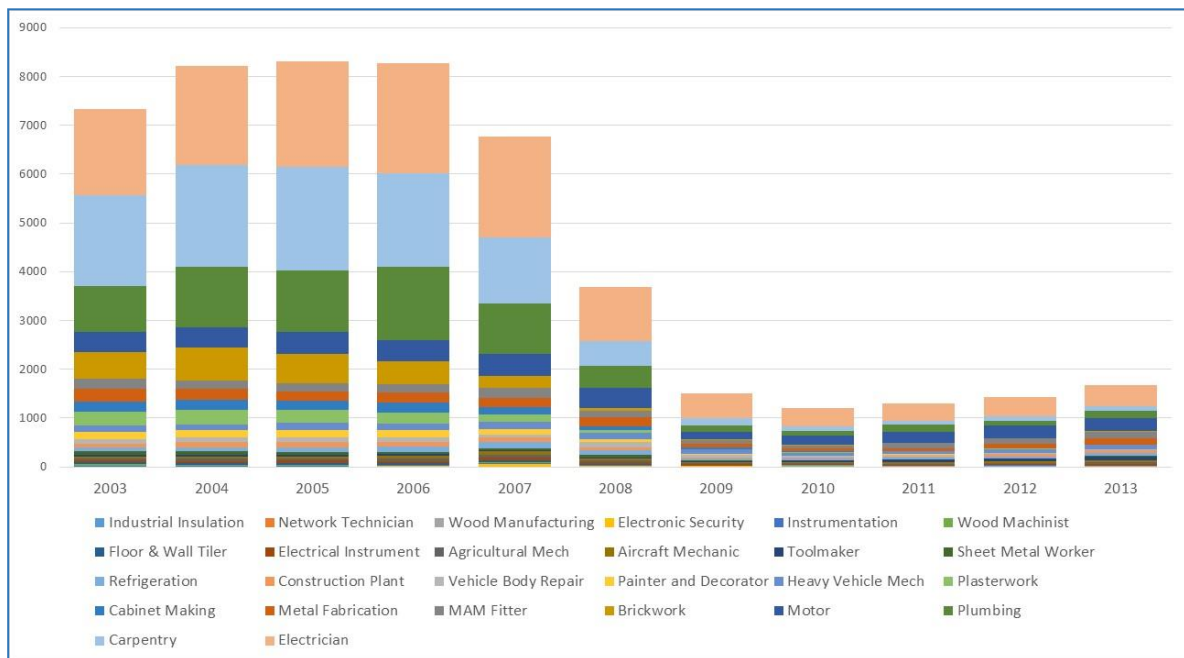
At Institute level, it is intended that work-placement initiatives will be increased from its current level by 5% for each year of the plan. Of course it is recognised that this target is not without its challenges, with difficulties in identifying and gaining the commitment of individual companies/bodies who have the capacity and willingness to take on such placements, for a growing student base. This will be kept under constant review.

### **Apprenticeship**

DIT has been a long-standing champion of apprenticeship education and with its partners in TU Dublin will continue to be so. Within an Irish context, there are 27 existing statutory 'designated trades' which are colloquially referred to as 'traditional apprenticeships' or 'standards based apprenticeships'. From the strategic review of apprenticeship in Ireland (2013), skills and apprenticeship is now defined more broadly. Such broader definition of apprenticeship and skills education is useful in a DIT/TU Dublin setting, as it may encompass traditional apprenticeship, new apprenticeship programmes and so-called 'earn and learn' programmes, all of which share a foundation of a minimum workplace learning component of 50%. The TU Dublin partners have successfully established a number of 'earn and learn' programmes, such as a Level 8 programme in Quantity Surveying in DIT as

well as a Level 7 programme in Process Instrumentation & Automation and a Level 6 in Science in Computing in Networking technologies, both in ITB. Such programmes are also a key way in which the TU Dublin will continue to meet the need for workplace based learning.

During the economic crash which began in 2008, the number of traditional apprentice students collapsed nationally. This is seen in Figure 5 below. From the peak of provision to the lowest point, the fall in numbers nationally was 86%, whilst DIT experienced a 96% drop. Apprentice student numbers in DIT went from 3,500 to 350 in the period. Naturally, this had a dramatic effect on the operation of apprenticeship education in the Institute.



**Figure 5 – National Apprentice Numbers 2013-2013**

In the last four years however, as the national recovery has gained momentum, the number of traditional apprentice students has grown dramatically. For example for DIT alone the number of apprentice blocks (there are 16 students per block) per academic year has grown from 55 in 2014/2015 to circa 78 in 2017/2018. For the TU Dublin partners, all of whom will have apprentice provision in 2018/2019, the number of blocks will exceed 80, which represents over 30% of the national provision, across 13 designated trades. For the new TU Dublin, the provision of apprenticeship on such a large scale means that the University will continue to be the largest third-level apprentice/training provider in the country. This places TU Dublin as the key player in providing the human capital that supports infrastructure and the construction and engineering industries, critical sectors in the Irish economy.

For the coming years, DIT plans the following in terms of apprenticeship provision:-

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	<i>Treat as 2017 year for reference</i>			<i>Treat as 2020 year for reference</i>
Traditional Apprenticeship blocks	72	77	86	97
Apprentice student registrations	1,152	1,232	1,380	1,545
'New apprenticeship' programme registrations	0	32	76	90
'Earn and Learn' Programme registrations	74	95	95	95
<b>Total DIT Registrations</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,359</b>	<b>1,551</b>	<b>1,730</b>

**Table 5 – Targets for apprenticeships to 2020/21**

The following comments in respect of these plans are important:-

- It is noted that the numbers above do not include TU Dublin partner provision
- According to national projections, there is an assumption that the current apprenticeship growth will be maintained. If so, DIT highlights a major issue in terms of physical capacity, in that it will not be able to

accommodate within its current workshops, the increase in traditional apprentice blocks envisaged for 2020/21. This will need to be addressed and the DIT team is currently exploring options in this regard, with the view to bringing forward appropriate proposals to HEA.

- There is an assumption in the DIT projections that we will not have any additional ‘new apprenticeships’ or ‘earn and learn’ programmes from 2018/19 onwards, concentrating as has been previously stated on the current academic provision.
- A limiting factor regarding apprenticeship development is active engagement from the industry sector. There are some notable successes in this regard, but also some real challenges. In order for the national and DIT targets to be achieved, sufficient numbers of industry partners with the capacity and commitment to deliver on the work-based element of the model, are required. This in itself may be a limiting factor to reaching the targeted figures and will be kept under review.

It should be noted that DIT will also continue to support the development of apprenticeship over the period of the Compact through the delivery of its unique ‘Access to Apprenticeship’ programme. As part of its diversity agenda, DIT developed the Access to Apprenticeship initiative with substantial philanthropic support from JP Morgan and the ESB, with the aim to prepare young people from Dublin’s inner city communities to access apprenticeship positions. The programme builds on the specific expertise and track record of DIT in the delivery of skills education and in supporting young people into third level education. The second round of this initiative has commenced, with HEA joining the partners to provide funding support. It is hoped that the DIT programme can act as model for other such initiatives in other regions.

This Strategic Priority helps address a number of the high-level targets set out in the HEA Compact, including:- *‘the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project’* and *‘new apprenticeship registrations’*.

## 4.1 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 2. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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### Strategy summary:

In this section, DIT has focused on two Strategic Priorities, which between them, address most of the high-level targets set out in this section of the Compact:-

1. **Advancing the institution to be a truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities**
2. **Achieve sustainable growth in research & innovation outputs in designated research fields**

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.1

*“Ireland is one of the most globalised countries in the world. As an open, trading economy, our future prosperity depends fundamentally on our international connectivity and competitiveness. The Irish education system plays a key role in forging crucial global relationships and building international outlook and awareness.”<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> Irish Educated Globally Connected: An International Education Strategy for Ireland, 2016-2020.

Internationalisation is an increasing part of DIT's activities and it is committed to playing its part in supporting the Irish economy on the global stage. In this area, DIT has set its strategic priority as '**Advancing the institution to be a truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities**'. This will be done under 3 main goals as follows:-

1. Contribute to the quality of the education provided and ensure that internationalisation embraces and supports all activities of the Institute providing opportunities for staff and students to engage in international activity.
2. Seek opportunities to extend the Institute's reach internationally and continue to develop and grow targeted international partnerships that align with the Institute plan, including education and research initiatives
3. Promote the recruitment of international students ( all categories) in line with the scale and mission of the Institute

Internationalisation has a much broader remit than student recruitment and is reflected in the overall TU Dublin internationalisation strategy shown in Figure 6 below.



**Figure 6 – TU Dublin Internationalisation Strategy – Embedding Internationalisation into all – a focus for quality**

The Internationalisation Strategy aims include:-

1. Ensuring that the university has an international staff and student body;
2. Enhancing quality in learning, research and engagement activities – to become an international university;
3. Engaging students with internationally informed curriculum, research and cultural and linguistic diversity;
4. Building international & intercultural capacity and develop inter-culturally competent students;
5. Ensuring that internationalisation is embedded into all core activities of the University;
6. Providing an opportunity for every TU Dublin student across all programme levels to experience an international dimension to their educational experience;
7. Building internationalisation on the particular disciplines and strengths of the university; and
8. Harnessing the economic impact of internationalisation for the benefit of the University and the greater Dublin region.

In the report on "The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education"<sup>4</sup>, it was noted that HEIs acknowledged the importance of internationalisation of curriculum. The study pointed out that whilst "*some institutions used programmatic reviews to embed international approaches in modules and programmes*", it is recognised that more needs to be achieved in this area to "*prepare graduates to enter a global working environment through an emphasis on the broader educational experience, including engagement with industry and social and community groups.*"

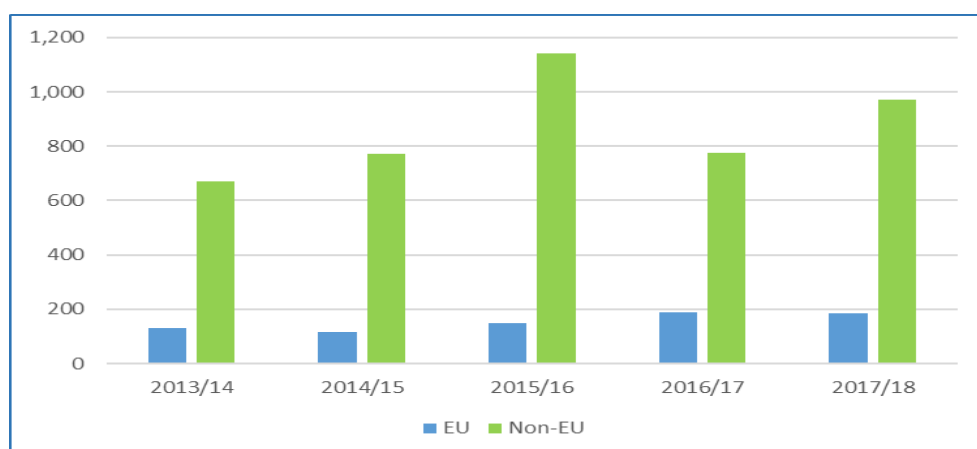
<sup>4</sup> [http://eurireland.ie/assets/uploads/2018/07/report\\_internationalisation\\_of\\_education\\_2018.pdf](http://eurireland.ie/assets/uploads/2018/07/report_internationalisation_of_education_2018.pdf)

This is very much in tune with the DIT/TU Dublin philosophy and under the main goals of 1 & 2 above, it is intended that a range of measures will be undertaken so as to embrace internationalisation as an embedded element in the DIT/TU Dublin learning experience for students and staff. For this Compact period, these include:-

- **Development of the curriculum to support internationalisation** - ‘Internationalisation’ will be topic for Academic Council’s agenda in 2018/19 with the aim of developing and implementing specific initiatives over the period of the Compact
- **Research & Technology Transfer** - Internationalisation will be reflected in DIT/TU Dublin’s plans and will be measured through an increase in EU research funding; international partnerships and international staff exchanges.
  - The target for EU research funding will form part of the overall target to increase the value of external research awards, as set out under Strategic Priority 3.1, for Objective 3 of this Compact.
  - In respect of the development of international partnerships and staff exchanges, which has evolved organically within DIT, work is required in the first instance on auditing, reviewing and establishing a baseline for this activity. Thereafter targets in line with relevant benchmarks will be determined.
- **Community Engagement** - Internationalisation will be reflected in TU Dublin’s community engagement activities through collaborative projects with international community groups, networks, organisations and other universities abroad. The focus of the work here will also be to audit and review existing activity, confirm the baseline and determine appropriate targets in line with relevant benchmarks.
- **Staff** – The initial focus will be on promoting the recruitment of international staff (academic and non-academic) to DIT/TU Dublin. Currently, the percentage of non-Irish staff within DIT 16%. The aim here is to analyse the existing profile, consider likely opportunities and challenges in attracting new staff and develop a robust recruitment plan that will achieve an appropriate profile of international staff for DIT/TU Dublin.
- **International Student Experience** – In addition to providing a targeted curriculum, DIT through its languages strategy will provide opportunities to students in terms of languages acquisition and cultural awareness. In 2016/17 the percentage of DIT students (undergraduate, full-time) taking a language was just over 3%. These students were primarily studying dedicated language programmes or for example business programmes with a language. With the introduction of a ‘languages for all’ approach, it is intended the DIT will be able to offer optional language modules to all students on all programmes. This is projected to double the numbers of students taking a language by 2021/22.

Building on the Institute’s previous Erasmus strategy, that achieved a balance in inflows and outflows regarding Erasmus student numbers, it is now aimed at increasing the number of outgoing DIT students on Erasmus exchanges/placements. This is discussed further on page 24.

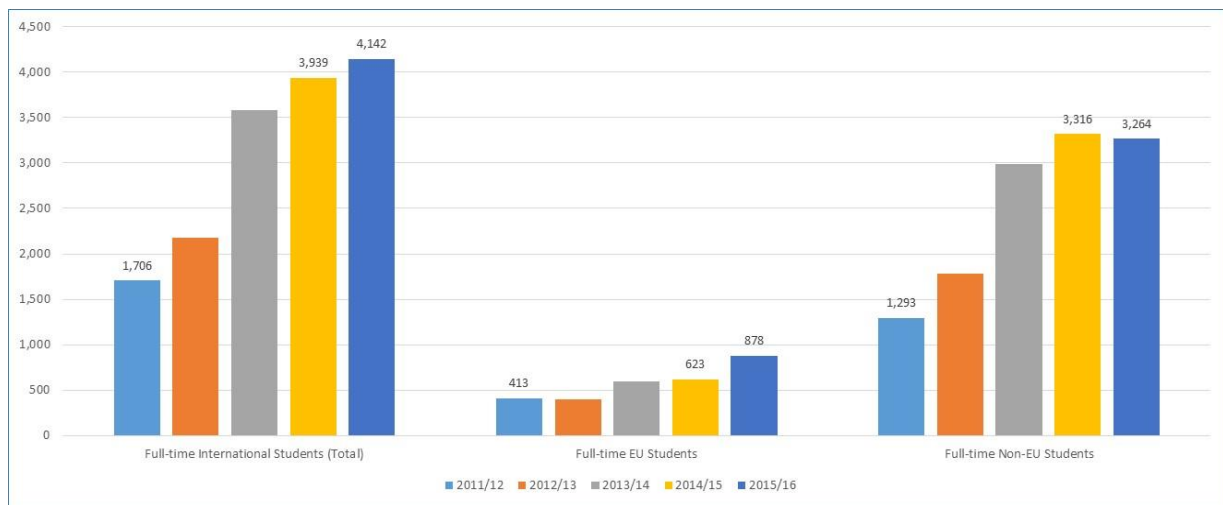
Goal 3 of this internationalisation plan is to provide a continuation of the activity which has traditionally been the focus of DIT’s international agenda, i.e. international student recruitment. This has seen an increase in DIT over the last five years and is reflected in Figure 7.



**Figure 7 – DIT Full-time International Student Numbers – 2013/14 to 2017/18**



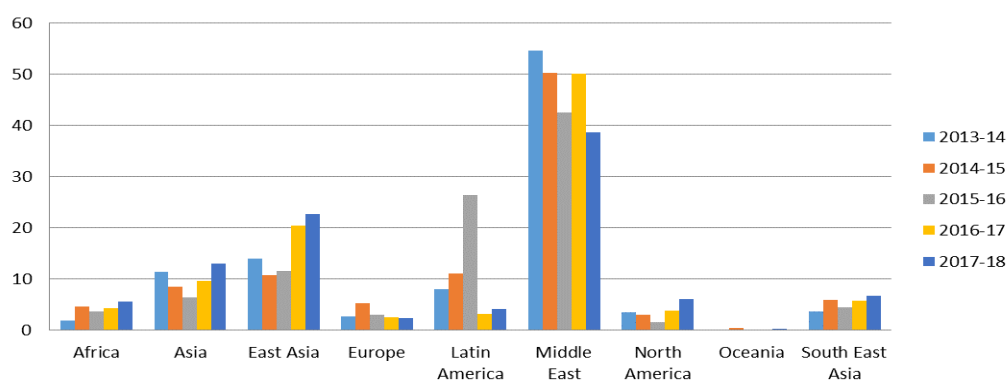
In Figure 8 below, international student enrolments within the Institute of Technology sector is given. Currently, DIT accounts for 1 in 3 of all non-EU enrolments in the Institute of Technology sector. With steady growth in non-EU enrolments in the period, it peaked in 2015-16 due to the significant influx of Brazilian students under the Sciences without Borders programme (SWB). From this programme, which has now closed, DIT hosted 248 SWB students out of the total of 1,077 that studied in all institutions in Ireland.



**Figure 8 – International Enrolments, IoT Sector – 2011/12 to 2015/16**

In 2011/12 DIT introduced its first cohort of students onto an International Foundation Programme (IFP) as a pathway programme to facilitate entry to undergraduate programmes following successful completion. This programme has been very successful in attracting government sponsored students, mainly from the Gulf States region. Overall progression rates from this programme and into undergraduate programmes are of the order of 80%. In addition, other pathway programmes (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Bridging Programmes, Pre-Masters Programmes *etc.*) have been introduced to facilitate entry to postgraduate programmes.

The IFP is particularly beneficial in attracting undergraduate students and as a consequence the overall ratio of undergraduate to postgraduate non-EU students in DIT is approximately 2:1. This is somewhat at odds with international norms, but provides a pipeline for DIT of students remaining with the Institute for up to five years. The impact of the IFP and other pathway programmes have clearly brought significant benefits, but have also brought certain distortions, in particular in terms of the mix of nationalities. As can be seen in Figure 9, DIT is heavily dependent on the Gulf States for non-EU students, accounting for almost 40% of all non-EU students. In 2013/14 this was over 50% and actions taken by the Institute to reduce the risk and diversify the mix of nationalities has seen the percentage reduce over time.

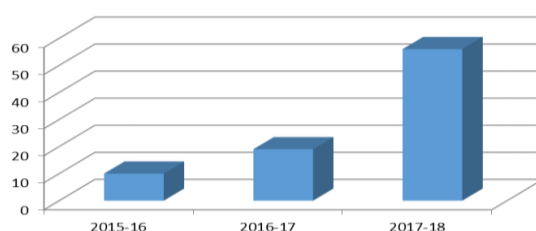


**Figure 9 – Percentage of DIT International students by region, 2013-14 to 2017-18**

Over the last three recruitment cycles, non-EU applications in DIT have grown dramatically, impacted mainly by regional economic and political factors and the Institute is confident of a steady growth in student registrations in coming years. With ‘university’ designation, there will be an enhanced market position internationally, such that the organisation can easily clarify its value as a global higher education institution, where the only real currency is a university title. It is expected that this designation will eliminate the current barrier of the Irish title of ‘Institute of Technology’, which is not recognised appropriately in other territories. In addition, the lack of student accommodation on campus, which heretofore had presented some challenges in attracting international student applicants is now being addressed – immediately, by third-party providers adjacent to the Grangegorman campus and in due course by DIT itself when student accommodation will be constructed on the campus.

In making a decision about study abroad, students and their families (as the main sponsor) will consider a number of factors; cost of study, post-graduation working opportunities and safety/wellbeing of their child. Students and their families are seeking peace-of-mind and stability when they send study abroad. For many years Ireland has struggled to achieve a top ranking as a destination of choice for internationally mobile students. This is despite the fact that it is English speaking, has highly ranked institutions, internationally recognised awards and is a safe destination relative to other locations in the western hemisphere. With the policy and administration changes in the USA and the UK (the number one and two study destinations globally), Ireland, and DIT/TU Dublin, are now presented with significant opportunities. Specifically, Ireland is still perceived as a welcoming destination; we will soon be the only English speaking country in the EU and we now have one of the most progressive stay-back visas regimes in the world.

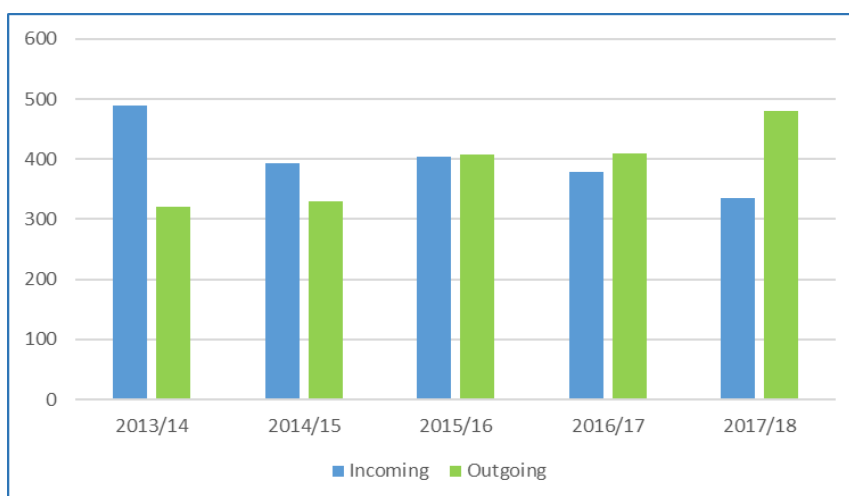
Despite these positives, it is important to recognise that Ireland still has significant constraints, in particular around visa processing times, which are of the order of 8 to 12 weeks. By way of comparison, the UK Border Agency processes 92% of all category of study visas within 15 working days. By example, Figure 10 shows the significant increase in the rate of refunds made to DIT student applicants due to visa processing delays and visa refusals over the last three academic years. It should be noted that over 80% of the refunds were due to visa refusals rather than delays in processing visas.



**Figure 10 - Numbers of refunds to DIT international applicants due to visa issues**

While DIT has demonstrated its ability to significantly increase its non-EU application numbers, visa issues have now become a serious limiting factor in increasing student numbers. DIT/ TU Dublin will continue to work with the government bodies to address such issues and is optimistic in that regard. Therefore, with the opportunities presenting globally, it is confident to target an increase of international student numbers (non-EU students) from its current level of circa 7% of full-time enrolments to 10% by 2021/22.

In addition to international fee-paying students, a critical element of the strategy is in respect of international student exchanges. DIT has been a long-time advocate of Erasmus, with thousands of students availing of the opportunity that the programme provides for an international learning experience. One of the challenges that DIT faced over the years was to balance the number of outgoing students (i.e. DIT students) and incoming students. This has implications, not only from a financial perspective, but more importantly for the opportunities for Irish students (who seemed more reluctant to engage in the initiative) for an enhanced student learning experience. As can be seen from Figure 11, DIT is very pleased that its focus on achieving the balance between the two cohorts has resulted in a greater number of DIT students taking up the Erasmus opportunity. The plans during the period of this Compact will be to maintain this focus and endeavour to grow the activity further, as finances allow.



**Figure 11 – DIT Erasmus students (incoming & outgoing)- 2013/14 to 2017/18**



## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.2**

The second priority relevant to this section of the Compact is in respect of DIT's commitment to its **knowledge transfer** activity. Historically, DIT has been very successful in the commercialisation of research, knowledge transfer and the support for enterprise development. This history is one DIT aims to continue.

DIT established its technology transfer office Hothouse (see [Link to Hothouse](#)) in 2007 to licence inventions and create new companies based on DIT research. In this, it has been particularly successful and in the period from 2007 to 2017, DIT created over 1,700 jobs in 400 sustainable businesses with a value to the community of €655 M. Over the course of this ten year period, DIT delivered the following key impact measures:-

- 1,700 sustainable jobs created in high technology areas
- Supported early stage companies with €195M in equity investment secured
- 36 spin-out companies created from DIT research
- 441 qualified inventions delivered
- 85 patents registered
- Over 30 new products launched based on DIT research

DIT leads the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium (DRIC), funded under the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative (TTSI) Phase 3 programme. Partners in the consortium include: Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), the Institute of Technology Tallaght Dublin (ITTD), the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB), the Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT), the National College of Ireland (NCI) and the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS) which joined the consortium in 2017 adding further excellence to the research encompassed within DRIC.

DRIC's vision is "to stimulate economic development in the Dublin Region by commercialising research from across the Institutes" and for TTSI3. DRIC maximises the societal impact and economic return on investment in research at its partner institutes by supporting client companies and start-ups to develop novel and differentiated products and services based on DRIC research. New products, services and companies ultimately translate into investment in the region, the creation of high value jobs and the delivery of enduring economic and societal impact.

Over the next 5 years, the DRIC consortium has targets of delivering:

- 250 new jobs;
- 41 new products and/or services;
- 23 new start-up companies;
- 6 High Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs)
- 347 valued research/consultancy engagements with industry.

The targets set by DRIC in its successful application to the TTSI3 programme were informed by national targets in Innovation 2020. The DRIC commitment in TTSI3 is to deliver 7.8% of the LOA's, 10.5% of the spin-outs, 7.5% of the HPSUs and 5.9% of the research engagements in the national target, on just 4% of the national research expenditure continuing our tradition of exceeding targets and delivering real value for money. The DRIC consortium delivered 10-20% of the LOAs and start-ups in Ireland in TTSI1 and TTSI2. License deals completed during TTSI2 led to the market launch of 23 products or services. Examples include Optrace's holographic anti-counterfeit label, an antenna for Decawave's ScenSor (Single Chip Wireless Transceiver) chip, OptiWifi's wireless internet optimisation solution and Checkventory's field-based auditing system.

The results of report on the performance by Knowledge Transfer Ireland 'KTI Review and Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2017'<sup>5</sup> gives the outputs of all Irish HEIs in the period. DIT's successful performance is shown to continue in this report, with comparative outputs on several measures greater than that of other HEIs. Figure 12 below shows the impact of a number knowledge transfer elements per €M of research expenditure.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/About\\_KTI/Reports-Publications/KTI-Review-and-Annual-Knowledge-Transfer-Survey-AKTS-2017.pdf](http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/About_KTI/Reports-Publications/KTI-Review-and-Annual-Knowledge-Transfer-Survey-AKTS-2017.pdf)



**Figure 12 – Comparative Knowledge Transfer Performance 2017: DIT and selected HEIs**

For this Compact and in line with its commitments under the TTSI programme, DIT will:-

- 1. Deliver a minimum of 21 commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) over the lifetime of the Compact, based on annual delivery of 7 LOAs per annum.**  
[National target - Increase the number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) by 20% by 2020 (163 in 2017)]
- 2. Create 3 new spin-outs per annum, contributing a total of 9 spin-outs to the national target of 40 spin-outs to be achieved by 2020.**  
[National target - Increase number of spin-outs established during the year by 40% by 2020 (Innovation 2020 target, 29 in 2014)]

The targets above refer directly to the DIT contribution to the combined output of the DRIC consortium. The target contributes directly to commercialisation targets in *Innovation 2020*, regarding commercially relevant technologies; the creation of spin-outs and the creation of High Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs) from spin-outs. DIT's commitment in start-up creation is an increase from a baseline of 2 spin-outs per annum in 2016 (AKTS). The combined DRIC consortium target is to create 23 new start-up companies by 2021 of which 6 will convert to High Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs), thus contributing a major portion of the national target.

DIT has a very successful track record in spin-out creation. Under the TTSI 1 and 2 programmes, DIT created 17 spin-outs, of which 4 have already become High Potential Start-ups (HPSUs): OptiWiFi, Optrace, Kastus and Smarter Surfaces and we expect to continue this focus on producing quality start-ups again in TTSI3.

The location of DIT's Incubator at Grangegorman has provided a new boost to start up activity right at the heart of the campus. As of February 2016, the Hothouse New Frontiers programme was relocated to a 2,000m<sup>2</sup> commercialisation centre in the Greenway Hub, Grangegorman. (See photo on the next page). The facility allows expansion of research and commercialisation activities in the future and more than doubles our entrepreneurial support capacity by offering office space and supports to over 60 entrepreneurs and their teams. Over the past 3 years the TTO has licensed DIT technology to eleven Hothouse companies including OptiWifi, DecaWave and Smart Wall Paint. A total of 45 companies have won a range of Irish, European and international awards including Seedcorn, European Business Awards and the Nvidia Early Stage Awards and we plan to leverage this network more in TTSI3.



**Figure 13 – DIT's Hothouse Incubator in the Greenway Hub, Grangegorman**

In the context of DRIC, DIT now leads a strategy to better leverage the start-up ecosystem that we have collectively created, that supports entrepreneurs launching new businesses in Dublin. Between DIT Hothouse, the ITT Synergy Centre, ITB's LINC centre, IADT's Cube and NCI's innovation centre, we currently support over 180 entrepreneurs to launch businesses each year. Collectively the partners support over 350 businesses that have grown to attract over €154M of investment and create over 1,500 knowledge intensive jobs. The new strategy here is to improve engagement with these client companies in terms of identifying the business and technical issues that DRIC can help solve through its Open Labs programme as well as leveraging the capabilities in its Student Entrepreneurship Academy.

DIT's knowledge transfer activity is aligned with national strategy and with the strategies of our key stakeholders including:- HEA, Knowledge Transfer Ireland; Irish Research Council; Science Foundation Ireland; IDA and Enterprise Ireland. Knowledge transfer will continue to be a central focus for TU Dublin. DIT with ITT and ITB have outlined in their submission "Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape" how the strategy and objectives of DRIC are central to the mission and aims of TU Dublin.

*"Translation of research into new products and new services that have real economic impact will be a differentiating feature of TU4 Dublin. Consistent with our mission, the quality of our research and innovation outputs and outcomes will be peer reviewed internationally. Economic and societal impact will also be assessed and excellence determined by a number of factors including the demand for graduates and postgraduates, research investment, the quality of academic and scholarly publications and the success in influencing and informing national and EU policy."*

### 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 3. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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#### Strategy summary:

The key **STRATEGIC PRIORITY (3.1)** in this section is to:- **‘Build capacity in Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise through growth in and enhancement’**

High-level targets identified are:-

1. **Increase DIT’s postgraduate research enrolment over the three-year timespan of the Compact, from a baseline of 529 in 2018 (2018 March SRS) to 671 in 2021**  
[National target - 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 the value of external research awards from industry and from other sources from a baseline of €6.2m in 2017 to €8.5m in 2021**  
[National target - Double overall Higher Education research income derived from industry to €48m’ and 5 ‘Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020’ ]

Key Goal 3 of DIT’s Strategic Plan to 2019 is to be **‘A Force for Research and Innovation’**. DIT undertakes research that is nationally relevant, internationally competitive and strategically important. It is strongly focused on problem-solving, and social and technological development and innovation that advances human knowledge and makes a real impact on people’s life experience. Research excellence underpins all aspects of our educational mission. It contributes to DIT’s ability to attract high quality staff and students and enhances the ability to attract external research funding from industry and other sources. The aim is to build further capacity to provide useful knowledge for a range of stakeholders, thereby enhancing DIT’s institutional reputation and allowing it to better fulfil its public service mission, for the benefit of students, staff, society and the economy.



Strategic objectives for research were previously outlined in the previous DIT Strategic Plan as follows:

1. Concentrate and consolidate research activity, including PhD study, in fields of verifiable strength and national significance;
2. Ensure greater integration between research and innovation, and teaching and learning;
3. Strengthen and embed technology/knowledge transfer and entrepreneurial activity in all research activities.

Building on this high level strategy, the Institute's *Research Action Plan 2013-17* detailed specific initiatives and actions to achieve this overall objective including actions to:-

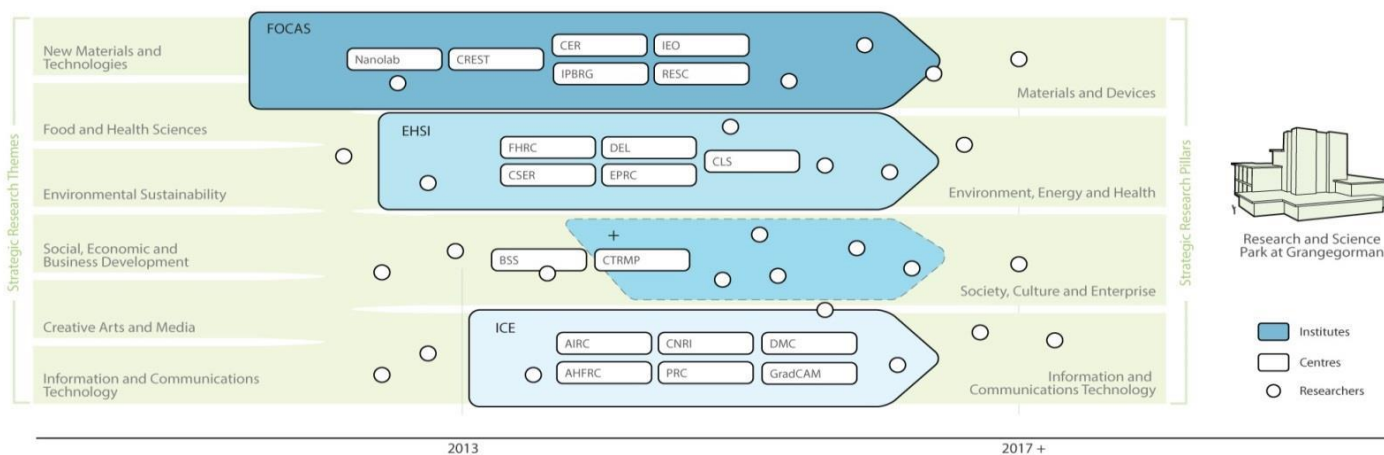
- Strengthen and develop DIT research capacity and capability in terms of scale and international recognition;
- Meet and benchmark against TU criteria;
- Align DIT with national policy objectives and new funding/competitive environment;
- Provide support for researchers through a series of initiatives;
- Grow the number of research students;
- Ensure a high quality research training environment for all researchers;
- Enhance the leadership, management and governance structure for research.

Implementation of the Research Action Plan over the past four years has led to a significant increase in research activity, as evidenced by increased research student enrolments, enhanced competitiveness in achieving external research awards and increased numbers of research active staff. Over the timeframe of the last Compact 2014-17, research student enrolments increased by nearly 200 from a baseline of 300 in 2012-13 to 491 in 2017. External research funding also grew from a baseline of €4m in 2014 to €5.9m by the end of 2016. The number of PIs has also grown steadily supported by the proportion of staff with a PhD growing from 39% to 50%.

As a result of the increasing concentration and consolidation of research in fields of verifiable strength and national significance, research has been organised around four main research areas: *Environment, Energy & Health, Information, Communications & Media Technologies, New Materials & Devices* and *Society, Culture and Enterprise*. Research areas act as broad descriptors for research in complementary or cognate fields of inquiry and is the primary means by which DIT research capacity and capability is profiled and showcased, providing a macro-interdisciplinary perspective. These are aligned to national priorities and societal challenges, particularly in the context of Horizon 2020 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. They build on identified and verifiable strengths and provide a framework around which research is supported and developed.

Research Institutes provide access to dedicated research facilities, supports and leadership and are the principal environment with which research is carried out. As a formal, recognised part of the research infrastructure, Research Institutes ensure that resources are used in the most efficient manner to support the full range of research activities to full capacity. Research Institutes also support participation in a range of national research platforms and partnerships including SFI Research Centres, EI/IDA Technology Centres, Enterprise Ireland-funded Technology Gateways and integrated platforms established under successive cycles of PRTLII.

An overview of the development of Research Institutes at DIT is shown in Figure 14 representing consolidation in areas of research strength and alignment with Institute and national strategic objectives.



**Figure 14 - Research Development at DIT**

To date, three Research Institutes have been formally incorporated:-

The **FOCAS Research Institute** was established under the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions, Cycle 1 (1999-2001), co-funded by the EU. The 3,200m<sup>2</sup> facility provides state of the art core laboratory support in

microscopy and spectroscopy for a range of research groups and activities. The facilities were consolidated under PRTL Cycle 4 (2007-2013), co-funded by the EU Regional Development Fund, through the Integrated NanoScience Platform for Ireland and the National Biophotonics and Imaging Platform, Ireland and are incorporated as a pilot site in the EuroBioImaging programme.

The **Environmental Sustainability and Health Institute (ESHI)** was funded under PRTL Cycle 5 and, alongside the Enterprise Ireland-supported Incubation facility, is located in the Greenway Hub at the heart of the DIT Grangegorman campus. ESHI is a dedicated national translational research platform, uniquely based on collaboration between Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and Dublin City Council (DCC), building national and regional capacity and capability. ESHI is an all-island initiative, involving strategic partnerships with the University of Ulster (UU), Dublin City University (DCU), the Institute of Public Health (IPH) and other stakeholders, facilitating an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach, integrating academic research with the knowledge and expertise of relevant professionals to generate collective responses to public health issues.

More recently, the **Information, Communications and Entertainment (ICE)** Research Institute was established as a virtual institute to bring together complementary strengths in ICT-related research in Content Enabling Digital Technologies (such as Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Machine Learning, and Digital Humanities/Studies), Distribution and Delivery Platforms (including Next Generation Internet and Internet of Things research), and Engineering Technology. ICT and media technologies are an area of particular industry need and one which TU Dublin partners are well-placed to fulfil. The ICE Research Institute also builds on DIT's partnership in two national SFI Research Centres (ADAPT and CONNECT) and in the EI/IDA national Technology Centre, CeADAR – Centre for Applied Data Analytics.

The Research Institute for **Arts Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS)** is now in development. The Research Institute for AHSS will support the strong and distinctive provision at DIT and across TU Dublin partners in creative arts and media, in business and social sciences. The Graduate School of Creative Arts and Media (GradCAM) was established under PRTL 4 as Ireland's first centre for doctoral research education across design, visual and performing arts, media practice and their associated critical, historical and theoretical discourses. Research in this domain is characterised by a strong practitioner orientation, and fosters multidisciplinary activity and student interactions across disciplines as one of the distinguishing features of DIT and the new TU Dublin.

For this next phase of development, DIT with its TU Dublin partners intends to maintain the momentum achieved in research and grow the activity further. Aligned to national targets of achieving an increase of 500 new postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020 (baseline 2,235 in 2014/15), DIT's aim is to:

# 1. Increase DIT's postgraduate research enrolment over the three-year timespan of the Compact, from a baseline of 545 in 2018 (2018 March SRS) to 671 in 2021.

The growth in Level 10 education and expansion of the doctoral programme provision is a core objective of DIT Strategic Plan to 2019. The objective for targeted increase in postgraduate enrolment was aligned with strategic objectives towards technological university designation, specifically to reach a target of 4% of the total Level 8 to 10 student cohort registered on a research programme, growing to 7% within ten years (*Technological Universities Act 2018*). The initial target of 4% has been met and the partners are now focussed on the latter target.

Over the course of the Performance Compact 2014-17, significant growth in research student enrolment was achieved. The growth was built on a longstanding trajectory in the development of career-focused, research-informed education at DIT. This is evidenced by the transition to predominantly PhD-track graduate research education with the focus on Level 10 Structured PhD programme provision underpinned by strong quality assurance systems and a supportive research environment. Figure 15 shows the trends in research students over the 15-year period from 2002 to 2017.

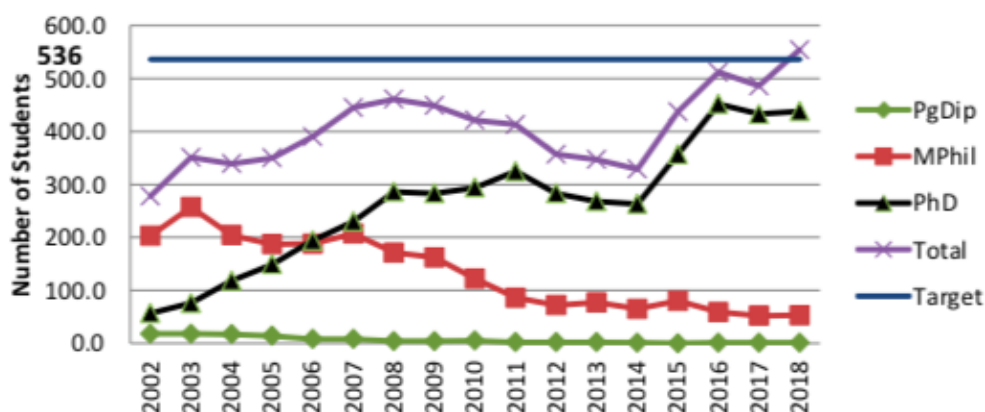


Figure 15: DIT Research Student Number Trends 2002-17

Graduate research provision at DIT has grown steadily since the Institute was granted degree-awarding powers in 1998. Initially, primarily based on Masters by Research, graduate research education has steadily transitioned to PhD-track. From 2007 on, enrolments on PhD programmes overtook the numbers registered for Masters by Research, attaining an enrolment of 300 at Level 10 in 2008. Research student numbers declined between 2009 and 2014, following the general economic downturn and mirroring the national trend of reduced research student enrolments. However, with the implementation of the DIT Research Action Plan, comprising targeted initiatives to grow and support areas of particular strength, a growth in PhD enrolments is particularly evident in the period from 2014 onwards. In 2015, DIT returned to its previous peak performance of 2008 with approximately 460 research students, now predominantly at PhD level. This growth has been maintained with a total of 545 research students enrolled in 2017/18, contributing substantially to the TU Dublin consortium's attainment of the target of 4% of the L8 to 10 cohort registered on research programmes.

TU Dublin has now set itself the target of continuing this projected trajectory towards 7% of the total Level 8 to 10 enrolments, registered on research programmes. Based on an anticipated 1.36% annual growth in the full-time undergraduate student population (DoES) and the target of reaching 7% research enrolments within a ten year period, the TU Dublin partners have set out the following 10-year projected profile:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
<b>TU Dublin</b>	693	743	796	854	915	981	1051	1127	1208	1295	1388
<b>DIT</b>	545	584	626	671	720	771	827	886	950	1018	1092

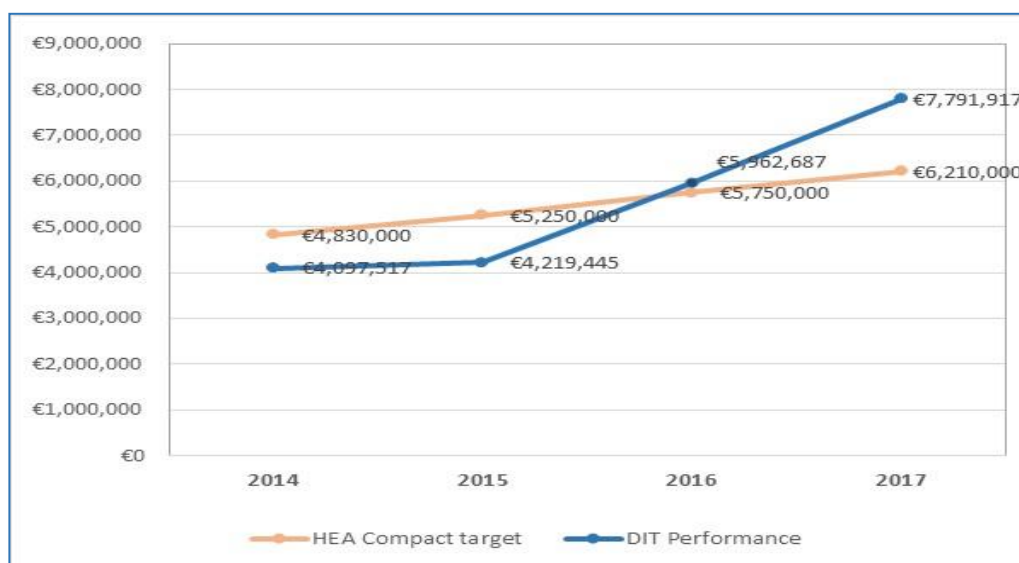
**Table 6 - Projected Research Student Numbers 2018-2028**

Over the three-year timespan of the Compact, DIT will grow its research student numbers from the baseline of 545 in 2018 to 671 in 2021 while TU Dublin will grow its research enrolments from 693 in 2018 to 854 in 2021. This represents an increase of 126 (DIT) or 201 (TU Dublin) research enrolments, contributing directly to the national target.

Research student growth is further underpinned by the second high level target put forward by DIT in this section of the Compact. Under this heading, DIT aims to:

**2. Increase the value of external research awards from industry and from other sources from a baseline of €6.2m in 2017 to €8.5m in 2021**

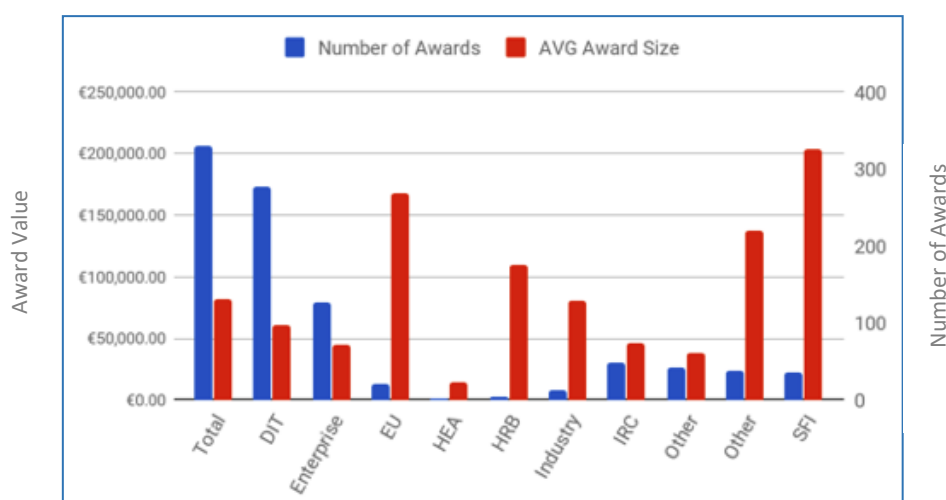
Supporting and sustaining the high levels of PhD graduate education activity requires an ongoing pipeline of research development, new projects and research funding. In the previous Compact with the HEA, DIT sought approval to change the original KPI of Research Income to External Research Award Value. This amendment was made in Cycle 3 and this revision was agreed with the HEA. Setting the baseline in 2014 at €4.83m, DIT grew the annual value of research awards from just under €5m in 2014 to €7.7m in 2017. The target of €5.75m in 2016 was surpassed by c. €25k. – see Figure 16.



**Figure 16 - Progress against Compact Target 2014-17**

For the purposes of this Compact, DIT will continue this trajectory and will increase the value of external research awards from the baseline of €6.2m in 2017 (HEA Compact target) to €8.5m in 2021.

Research awards are secured from a variety of sources including national programmes (Enterprise Ireland, Science Foundation Ireland, Irish Research Council), European programmes (Horizon2020, European Institute of Innovation and Technology, European Research Council, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions), and industry sources (innovation vouchers and collaborative agreements with industry). A breakdown of the sources of research awards and average grant size between 2013 and 2018 is shown in Figure 17.



**Figure 17 - Average Grant Award vs Number of Awards 2013-18**

DIT has introduced close monitoring of its research provision, producing a detailed monthly awards report so that it can monitor its research award pipeline and expenditure to ensure any anomalies can be identified and actions put in place. This has yielded good results and has allowed targeting of specific programmes with a particular focus on awards of higher research value. As illustrated in Figure 17, the average award size both from European programmes in Horizon 2020 as well as with industry collaborations versus the number of awards demonstrates the capacity for further growth which DIT will continue to target.

To support attainment of both of the above targets, DIT will continue to implement its updated Research Action Plan “Building Sustainable Research in DIT” carrying out support initiatives under the following three themes:

1. **Towards Sustainable Funding:** measures to increase numbers of research awards and overall levels of externally funded research. Indicative actions include:
  - Incentivise applications of quality to national funded scholarship programmes, e.g. providing funding support for applications that attain high scores in internationally reviewed competitions;
  - Incentivise high quality Investigator programmes through funding of projects that attain high scores in internationally reviewed competitions;
  - Exploitation of major programmes such as Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, with a particular focus on ITNs within areas of strategic focus;
  - Seed fund new enterprise partnerships in first year as preparation for application to relevant IRC schemes.
2. **Capacity Building for Long Term Sustainability:** developing the ability of the future technological university as a Research Performing Organisation. Indicative actions include:
  - Consolidate researcher career development programme to nurture and support all research talent;
  - Develop strategic planning processes aligned with a new academic workload model to achieve sustainable levels and high quality research output;
  - Develop Research Chairs programme, to be supported by philanthropy, in each of the Research Institutes as ways of developing key research strengths;
  - Develop key areas of infrastructure including the use of philanthropy.
3. **Support for Excellence:** enhancing the performance of the technological university. Indicative actions include:
  - Strengthen participation in national SFI Centres with planned expansion of eligible PIs and researchers, development of Spokes etc.
  - Leverage technical expertise in grant writing and proposal management in relevant national centres
  - Develop employment-based research traineeship programme as basis for developing a sustainable cadre of early stage researchers equipped to compete for national sources of funding.

Building on its already strong growth and the measures implemented to date under the Research Action Plan, DIT is confident that it can continue to develop further capacity and grow its research base in line with its educational mission, contributing to national targets in research and innovation.



## 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 4. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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### Strategy summary:

In the Strategic Plan to 2019, DIT has an overall goal to **'Provide multi-level educational opportunities with clear pathways and diverse modes of delivery to ensure global competitiveness for our graduates'**

Within this goal it has also set a strategic objective to:-

1. **Enhance access and ensure clearly articulated entry and progression pathways and distinctive offerings at levels 6-10 of NFQ, to grow participation rates in Widening Participation (WP) cohorts and to support life-long learning**

DIT is including this as **STRATEGIC PRIORITY (4.1)** within this section of the Compact. The specific targets for DIT that are provided below, align with the national targets identified. DIT has a long tradition of making education accessible to all by widening participation in higher education through:

- Enhancing the quality of DIT education experiences
- Building partnerships with civil society, communities and other education organisations to co-deliver transformative learning opportunities and to co-create and exchange knowledge
- Having a positive impact on Irish society by addressing key societal issues through better policy and practice

The Access and Civic Engagement Office, in place since 1995, manages the achievement of DIT's widening participation aims. The Office provides:-

- Outreach to primary and 2<sup>nd</sup> level schools providing information on pathways to learning and preparation for Higher Education
- Higher Education community engagement programmes in the Grangegorman area
- Community-based research and learning also known as Students Learning with Communities
- Access Entry routes – including for those with a disability and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds
- Transition and support programmes for students with a disability and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds
- Student development programmes for DIT students

DIT's work in outreach and access has been successful over this time, with notable achievements including the identification of its Community Links Programme as an example of best practice in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (the Hunt report) and receiving a MacJannet Award for Global Citizenship from the Talloires Network in 2011.

In terms of scale the following give some sense of the activity on an annual basis :-

- Working with **150+** external partners
- Processing **4,000+** applications to DIT Access and disability entry routes
- Supporting over **1,000** Access students
- Facilitating **130** Access Foundation Programme students to progress to higher education
- Supporting **over 1,300** students with disabilities
- **1,000** students and **50** lecturers engaged in community-based learning and community-based research projects (Students Learning With Communities)
- **800** primary school students using ClicNews.ie literacy/news website
- **300** primary & secondary school students attending workshops on campus
- Outreach for **29** linked DEIS partner schools – presentations to **800+** students

Feedback from some of the students can be seen on the [DIT Access - Video Link](#)

Building on the success of DIT's widening participation work, targets are provided in Table 7 for this cycle of the Performance Compact.

The 'Access to Apprenticeship' initiative, as set out under Objective 1 (Strategic Priority 1.2) also forms a unique component of the DIT widening participation agenda and is embraced within this suite of activities. Provided in Appendix 3, is an article highlighting the case of two sisters who have participated successfully in the programme and share their experience and insights. (Also see the [Sister Apprentices - Web Link](#)).

DIT, with its TU Dublin partners, is also committed to participating in the Programme for Access to Third Level (PATH) Fund, as supported by HEA, and will deliver on commitments identified under the relevant strands.

Target Group or Target	Current Status	Proposed Target 2021/22
Students from socio-economic disadvantage	9% of new entrants are from this category	10% This will build on the current level, with a particular focus on working with DEIS schools or one of our link schools
Mature Students	9% of new entrants are from this category	12% This is accepted as an ambitious target within DIT. Although the national target has been set at 16% (from a baseline of 13%), in recent years DIT, as is the case more generally, has experienced a drop in mature student registrations. This is attributed in part to the increased economic activity. However, DIT will focus on specific interventions to attract and support this cohort, but will continue to monitor and review this target as necessary over the Compact period.
Students with a Disability	11% of new entrants are from this category and 8% are funded from the FSD	11% and 8%, as current level It is proposed to maintain the current level of support in this area at this point. This may be revised under the auspices of TU Dublin.
<u>Progression of 'Access' students</u>	For many years, the progression rates of 'Access' students was at or above the average level of all DIT students. However, in recent years there has been a slight decline in the success rate, depending on the programme and year of programme	There is an initial target of progression to be within 5% of the DIT average progression rates, moving to 2% by the end of the period.

**Table 7 – Targets for Widening Participation enrolments & progression**

## 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 5. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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### Strategy summary:

The key goal identified by DIT in respect of this section centres on providing a distinctive student experience and is to **‘Maintain academic excellence in professional programmes whilst promoting and further building on the Institute’s practice based model’**

Under this goal, two Strategic Priorities have been set out in the plan relevant to this section of the Compact:-

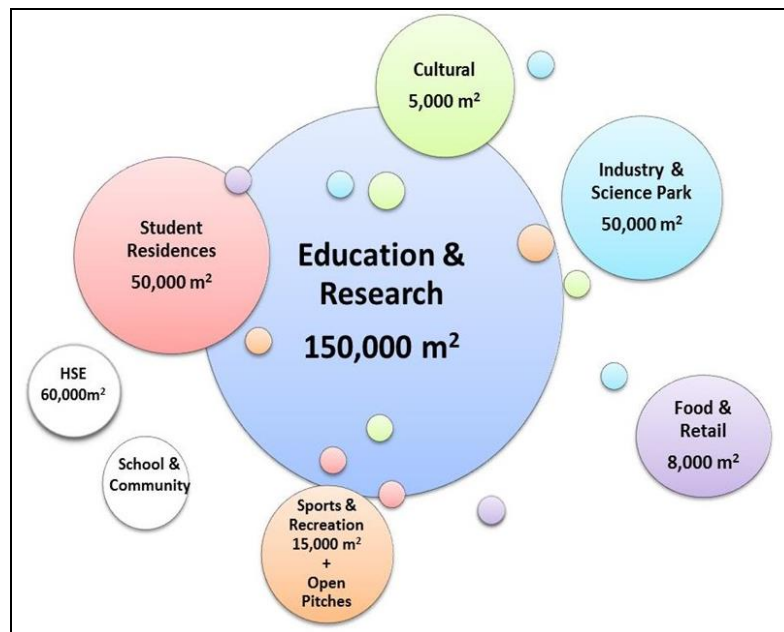
1. **Delivery of specific elements of the consolidated campus at Grangegorman**, to ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment
2. **Development of the Digital Campus** to provide a modern and responsive academic and service experience for all students, supporting appropriate transformation of learning

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5.1

As has been stated earlier the Grangegorman Campus development (see - [Grangegorman Video Link](#)) is one of the two strategic projects for DIT for the coming years. It not only underpins the Institute’s practice-based education philosophy and enables it to enhance the overall learning environment for its student population, helping to address some of the causes of poor retention, but it also underpins the future development of TU Dublin as one of its three modern campuses to serve the greater Dublin region and nationally. The campus development supports many of the strategic priorities set out in this Compact, but primarily Strategic Priority 1.1, that focuses on teaching & learning excellence and student retention as it will provide the necessary environment to facilitate learning enhancement and student engagement. The new campus is also important for Strategic Priority 2.1 of profiling DIT/TU Dublin as a modern education institute, with facilities and accommodation attractive to international students. The project has also been identified as a strategic project within the Government’s capital programme.

The Grangegorman Campus will contribute enormously to the rejuvenation of a key area of Dublin’s inner city underpinning the educational, economic, social, creative & cultural and environmental fabric of the city overall. A joint development with HSE, on completion the campus will have almost 350,000 m<sup>2</sup> of building on the 73 acre site in the centre of the city. The breakdown of space planned is provided in Figure 18 below.

The campus will accommodate the full student population of the current DIT, bringing together up to 25,000 students, 2,000 staff from over 30 existing locations onto one new state-of-the-art campus, and will be one of the 3 physical campuses of the TU Dublin, complemented by a TU D Digital Campus.



**Figure 18 – Grangegorman Campus – Breakdown of Space**

With the opening of the DIT campus at Grangegorman in 2014, there has been an improvement in the overall learning environment within the Institute, in particular for the cohort of Art & Design students now based there who were previously spread over three separate sites. Since late 2014, 1,200 students and staff have been accommodated in the newly renovated and beautifully restored protected buildings on campus. Following the completion of the Greenway Hub in late 2015, the Hothouse enterprise support team relocated the Institute's incubation programme to the building and that space is now fully occupied by start-ups companies. In addition, this building houses the Environmental Sciences & Health Institute (see link - [ESHI](#))

The top class pitches and grounds provide excellent facilities for all DIT students and they are also accessed by local community clubs and schools. Indeed, the opening of the playground and walking paths has seen significant local community use generally.

In April 2018, government Ministers witnessed the signing of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) Project Agreement that paved the way for the construction of two flagship new buildings on campus, enabling DIT to progress the development of this contemporary learning environment appropriate for the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century students. As of July 2018, construction began on the two academic quads (Science, Health & Tourism) and (the Arts, Performance & Cultural Hub), with an anticipated occupation in September 2020, when 10,000 students will be based on the campus. The overall schematic for the development is given below.





**Figure 19 – Grangegorman Campus Schematic**

Government has set the ambition to make Ireland’s education and training service the best in Europe by 2026. Modern, state of the art facilities are important to delivering on this ambition and to provide the sort of learning environment in which students can grow and thrive. The two new buildings under the PPP arrangements (the Central Quad and East Quad), will together provide some 52,000m<sup>2</sup> of academic space and cater for 10,000 students and 600 staff. In line with the Government’s strategic national priorities, the buildings will provide state of the art facilities for the Colleges of Sciences and Health, Arts and Tourism and for the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Part-funded by the EIB, the construction cost of the two buildings is approximately €250 million and represents the largest PPP project to be procured in the education sector. A further two phases of major construction are required after these buildings to complete the plans for the campus. Moving forward there are some key targets to be achieved for Grangegorman. They are:-

Development Strand	Date
DIT will finalise the Migration Plan to assist in guiding and optimising the benefits of relocation to the DIT campus at Grangegorman. This Migration plan will focus on the East and Central academic Quads for September 2020.	Quarter 2, 2018
DIT will finalise its property disposal strategy and commence the sale of property to fund the development of the DIT campus at Grangegorman.	Quarter 2, 2018
DIT will decide a viable route to the procurement of 1,000 student accommodation bed spaces, and proceed if possible with potential delivery in 2021/22.	Quarter 2, 2018
DIT will appoint a design team for the West Quad (primarily for the DIT College of Business)	Quarter 3, 2018
DIT will agree with Dept of Education and Skills on the next phase of development on the campus, primarily a permanent library and the possible development of the West Quad.	Quarter 3, 2018
10,000 DIT students (50% of total population) with 600 DIT staff will relocate to DIT campus at Grangegorman into new purpose built facilities	September 2020
DIT will provide interim: library, student catering, and student recreational and sporting facilities at the DIT campus at Grangegorman.	September 2020

**Table 8 – Planned Elements for the Grangegorman Campus up to 2020**

The Grangegorman campus is not only a strategic project for DIT/TU Dublin but a hugely exciting development in Irish higher education. Its design and development has been informed by best practice in learning design internationally and by specific case studies such as those outlined in the JISC ‘Designing Spaces for Effective Learning’<sup>6</sup>. The consolidation of provision onto a contemporary urban campus at Grangegorman:-

- Greatly enhances the overall learning experience by providing students with significant top class facilities that underpin the Institute’s education philosophy and framework for an integrated curriculum and that inspire student and colleagues alike in their practice-based learning and discovery activities;
- Provides access to new playing fields giving much needed student-facing sporting and recreational facilities that help engage students in the life of the Institute, giving them a sense of belonging, providing a rounded student experience and connecting with those who may be in risk of non-progression or drop-out ;
- In time, there will be access to on-campus student accommodation supporting domestic students to find accommodation in Dublin and underpinning internationalisation of the campus;
- Consolidation of activities at the DIT campus at Grangegorman will promote an enhanced experience for staff members, bringing colleagues together and assisting in promoting greater collegiality;
- Consolidation of DIT academic facilities at the DIT campus at Grangegorman will assist in addressing the traditional fragmentation of DIT and assist in building an integrated Institute as DIT moves to a TU Dublin.

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<sup>6</sup><https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20140616001949/http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/publications/learningspaces.pdf>

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5.2**

The delivery of the Digital Campus has been identified as a strategic objective within the DIT Strategic Plan / TU Dublin strategy. Implementation will help realise our vision to digitally enable teaching and learning and the delivery of student services, complementing their physical delivery across our campuses. The vision is to build a community and ecosystem that transcends traditional university boundaries through the use of digital technologies. Ultimately, the Digital Campus will offer students, staff and members of the wider community opportunities to learn, discover, and engage that are independent of the physical location of the TU Dublin campuses.



**Figure 20 – Flexibility provided by a digital campus**

The Digital Campus will ultimately:

- Create a unique, engaged, powerful and comprehensive experience for every student, on a par with the leading international on-line and blended-learning higher education providers.
- Improve the total student experience - from the initial engagement when they are applying for programmes, through selection, registration and induction, learning, assessment, graduation and ongoing engagement following graduation.
- Offer flexible programmes that are exciting and attractive for students.
- Improve communication with, collaboration between, and socialisation among students, so leading to better retention and higher satisfaction levels.
- Support academic staff as they to engage with students - through a transformative learning environment that combines active learning in the classroom, the studio, the laboratory, the workshop and in communities, together with outstanding student-centred, blended learning support. To enable student services staff to provide better support to students - by leveraging the functionality provided by digital technologies.
- Enable academic administration to better manage academic operations in line with our strategic initiatives - by leveraging the functionality provided by digital technologies.
- Enhance the ability to use learning analytics and other relevant data to support improvement in teaching and learning, research and student services.
- Help academics explore and implement new teaching techniques - using tools that will allow them to easily develop and share successful approaches and good practice.
- Enable dissemination of comprehensive and up-to-date information so that the approach to student welfare and the delivery of student services can be more effective and better coordinated.
- Make effective use of social media and other tools to transform the way we communicate with students so that they are better informed and can do their own problem solving, so reducing their dependence on administrative support for routine enquiries.
- Provide opportunities to strengthen the relationship with alumni, so enhancing professional and social networking benefits and the position of our graduates in the community.



Key strategic initiatives supporting the delivery of these objectives are:

- Evolution of the curriculum to reflect the opportunities afforded by 'digital' and the blend with more traditional modes of teaching and learning;
- The development of an e-portfolio for every student capturing their progress through their academic programme and enhancing their employability prospects
- An enhanced offering for part time and flexible students supporting growth in these learner cohorts and the quality of their experience
- Digitisation of the student service lifecycle from marketing through to graduation and alumni management significantly reducing the need for students to physically access services.
- More effective use of social media to improve communication with students and, in doing so, to reduce the need to provide administrative support for routine student enquiries
- Establishment of digital skills coaching programme focused on programme teams empowering academic staff to transform the curriculum by leveraging the full potential of digital tools to achieve academic excellence.
- Collation and utilisation of learning analytics and other data to support improvement in teaching and learning and the delivery of student services enhancing the student experience and improving student retention
- Build on the strong existing capability in supporting teaching excellence with a focus on expanding delivery through digital and mobile technologies.

Delivery of these initiatives will require the following developments and policies to be put in place (in line with the HEA high-level target *'All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019'*):-

- Review of programme development and quality assurance frameworks to ensure that opportunities to develop digital learning materials are fully supported by these frameworks
- Development and implementation of a workload model for academic staff that supports digital teaching & learning.
- Development of an agreed policy so that every student has an e-portfolio – this includes fully addressing any and all data protection issues associated with e-portfolios
- Review of processes and policies associated with every phase of the student management lifecycle to ensure that they are digitally 'fit for purpose'.
- Agreement with students/their representative body with respect to acceptable policies regarding the medium, content and timing of mass/social media communication with students
- Identification of digital skills inventory necessary to underpin coaching programme
- Review of the skills base within existing teaching, learning and technology support resources across the TU Dublin partners
- Ensuring compliance with all salient data protection requirements in the use of learning and other analytics.

For each of the key strategic initiatives described above, DIT will establish relevant external benchmarks which can guide our approach. This process will include national and international engagement with exemplar HEIs where these can be identified.

## 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

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 6. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

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### Strategy summary:

There are 2 Strategic Priorities for DIT included here:-

1. **Implement arrangements for TU designation**
2. **Develop and implement a 'People Strategy' to empower staff to fulfil their potential within a challenging and stimulating environment, with learning and development opportunities that are flexible, relevant and accessible to every staff member within an engaged, innovative, diverse and high performing workforce**

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6.1

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 sets out the Government's framework for driving reform across all areas of Irish higher education, including teaching and learning, research, engagement with wider society, and internationalisation. The National Strategy included a recommendation that institutes of technology might begin a process of evolution and consolidation, following which amalgamated institutes might arrive at a position where they could apply for designation as a *technological university*.

The technological university was envisaged as a body with a 'distinct mission and character' that would offer innovative pathways for new and existing learners, that could enable higher education to enhance its contribution to the country through globally significant research and through innovation to support enhanced competitiveness.

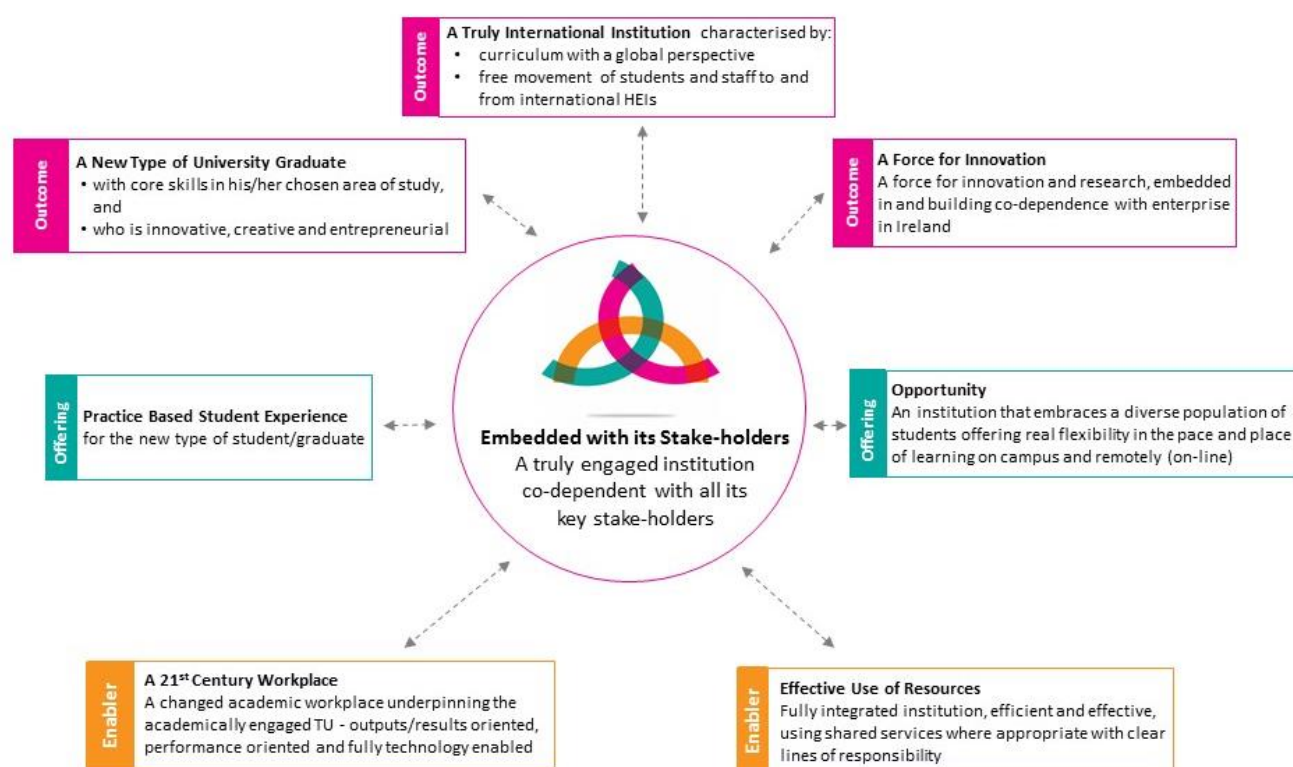
This was the context within which Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB) and Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT) signed a memorandum of understanding establishing the Dublin Technological University Alliance (known as the TU4Dublin Alliance) with the goal of creating a new technological university for Dublin.

The intention of the TU4Dublin Alliance was to bring its three constituent institutions together to create a technological university that can deliver a broad range of higher education provision across disciplines for the Greater Dublin region, spanning NFQ levels 6 to 10, and producing graduates with the skills and capabilities to meet regional and national labour market requirements.

Graduates of the technological university will develop attributes that prepare them for life and for fulfilling careers in a rapidly changing knowledge economy. The vision is to build a modern, vibrant university that provides cohesive and differentiated technological education in Dublin, but also one that is deeply embedded in the economic, civic, social, creative and cultural life of the city region.

Combining the collective experiences, capabilities, passion and resources of the three partner institutions, student-centred learning environments will be developed on three physical campuses as well as through the TU Dublin digital campus. TU Dublin intends to be a key provider of modern apprentice education within the proposed framework, supporting ladders of opportunity for a new generation of students.

The creation of TU Dublin will be one of the most exciting and important landmarks in Irish higher education in decades. The TU Dublin strategic intent is set out in Figure 21 below. This Strategic Priority is included in this section of the Compact with reference to the ambitions of the System Performance Framework in terms of reform of the higher education landscape to create technological universities that will *'meet the needs of the regions, and contribute to national priorities'*.



**Figure 21 – TU Dublin Strategic Intent**

The TU4Dublin Alliance has already invested substantial time, thinking, effort and resources into its development and is committed to building a new type of university to serve the future generations of Dublin and Ireland. The next phase of its work is set out in the broad Programme Plan provided in the following table.

# TU Dublin Programme Plan

## Programmes 1-3

Programme	Deliverables	Milestones
<p>1</p> <p>Academic Development and the New University Graduate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Programmes of the Future.</li> <li>• Work Placement strategy.</li> <li>• Community and civic engagement opportunities in all new programmes.</li> <li>• Approved TU Dublin Graduate Attributes.</li> <li>• Approved Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy.</li> <li>• A restructured First Year Experience.</li> <li>• Flexible pathways of entry to the TU.</li> <li>• Approved Educational Philosophy.</li> <li>• Approved Curriculum Framework.</li> <li>• Completion of the Programme Review framework.</li> <li>• Alignment of programme outcomes and features with the TU's Graduate Attributes.</li> <li>• QA/QE Handbook.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approved Position Statement</li> <li>• Approved Graduate Attributes</li> <li>• QE Draft Regulations</li> <li>• Programme Review framework</li> <li>• Programme Integration Principles and Process</li> <li>• QE Draft Regulations</li> </ul>
<p>2</p> <p>Student Experience and Wellness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an organisational model that enables students to participate as partners in institutional decision-making at all levels</li> <li>• Access and Widening Participation Optimum Practice Model</li> <li>• Cross Campus Integrated Services Design – one-stop- shop service/contact centre</li> <li>• Phased Primary Care Provision Model</li> <li>• Healthy Campus Model.</li> <li>• Service Quality Metrics</li> <li>• A student centred Induction and Orientation programme.</li> <li>• Cross campus learning support units e.g. Academic Writing Centres, Maths Learning centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Services Organisation Design</li> <li>• Revised Governance Structures</li> <li>• Align Access Policies</li> <li>• TU Dublin UD and UDL principles</li> <li>• Contact Centre Tender Award</li> <li>• TU Dublin Graduate Attributes</li> </ul>
<p>3</p> <p>Engaged International Institution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous Professional Development portfolio by School.</li> <li>• New Curriculum Transformation Framework to capture engagement.</li> <li>• New Programme Review Processes aligned with Curriculum Transformation Framework.</li> <li>• Suite of curriculum aligned Engagement Models.</li> <li>• School staff and student mobility strategies.</li> <li>• Suite of engagement and international staff training and development programmes.</li> <li>• Recruitment and staff development policies that value experience in and commitment to engagement with International and Regional stakeholders.</li> <li>• Socio-Economic Impact Study.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-Economic Impact Study</li> <li>• System for capturing engagement activity</li> <li>• Draft QA Processes</li> <li>• Draft Curriculum Framework Proposal</li> </ul>

# TU Dublin Programme Plan

## Programmes 4-6

Programme	Deliverables	Milestones
<p>4</p> <p><b>A Force for Innovation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status Report on the position of the alliance with regard to legislative requirements.</li> <li>• Staff and student recruitment plan.</li> <li>• TU Handbook for Quality Assurance of Graduate Research Programmes.</li> <li>• Structured PhD Programme Development Plan.</li> <li>• Research Strategy document for the Technological University.</li> <li>• Strategic Partnership Model for the Technological University.</li> <li>• Internal Financial Model appropriate to support research and innovation in a technological university.</li> <li>• Organisational Plan for research and innovation support structures in the Technological University.</li> <li>• HR Excellence in Research Quality Mark achieved</li> <li>• Strategy for internationalising our research generated from FRINDOC</li> <li>• Annual research KPIs and targets.</li> <li>• Harmonised SOPs for management of international research programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-Economic Impact Study.</li> <li>• Research student data model (actual versus required student numbers by year).</li> <li>• Agreed Allocation of Student Targets with regard to legislative requirements for research students.</li> <li>• Overall Recruitment Plan with regard to targets set in legislation that are required to be met to achieve designation, and to address targets set at various periods of time post designation.</li> <li>• Research Activity Mapping to address identification of current and proposed fields of education and a research expertise modelling exercise to support the development of these and further fields.</li> <li>• Draft Quality Assurance Handbook of Graduate Research Programmes.</li> <li>• Strategic Partner Needs /Gap Analysis.</li> <li>• Internal Research Financial Model.</li> <li>• Research funding strategy and investment plan.</li> <li>• Research Space Plan.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p>5</p> <p><b>21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phased TU Organisation Design. *</li> <li>• Competency based frameworks for all staff.</li> <li>• TU Equality and Diversity Training Programme.</li> <li>• TU Athena Swan accreditation.</li> <li>• Staff Award Scheme</li> <li>• Managing Mental Health in the Workplace Training Programme.</li> <li>• TU Team Talk Communication Process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation Design Tender.</li> <li>• Alignment of key Recruitment and Selection Policies and related Procedures.</li> <li>• Competency Framework Tender.</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity Training Tender.</li> <li>• TU Athena Swan application.</li> </ul>
<p>6</p> <p><b>Efficient Use of Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross Campus Integrated Services Design – One stop shop approach delivered across sites</li> <li>• Service Quality Metrics - Use of national student engagement surveys, first year student survey, Retention/Completion Statistics, Internal and External Audit, HEA Reports</li> <li>• Optimisation of resources - Increased Staff mobility through training and succession planning, sharing of knowledge, efficient processes, increased use of technology through Digital Campus strategy</li> <li>• Financial Resource and Allocation Model – Consolidation and alignment of revenue and cost streams comprising, review of revenue streams and revenue generation, student numbers, allocation of revenue, cost analysis and review, potential efficiencies of scale in procurement and capital spend.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Services Organisation Design</li> <li>• Alignment of key HR Policies and related Procedures</li> <li>• Alignment of key HR Practices</li> <li>• Alignment of key Financial Policies</li> <li>• Alignment of key Financial Procedures</li> <li>• Alignment of Recruitment, Registrations, Fee Collection and Examination administration policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Design of consistent student experience model implemented across multiple sites and student categories</li> <li>• Pension Audit</li> <li>• Alignment of Payroll Processing</li> <li>• Consolidated Procurement function</li> <li>• Financial Resource and Allocation Model</li> </ul>

## TU Dublin Programme Plan

### Programmes 7

Programme	Deliverables	Milestones
<div>7</div> <div>Digital Campus</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowering People</li> <li>• Enhancing Processes</li> <li>• Enriching Programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding/Communications campaign</li> <li>• Local digital initiatives published &amp; supported incl. identification of digital champions</li> <li>• Online modules/programmes for staff available</li> <li>• Digital skills coaching programme established</li> <li>• Policies/procedures for digital working/studying in place</li> <li>• Data manager/architect appointed</li> <li>• Mobile/BYOD strategy</li> <li>• One-stop digital support centre in place</li> <li>• Digital research information system initiated</li> <li>• Pilot mobile apps</li> <li>• Data-input significantly reduced</li> <li>• Launch of digital ID and access system</li> <li>• Launch of digital dashboard</li> <li>• Online/Flexible learning Steering group established</li> <li>• Digital classroom/multimedia initiative</li> <li>• Digital Library resources enhanced</li> <li>• Learning analytics initiatives established</li> <li>• ePortfolio implementation</li> <li>• Launch TU4D online</li> <li>• Launch new programmes</li> </ul>

Table 9 – TU Dublin Programme Plan



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6.2

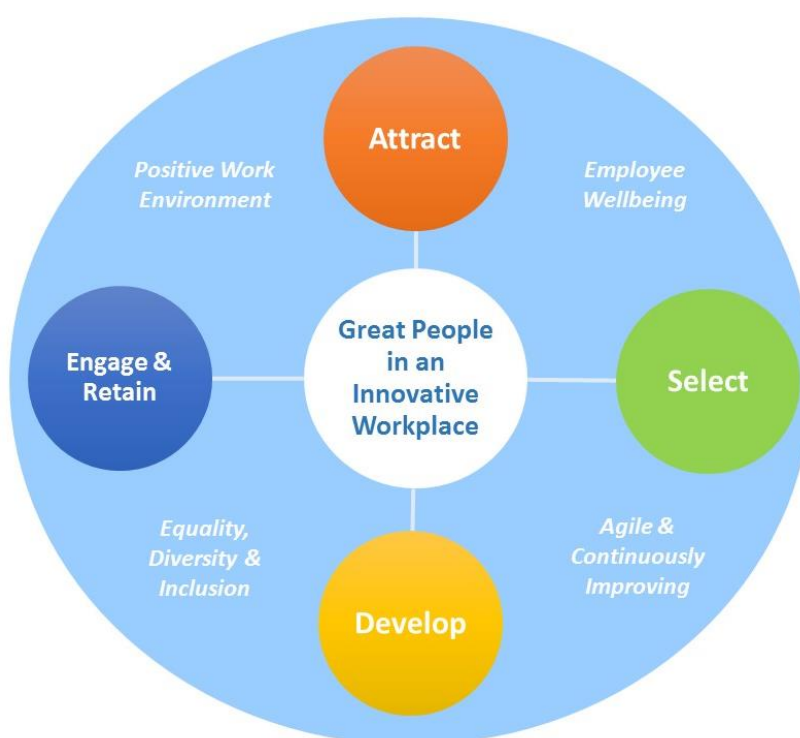
A higher education institution is nothing without its people. The success, reputation and positioning of a HEI is entirely dependent on the capability, commitment, creativity and innovation of colleagues. Therefore the recruitment, retention, development and engagement of staff within the academic areas and within the professional service areas must always be a priority. DIT recognises that colleagues are its most valuable asset and it aims to recognise, nurture and harness the collective talents of all colleagues.

Results from DIT's internal staff engagement survey (2014) noted some really good aspects of DIT, but naturally also highlighted areas for improvement. The development of the TU Dublin, a major organisational merger, requires ongoing attention in the areas of change management and communication and the engagement of colleagues. DIT has invested purposefully in its people over the years and positive features in DIT's staff development programme are generally lauded – these will be readily adopted in the TU Dublin context. Solid leadership and effective management skills are required now more than ever as DIT enters into this next phase of its journey to create an exciting, modern university, supported by the talent that will drive a dynamic top-class learning experience for generations to come. In parallel, obligations for appropriate governance, compliance and transparent reporting are all needed to provide assurance to the public regarding its investment in higher education.

The DIT/TU Dublin People strategy has been developed to try to embrace many of these aspects. Its main focus is to ensure that we have 'great people' happily working in an innovative workplace. The strategic objective is to

**'Attract, recruit, develop and retain the highest calibre of staff, to build a multidimensional diversified and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community'**

This is encapsulated in Figure 22 below



**Figure 22 – DIT/TU Dublin People Strategy**

Specific initiatives identified for the period of this Compact are as follows:-

1. DIT is committed to being an employer of choice and to providing an inclusive environment where everyone feels they are treated fairly, valued and respected regardless of difference. To that end in 2018 DIT engaged in an external **review of its recruitment, selection and promotion policies & procedures**, including a review of data reporting and analysis to monitor and inform recruitment. Recommendations from this review will be considered and implemented from end of 2018, so as to support best practice in recruitment for DIT/TU Dublin.
2. **Implementation of the recommendations of the HE Gender Equality Expert Group.**  
DIT has made implementation of the recommendations of the HE Gender Equality Expert Group a key priority.

- In 2018, it completed the process of recruiting a Director of Equality Diversity and Inclusion, with the post-holder taking up position in quarter 4, 2018. The responsibilities of the role include:-
  - Development and communication of a compelling Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for TU Dublin
  - Ensuring that TU Dublin meets all Equality, Diversity and Inclusion related business, legal and reporting obligations in relation to both staff and students
  - Acting as a point of expertise for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters across TU Dublin.

- The plan to attain an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019 also formed part of this commitment. DIT, achieved the award in September 2018 and was the first Institute of Technology to do so.

In 2016, DIT established its Self-Assessment Team (SAT) for the purposes of preparing an application for an Athena SWAN Bronze Award. The application process comprised a comprehensive gender audit of DIT where issues of unequal participation of men and women in decision-making in DIT, pipeline and career progression were highlighted. While the application was not successful, the positive feedback and guidance received has strengthened DIT's commitment and capacity to deliver on real institutional change for gender equality and inclusion. Preparing our application for Athena SWAN enabled us to look closely at our organisational culture, policies and procedures and highlighted issues we need to address in order to achieve the level of gender equality and diversity that we aspire to. DIT prides itself on being a fully inclusive, striving to create a friendly, collaborative and trusting community where diversity is valued and all members are encouraged to make their contribution and develop their full potential.

A new application for an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award was submitted in May 2018. Informing this application was a detailed institutional analysis examining the pipeline and progression rates by gender across the Institute but with a focus on STEM areas. In addition, a detailed and comprehensive staff consultation process had taken place collecting quantitative and qualitative data through surveys and focus groups on themes relevant to Athena SWAN. This was supported by extensive communications and outreach to raise awareness of gender equality and inclusion and to disseminate best practice in diversity and inclusion across the Institute.

Following on from its successful application, DIT will now implement the comprehensive Action Plan to address all relevant aspects to support greater gender equality including recruitment, career development, progression & promotion, supporting staff on leave, membership of committees. This will in turn be cascaded further through the organisation with a commitment to preparing a minimum of two departmental Athena SWAN applications within the two years of attaining the bronze institutional status.

- DIT is committed in its Strategic Plan to implement more generally the changes in culture, processes and structure to embed gender balance and equality of opportunity for all and at all levels of the organisation. To address this agenda, DIT has embarked on a programme of change to achieve greater diversity and balance in our committees; develop strategic competence and encourage equal professional development for women and men throughout the organisation; and to create opportunities and encouragement for the widest possible inclusive participation in shaping the work of DIT.

An Operations & Resources Committee (ORC), will now deal with all resource allocation, appointments and compliance. With an equal number of men and women, its membership includes all Directors plus colleagues from the next senior management level, rotating on one year terms. Members of the committee do not represent their College, School or function, but will make decisions in the best interests of DIT as a whole. All other committees, sub-committees and selection panels will similarly be gender-balanced with at least 40% of Chairs of such committees being women.

3. The development of **Competency Based Frameworks** for all categories of staff will commence in this academic year 2018/19. This will support the Institute in recruitment, promotion, development, performance management of talented colleagues and in recognising and empowering the great people in the organisation, as we work towards delivering the major strategic change initiatives of Grangegorman and TU Dublin over the coming years.
4. It is intended to introduce and implement an **Agile Working policy** from this academic year 2018/19. With a view to seeking to enhance current flexible working arrangements, the Agile Working Policy will embrace ways of working in DIT/TU Dublin that empower its people to work where, when, and how they choose with maximum flexibility and minimum constraints, so as to optimise their performance and do their best work. The positive impact of agile working arrangements is recognised in terms of:-

- Improving business efficiency and productivity
  - Improving the balance between life and work
  - Sustaining a positive and inclusive healthy workforce
5. DIT will develop and roll out a series of **Career Planning Workshops**, starting in this academic year 2018/19. This is critically important as the Institute embarks on the next stage of its journey as a technological university.
6. A comprehensive **CPD Framework** will be developed and implemented during the period of the Compact, for all academic staff, from early career through mid-career, to staff in academic leadership roles. It is intended that this will build on DIT's highly successful model for new academic staff whereby they are required to participate in the Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching & Learning. This new CPD Framework is intended to provide expanded support for both new and existing academic colleagues. Not only will this help enhance academic *'leadership and operational excellence'*, but will also help address the high-level target under the Compact Objective 5 *'Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff in all HEIs'*.

In addition to these 2 priorities, it is noted that DIT is committed to its obligations under governance and intends to meet compliance standards as set out in the annual Financial Memo to HEA. This is included in the Compact as **Strategic Priority 6.3**.

## 4.7 Summary of Plans, Objectives & Targets

The following table provides a summary of the DIT objectives and targets for the Performance Compact 2018-2021

System Objective	DIT Compact Strategic Priority Reference No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective Description	Performance Compact Targets (to be achieved by 2021/22)
1	1.1	1.1	Ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment	<p><b>T1.1.1</b> – Increase overall student evaluation of education experience, in the ISSE survey, (Good + Excellent) from 75% to 85%</p> <p><b>T1.1.2</b> - Student progression rates for all programmes to be at, or above, the national average</p> <p><b>T1.1.3</b> - Framework for 1<sup>st</sup> Year Student Success to be rolled-out across all programmes, to achieve:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Full implementation of early orientation;</li> <li>(b) 75% of programmes to have conducted the extended induction;</li> <li>(c) 50% of all Schools to have peer engagement &amp; mentoring in place;</li> <li>(d) Full implementation of the assessment &amp; feedback model;</li> <li>(e) Full implementation of the graduate attributes model;</li> <li>(f) 50% of Schools to have the learning spaces/environment initiatives in place.</li> </ul> <p><b>T1.1.4</b> - Full implementation of student engagement through the formal curriculum, so that every programme has students engaged in at least one of the following activities:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Group research project</li> <li>(b) Site visit or industry related engagement</li> <li>(c) ‘Students Learning with Communities’</li> <li>(d) An international experience – placement/study abroad, Erasmus, international research project</li> <li>(e) Placement in industry/community</li> </ul> <p><b>T1.1.5</b> - Completion of an Institute-wide approach to student placement</p> <p><b>T1.1.6</b> - Full implementation of student engagement in the co-curriculum, so that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 500 students &amp; 150 mentors are involved in volunteering</li> <li>(b) Number of students who are members of a DIT Club/Society increases from 9,200 to 10,000</li> <li>(c) Number of students who are members of a sports group increases by 10% to 2,250</li> <li>(d) Participation in a DIT Student Union activity will be 30%</li> <li>(e) Number of students involved in a student leadership activity (Class rep, LEAD module, Access Student Support, etc.) will be 700</li> </ul>
	1.2	2.3	Extend practice/ work-based/ apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels	<p><b>T1.2.1</b>- For practice-based and work-based activities, a full review of best practices across DIT will be conducted to enable a plan developed for further adoption in the TU Dublin context.</p> <p><b>T1.2.2</b> - Work placement opportunities to be increased by 5% for each year of the Compact</p> <p><b>T1.2.3</b> - Apprenticeship numbers to be increased as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Traditional apprentices - from 1,152 to 1,545</li> <li>(b) ‘New Apprentices’ - from 0 to 90</li> <li>(c) ‘Earn &amp; Learn’ students - from 74 to 95</li> </ul>

System Objective	DIT Compact Strategic Priority Reference No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective Description	Performance Compact Targets (to be achieved by 2021/22)
2	2.1	4	Advancing the institution to be a truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities	<p><b>T2.1.1</b> - An 'Internationalisation' plan with specific initiatives to be developed, to be implemented commencing in 2019/2020.</p> <p><b>T2.1.2</b> - A targeted increase in EU research funding, as part of the overall target to increase external research</p> <p><b>T2.1.3</b> - An audit, review and baseline for international partnerships and staff exchanges to be established, with targets in line with relevant benchmarks that will be determined</p> <p><b>T2.1.4</b> - An audit, review and baseline for international community engagement activities to be established, with targets in line with relevant benchmarks that will be determined</p> <p><b>T2.1.5</b> - A robust recruitment plan for an appropriate international staff profile to be developed</p> <p><b>T2.1.6</b> - Introduce 'languages for all' that will double the numbers of students taking a language from current level.</p> <p><b>T2.1.7</b> - Increase the number of outgoing Erasmus students, as finances allow</p> <p><b>T2.1.8</b> - Increase the numbers of international students from 7% to 10% of full-time enrolments</p>
	2.2	3.2	Achieve sustainable growth in research & innovation outputs in designated research fields	<p><b>T2.2.1</b> - Deliver a minimum of 21 commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments)</p> <p><b>T2.2.2</b> - Create 3 new spin-outs per annum</p>
3	3.1	3.1	Build capacity in Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise through growth in and enhancement	<p><b>T3.1.1</b> - Increase postgraduate research enrolment from 529 to 671</p> <p><b>T3.1.2</b> - Increase the value of external research awards from industry and other sources from €6.2M (2016/17) to €8.5M (2021/22)</p>
4	4.1	2.1	Enhance access and ensure clearly articulated entry and progression pathways and distinctive offerings at levels 6-10 of NFQ, to grow participation rates in Widening Participation (WP) cohorts and to support life-long learning	<p><b>T4.1.1</b>- % of new entrants from socio-economic disadvantage backgrounds to be increased from 9% to 10%</p> <p><b>T4.1.2</b> - % of new entrants that are mature students to be increased from 9% to 12%, (subject to demand)</p> <p><b>T4.1.3</b> - % of new entrants that are students with a disability to be maintained at current level of 8%</p> <p><b>T4.1.4</b> - Achieve progression rates for access students at within 5% of the DIT average, moving to within 2% by 2021/2022.</p>
5	5.1	1.1	Delivery of specific elements of the consolidated campus at Grangegorman, to ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment	<p><b>T5.1.1</b>- Delivery of planned elements of the Grangegorman Campus up to 2020, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Migration plan for East &amp; Central Quads</li> <li>(b) Property disposal strategy, implemented with commencement of sale of properties</li> <li>(c) Procurement plan for student accommodation</li> <li>(d) Appointment of design team for West Quad</li> <li>(e) Confirmation of next phases of development</li> <li>(f) Provision of interim facilities</li> <li>(g) Relocation of 10,000 students to Grangegorman in the East &amp; Central Quads</li> </ul>

System Objective	DIT Compact Strategic Priority Reference No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective No.	DIT Strategic Plan Objective Description	Performance Compact Targets (to be achieved by 2021/22)
5	5.2	1.2	Development of the Digital Campus to provide a modern and responsive academic and service experience for all students, supporting appropriate transformation of learning	<b>T5.2.1</b> - Development of the Digital Campus to include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Review of QA frameworks to ensure they support digital learning</li> <li>(b) Development &amp; implementation of a workload model to support digital teaching &amp; learning</li> <li>(c) Development of a policy to ensure every student has an e-Portfolio</li> <li>(d) Review of policies and processes in the student management lifecycle to ensure they are digitally 'fit for purpose'</li> <li>(e) An agreed communications strategy for students to be in place</li> <li>(f) A digital skills inventory to be conducted</li> <li>(g) Review of skills base within existing teaching, learning and technology support resources</li> <li>(h) Ensuring compliance with data protection requirements</li> </ul>
6	6.1	6.3	Implement arrangements for TU designation	<b>T6.1.1</b> – Delivery of the TU Dublin Programme Plan, including specific elements under:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Academic Development &amp; the New University Graduate</li> <li>(b) Student Experience &amp; Wellness</li> <li>(c) Engaged International Institution</li> <li>(d) A Force for Innovation</li> <li>(e) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workplace</li> <li>(f) Efficient Use of Resources</li> <li>(g) Digital Campus</li> </ul>
	6.2	5	Attract, recruit, develop and retain the highest calibre of staff, to build a multidimensional diversified and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community	<b>T6.2.1</b> - Implementation, as appropriate, of recommendations from the review of DIT recruitment, selection and promotions policies & procedures <b>T6.2.2</b> - Implementation of the recommendations of the HE Gender Equality Expert Group <b>T6.2.3</b> - Development of Competency Based Frameworks for all categories of staff <b>T6.2.4</b> - Development and implementation of an Agile Working policy <b>T6.2.5</b> - Development and roll-out of a series of Career Planning workshops <b>T6.2.6</b> - Development and implementation of a CPD Framework for all academic staff
	6.3	-	Commitment to obligations under governance	<b>T6.3.1</b> - Delivery of obligations under governance and to compliance standards as set out in the Financial Memo to HEA

**Table 10 – DIT objectives and targets for the Performance Compact 2018-2021**



## 5. 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.

## 6. Agreement

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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:

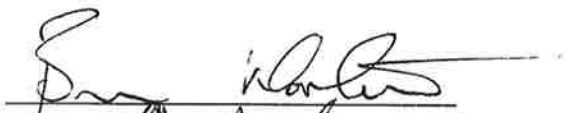


Date:

24/4/19

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed:



Date:

16<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Campus Principal, TU Dublin and former President, Dublin Institute of Technology

Signed:



Date:

16/4/19

President, TU Dublin

# Appendices

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We (Dublin Institute of Technology) include the following appendices with our performance compact.

List the appendices here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 1: - Copy of DIT Strategic Plan to 2019
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 2: - HE System Performance Framework, with high-level targets numbered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 3: - Article – ‘Sister Apprentices’
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 4: -
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 5: -
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 6: -
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 7: <i>Institutional quantitative data return – submitted separately by email to HEA (September 2018)</i>

## Appendices

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# Appendix 1

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**DIT Strategic Plan to 2019**



# **DIT Strategic Plan to 2019**

***Towards TU4Dublin Designation***

**2017**



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## Executive Summary

**Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)** is a leader in higher technological education in Ireland. With a history of over 130 years, it has developed and evolved to meet the every-changing challenges of higher education and currently has a student population of over 20,000. It has a significant track record in delivering career-oriented education, research & innovation, and community/civic engagement, and is now poised to address the current and future needs, challenges and opportunities of a complex modern knowledge society. Key drivers in the higher education environment have been identified and these have helped inform the development of priorities within this DIT Strategic Plan to 2019.

Working with partner Institutes of Technology, Blanchardstown and Tallaght, DIT intends to create a Technological University for Dublin, one of the first of these new types of universities in Ireland. With designation to be achieved under statute, the Technological University for Dublin (TU4Dublin) will deliver an enhanced cohesive offering of relevant technological education in the Greater Dublin region, at all levels of higher education. The TU4Dublin provision will comprise career-oriented teaching, learning, and research & innovation promoting engagement and exchange that contributes meaningfully to individual, cultural, community and societal development, and that supports enterprise creation and growth and economic progress in the region.

The second area of focus of this Strategic Plan up to 2019, is to progress the development of the Grangegorman Campus, that will facilitate 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of knowledge-intensive activity in the heart of Dublin city. Incorporating leading edge design, educational innovation and technology, and enabling the consolidation of DIT from 30 buildings to a single urban campus, the Grangegorman facility will support an enhanced learner experience for the DIT /TU4Dublin community and will contribute to urban regeneration and regional development for the city region.

The third element of strategic focus will be to maintain and enhance the academic enterprise and the effectiveness of operations so as to deliver high-quality learning that supports individual, societal and economic needs.

The DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 is based around 8 major themes, and a set of goals and objectives have been developed under each of these. The strategic themes centre on:-

- ⊙ Providing a distinctive, high quality, experiential student experience
- ⊙ Ensuring flexibility & diversity in provision to provide a range of learning opportunities and address regional skills needs
- ⊙ Being a force for research and innovation
- ⊙ Being a truly international institution
- ⊙ Promoting an innovative workplace, with 'people at its heart' that nurtures and supports colleagues
- ⊙ Having organisation arrangements that are effective in delivering the dynamic, entrepreneurial and innovative environment of a Technological University; with an appropriate balance of resources and efficient systems to underpin streamlined operations and create an outstanding learner experience
- ⊙ Being a truly engaged institution, working closely with and communicating effectively with internal & external stakeholders
- ⊙ Creating graduates that have positive impact on the economic, social, cultural and environmental fabric of the region, nationally and globally

Ownership of the DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 lies with all colleagues in DIT and every colleague has a role to play in its success. Implementation will be supported and guided by the President and the Senior Leadership Team, with individual academic and professional service areas developing and delivering their own related action plans around specific goals. Regular monitoring and reporting will be conducted to ensure progress and the Strategic Plan will form the basis of discussions with and reporting to the Higher Education Authority in respect of DIT strategic priorities.

## Our Environment – Context for Higher Education development

Higher education institutions (HEIs) have always had a central role in society going back to their origins in 12<sup>th</sup> century Europe when the first universities were established. Over time that role has evolved and changed and today it centres broadly on five main strands:-

- *Transferring knowledge through the education and development of graduates*
- *Ensuring a repository of knowledge for society*
- *Generating new knowledge through research*
- *Disseminating knowledge to society through publication and other means*
- *Contributing to socio-economic progress through technology transfer, enterprise development and support for job creation and other community and civic goals.*

Increasingly HEIs worldwide are being called upon as major contributors to a region's social, civic, cultural and economic development. National policy agendas for higher education are now driven not only by the goal of providing excellent standards of and access to education for its citizens but by, the demands for higher levels of knowledge and workforce skills to tackle the economic challenges; the impact of increased global educational and enterprise competition; and the need to prepare for the rapid changes brought about by technology and societal and environmental impacts. As such, expectations upon HEIs have risen generally and these expectations exist in an environment of limited resources, increasing student numbers and more diverse student populations. This global trend is reflected in the strategic plans of most HEIs, particularly those that are publicly funded. Some commentators, recognising the challenges are nonetheless calling on Higher Education to act boldly to embrace the opportunities that such changes bring.

The previous DIT Strategic Plan was set primarily within the context of the overall Irish higher education landscape, a landscape that has effectively been shaped by the Hunt Report (or 'National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030')<sup>1</sup>. This report and the Action Plan from the Department of Education and Skills<sup>2</sup> reflect the key drivers for Irish higher education. Today, the main drivers include:-

- **Increased demands** for undergraduate places due to demographics – the number of new entrants into higher education from the school leaver cohort is projected to continue to grow to 2020 and beyond<sup>3</sup>
- **Financial challenges** arising from the economic downturn that resulted in reductions in HEI budgets and consequent restriction on resources. Uncertainty about the ultimate funding of higher education will remain until decisions on the recommendations from the Cassells report<sup>4</sup> are taken and worked through.
- Calls on higher education have issued from the Hunt report, the Action Plan for Education and others<sup>5</sup>, to **widen participation** and provide **flexible education opportunities & progression pathways** to address issues of access for those most affected by unemployment and economic and social difficulties and to underpin the needs of the labour market generally. In addition, enriching **graduate attributes** is required, so as to equip citizens with a balance of domain-specific and essential generic skills to help them realise their full potential in society and in the new economy
- Opportunities in **internationalisation** - international student numbers worldwide doubled in the period 2000 to 2011 to the level of 4.5million<sup>6</sup>. This growth is projected to continue and it offers prospects for HEIs to attract diverse student cohorts that add richness to the overall student experience, whilst diversifying sources of income for the institute. In addition, international partnering in teaching & learning and research collaboration is growing in order to expand portfolios, networks and capabilities and to enhance positioning. **BREXIT**, the decision of the UK to withdraw from the European Union will no doubt have a significant impact on Ireland. The full implications for Irish higher education are still being assessed, but there is likely to be a range of opportunities and challenges involved.
- **Research and innovation** is a central strand of a HEI's activity – national policies<sup>7</sup> are increasingly looking towards higher education as lead players in the knowledge society and as major contributors to economic development, with expected increases in capacity, capability and output, and deeper engagement with the wider society
- There is increased attention on **enhancing the student experience** and **improving retention rates**, sometimes driven by (a) 'value for money' requirements from government and also (b) from increased expectations from students, as they provide increasing contributions towards their own education.
- Challenges in **attracting and retaining talent** exist amongst all categories of staff, due to increased competition in higher education and beyond, both nationally and globally. In addition, all organisations are striving to improve meaningful engagement and communication with staff, in an age where electronic interaction is prominent.
- **Student voice** – in some ways reflective of society generally and the expectation for responsiveness from providers, capturing and understanding students' concerns and input are seen as increasingly important
- **Impact of digital technologies** – students and staff alike, today operate in a digital world and expect the teaching and learning experience to be heavily technology-enabled. Not alone that, but all aspects of higher education including professional and support services, are increasingly affected by advances in technology development - strategic choices are needed as to where investment should be made if a HEI is to remain current and competitive
- **Structural changes** in the sector to support the goals of achieving diversity, coherence and critical mass, have resulted in the introduction of 'technological universities' in Ireland along with the framework of 'regional clusters'<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [National Strategy for Higher Education 2030](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Action Plan for Education 2016-2019, September 2016](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Projections in Demand, 2015-2029 - DoES - Nov 2015](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Investing in National Ambition - A Strategy for Funding Higher Education, March 2016](#)

<sup>5</sup> [National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education, 2015-2019](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Education at a Glance, Indicators – OECD - 2014](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Innovation 2020; Enterprise 2025](#)

<sup>8</sup> [HEA Report on system reconfiguration, inter-institutional collaboration & governance - April 2013](#)

- **Societal and environmental issues** such as crisis immigration or climate change, are areas where public HEIs can and are expected to have significant contributions to make in developing and supporting national and global solutions
- **Rankings and performance measurements** – despite debates over methodologies and questions in respect of the motivation and objectivity of their providers, it is accepted that university rankings are a permanent feature in today's higher education landscape. In addition to global rankings, national processes that set out to measure aspects of HEIs' performance (such as the Higher Education Authority<sup>9</sup> (HEA) Strategic Dialogue process<sup>10</sup> and the national surveys of Students<sup>11</sup> and Employers<sup>12</sup>) have had an impact on the workings of a HEI, not only in growing benchmarking activity but also in increasing the awareness of the importance of its public profile and how this can be effectively managed.

The framework for the HEA's Strategic Dialogue process is informed by the set of national priorities for higher education set by Government, as recommended from the Hunt Report. The current priorities are:- (a) Participation & Access; (b) Teaching & Learning; (c) Research & Innovation; (d) Engagement with the wider society; (e) Internationalising higher education; and (f) creating a Coherent Higher Education Framework (including establishing technological universities). Each HEI is expected to contribute to the delivery of these priorities and the **Performance Compact** (comprising a 3-year cycle) reflects each HEI's objectives under these priorities, drawn from its own strategic plan and in line with its mission. The objectives are measured annually to assess and fund performance against agreed targets.

Within the current DIT Performance Compact<sup>13</sup>, two major initiatives were identified;- the creation of the **Technological University for Dublin (TU4Dublin)**<sup>14</sup> and progress of the **Grangegorman**<sup>15</sup> campus. These initiatives remain as strategic priorities for DIT over the coming years and support institutional consolidation & the development of provision and facilities to further enhance the student experience.

As a public HEI, DIT is cognisant of the need to respond to national objectives whilst taking on the significant challenges and opportunities that exist in an increasingly competitive and global higher education world. The DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 is designed to build on its substantial strengths; to provide the focus to address the complexity of drivers in the higher education landscape; and to enhance its overall positioning in the environment.

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<sup>9</sup> [Higher Education Authority](#)

<sup>10</sup> [HEA Strategic Dialogue Process](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Irish Survey of Student Engagement](#)

<sup>12</sup> [National Employer Survey](#)

<sup>13</sup> [DIT Performance Compact 2014](#)

<sup>14</sup> [TU4Dublin](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Grangegorman Campus](#)

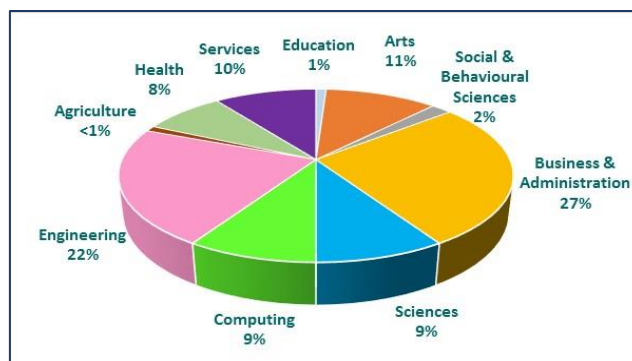
## Building on our Strengths

As an independent higher education institution **DIT** has retained a unique place in the Irish Higher Education landscape since its foundation and it has responded and evolved to meet the every-changing challenges in higher education. Its positioning and performance over many years provides DIT with a robust platform from which to launch and deliver its new strategic plan. Many of its strengths are given here:-

1. DIT has been a leader in higher technological education in Ireland, with history going back 130 years
2. DIT has had full degree awarding powers (NFQ<sup>16</sup> levels) up to PhD level, since 1998
3. DIT is the only Irish multi-level HEI to appear in global university rankings = top 3-5% of world universities (Times Higher & QS); in the top 50 youngest universities; and with strong performance in U-Multirank
4. DIT is a member of European University Association
5. DIT continues to support and deliver its model of practice-based and research informed education
6. DIT quality programme provision is recognised in accreditation by the relevant academic discipline bodies
7. DIT has recognised quality in programme provision through accreditation by professional and statutory bodies
8. DIT current student population, across NFQ levels 6-10, is 20,751 (*academic year 2016/17*); over 27,000 for the combined TU4Dublin
9. DIT Graduate Network has almost 100,000 members world-wide with highly successfully careers in Ireland and abroad
10. DIT is the only national provider, or one of two providers, in a number of areas of programme offering
11. DIT has a strong established track record in widening participation
12. DIT research strengths are in a number of key fields including:- Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise
13. DIT is proud of its research publications and citations success
14. DIT has highly successful and award-winning activity in technology transfer and new venture creation
15. DIT is the largest provider of corporate education in Ireland
16. DIT is renowned for its extensive community and civic engagement
17. DIT has commenced, and is committed to completing, the development of Grangegorman that will provide 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of state-of-the art facilities in a modern 21<sup>st</sup> century campus, in the heart of Dublin city.

In moving forward, DIT also recognises the strengths of working with partner Institutes of Technology, Blanchardstown and Tallaght (ITB & ITT) to form the Technological University for Dublin. The TU4Dublin will become a new type of university for Dublin and will be built on an already significant higher education profile. The profile<sup>17</sup> of the TU4Dublin Alliance includes -

- ⊙ **28,000+ students**, including **13%** of higher education students nationally and **1 in 4** in the Greater Dublin Region (GDR), with undergraduate provision across the major disciplines as shown here



- ⊙ TU4Dublin supports 10% of the **research students** in (GDR) and 40% of research students in the Institute of Technology sector
- ⊙ **Over 1 in 3** of new entrants in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (**STEM**) in GDR are registered with TU4Dublin and over ½ of NFQ Level 6&7 students
- ⊙ More than **1 in 5** of new entrants in TU4Dublin are in nationally-targeted socio-economic groups, with almost **15%** of new entrants as mature students
- ⊙ There are currently **2,300** staff within TU4Dublin, of which **1,300** are Academic
- ⊙ TU4Dublin will continue to operate across its 3 main campuses, plus developing an enhanced Digital Campus
- ⊙ TU4Dublin is a leader in lifelong learning and executive education opportunities

<sup>16</sup> [National Framework of Qualifications](#)

<sup>17</sup> Based on data from 2015/16 academic year

## Our Focus - Strategic Intent

Cognisant of developments and drivers in the external environment and building on the strengths, successes and opportunities of DIT and its TU4Dublin Alliance partners, ITB and ITT, the focus for DIT up to the end of the academic year 2018/19 will be threefold:-

1. With the ultimate goal of operating a new type of university that serves the evolving needs of the Greater Dublin region, DIT will work with partners ITB and ITT to implement the plan to create and achieve designation for a **Technological University for Dublin**. The aim of TU4Dublin is to deliver an enhanced cohesive offering of relevant technological education from NFQ levels 6-10, that supports career-oriented teaching, learning, research & innovation; that promotes engagement and exchange that contributes meaningfully to individual, cultural, community and societal development; and that supports enterprise creation and growth and economic progress in the region. The key characteristics of the TU4Dublin are provided in the Figure 1 below. For further details see:- [www.tu4dublin.ie](http://www.tu4dublin.ie)

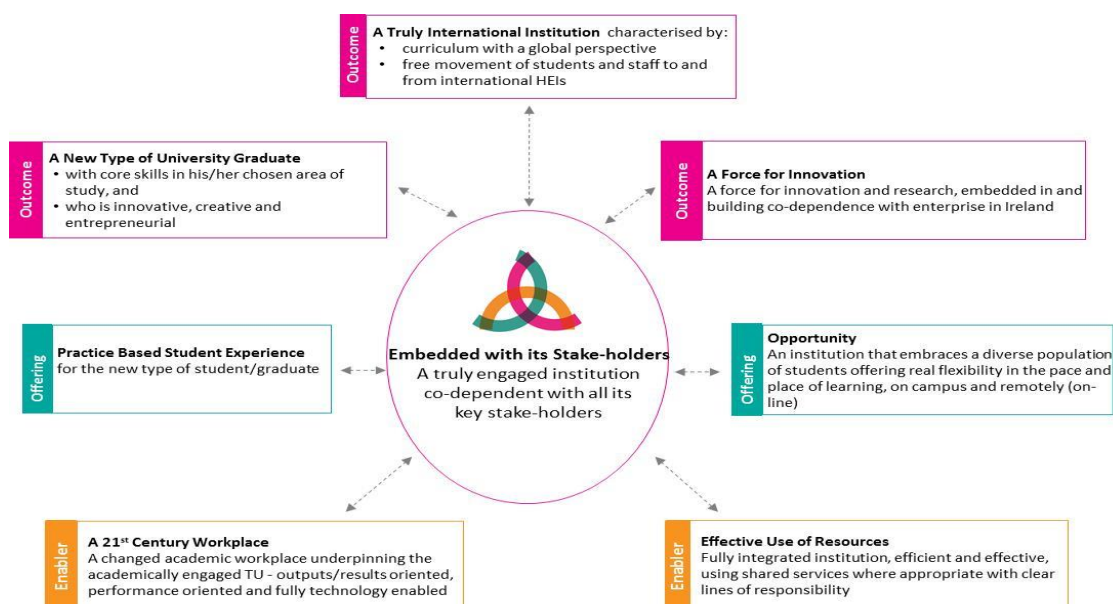


Figure 1 – TU4Dublin Characteristics

2. Working with the statutory body (the Grangegorman Development Agency), DIT will advance the development of **Grangegorman** as a world class integrated campus in line with its approved master-plan<sup>18</sup>, providing a flagship within Irish higher education that supports an enhanced learner experience for the DIT /TU4Dublin community; that incorporates leading edge design, educational innovation and technology; and that contributes to urban regeneration and regional development. The campus will enable the consolidation of DIT from 30 buildings to a single urban campus, accommodating up to 30,000 students & staff, producing 5,000+ new jobs and delivering 300,000m<sup>2</sup> of knowledge-intensive activity in the heart of Dublin city. The main elements of the development are captured in Figure 2 below.

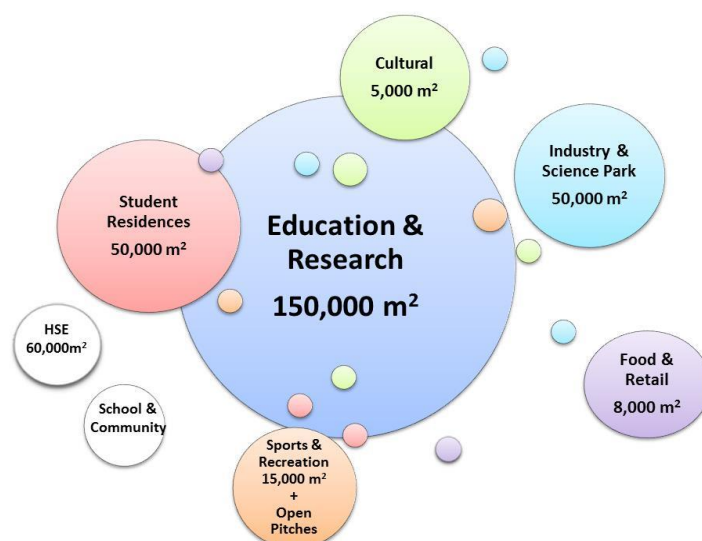


Figure 2 – Main elements of the Grangegorman campus

3. DIT will ensure successful delivery and enhancement of the **academic enterprise** and the effectiveness of its operations, continuing to provide high quality purpose-driven and practice-based learning to support individual, societal and economic needs, whilst delivering the major change initiatives of TU4Dublin and the new Grangegorman campus.

<sup>18</sup> <http://qgda.ie/the-masterplan>



## Our Ambitions - Strategic Themes

The DIT Strategic Plan to 2019 is based around 8 major themes that support the overall strategic intent and are anchored by DIT's core feature of providing 'purpose-driven and practice-based learning'. The themes are set out below in Figure 3



Figure 3 – Strategic Themes

The Strategic Themes are articulated as follows:-

1. **Distinctive Student Experience** - Academic excellence in professional programmes with a distinctive practice-based, research-informed learner experience
2. **Flexibility & Diversity** – Opportunities & Skills Needs - Providing flexible learning options to a diverse student population with 'elevators of opportunity' and addressing regional skills needs
3. **A Force for Research & Innovation** - creating useful knowledge and addressing real challenges in new and innovative ways
4. **International Institution** - A truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities
5. **Great People in an Innovative Workplace** - A modern workplace, that recognises 'people' as its key asset and provides the ethos and systems to nurture and support colleagues
6. **Effective & Efficient Organisation, Operations and Systems** – An organisation that facilitates flexibility, agility and governance accountability; supports dynamic and entrepreneurial endeavour and the innovative environment of a Technological University; and ensures efficient use of resources, to create of an outstanding learner experience.
7. **Engaged Institution** - A borderless university embedded with its stakeholders, with high quality engagement and communication, and creating impact and influence
8. **Highly valued Alumni** - Purpose-driven education for life and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, creating a new type of university graduate that achieves positive impacts in the region, nationally & globally

The key goals and objectives associated with each Strategic Theme are provided in the next section

## Our Key Goals & Objectives

Strategic Theme	Key Goal	Objectives
<b>Distinctive Student Experience</b>	1. Maintain academic excellence in professional programmes whilst promoting and further building on the Institute's practice based model	1.1 Ensure a high-quality, enriching successful student experience as part of a community, with a diversity of opportunities for student development to support career and life success and fulfilment 1.2 Develop the Digital Campus to provide a modern and responsive academic and service experience for all students, supporting appropriate transformation of learning
<b>Flexibility &amp; Diversity – Expand Educational Opportunities</b>	2. Provide multi-level educational opportunities with clear pathways and diverse of modes of delivery to ensure global competitiveness for our graduates	2.1 Enhance access and ensure clearly articulated entry and progression pathways and distinctive offerings at levels 6-10 of NFQ, to grow participation rates in Widening Participation cohorts and to support life-long learning 2.2 Develop the Digital Campus to support flexible on-line, blended learning and part-time provision 2.3 Extend practice/ work-based/ apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels
<b>A Force for Research &amp; Innovation</b>	3. Build research & innovation capacity in a number of targeted fields, creating useful knowledge, enhancing the Institute's profile and addressing real challenges in new and innovative ways	3.1 Build capacity in Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies ; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise 3.2 Achieve sustainable growth in research & innovation outputs in designated research fields
<b>International Institution</b>	4. Advancing the institution to be a truly international institution providing global perspectives and global opportunities	4.1 Contribute to the quality of the education provided and ensure that internationalisation embraces and supports all activities of the Institute providing opportunities for staff and students to engage in international activity. 4.2 Promote the recruitment of international students ( all categories) in line with the scale and mission of the Institute 4.3 Seek opportunities to extend the Institute's reach internationally and continue to develop and grow targeted international partnerships that align with the Institute plan, including education and research initiatives
<b>Great People in an Innovative Workplace</b>	5. Develop and Implement a 'People Strategy' to empower staff to fulfil their potential within a challenging and stimulating environment, with learning and development opportunities that are flexible, relevant and accessible to every staff member within an engaged, innovative, diverse and high performing workforce	5.1 Attract, recruit, develop and retain the highest calibre of staff, to build a multidimensional diversified and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community 5.2 Ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion 5.3 Ensure a community of fully informed and fully engaged colleagues
<b>Effective &amp; Efficient Organisation, Operations &amp; Systems</b>	6. Put in place organisational structures, operations and systems that facilitate flexibility, agility and governance accountability; support dynamic and entrepreneurial endeavour; and ensure efficient use of resources, to create of an outstanding learner experience	6.1 Review, revise and implement organisation structures, including decision-making pathways and reporting relationships, to underpin academic development across the disciplines and to ensure responsiveness and accountability 6.2 Ensure that the organisation has a suite of policies and procedures, processes and systems that meet quality requirements and are fit for purpose. 6.3 Implement appropriate arrangements in preparation for TU designation 6.4 Ensure the overall financial sustainability of DIT 6.5 Enable our students to access services in a way and at a time of their choosing and allow our student services and academic administration staff to leverage the functionality provided by digital technologies to better support our diverse student body. 6.6 Implement the Estates development plan to ensure best facilities are available to enhance the learner experience and that environmental sustainability targets are met (including achievement of the Green Flag)
<b>Engaged Institution</b>	7. Maintain the Institute as a borderless university, embedded with its stakeholders, with high quality engagement and communication, and creating impact and influence	7.1 Achieve meaningful engagement with key stakeholder groups to deliver impact in the region 7.2 Build on DIT's presence, enhancing its identity and be a valuable, pro-active & progressive influence in Irish society
<b>Highly valued Alumni</b>	8. Reinforce the Institute's purpose-driven education designed for life and work in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century, to create a new type of university graduate that achieves positive impacts in the region, nationally & globally	8.1 Support and promote the seamless transition of learners to the workplace, ensuring work-ready graduates that embrace life-long learning skills and that provide positive impact 8.2 Promote and support the network of DIT graduates

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## Appendix 2

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### HE System Performance Framework, with high-level targets numbered

HE System Performance Framework	
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills &amp; 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</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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%;</li> <li>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);</li> <li>3. Increase tertiary attainment among 30-34 years olds to 60% by 2020 (52.9% 2016);</li> <li>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);</li> <li>5. Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines in all HEIs by 2020 (baseline to be established and tracked);</li> <li>6. Increase number of available Springboard places by 30% by 2021 in both universities and institutes of technology;</li> <li>7. Double target to 9,000 annual new apprenticeship registrations by 2020 (over 4,500 in 2017) with 78 separate apprenticeships in place;</li> <li>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);</li> <li>9. Achievement of the targets in the new ICT Action Plan.</li> </ol>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the output value of internationalisation to €1.15bn per annum by 2020 (International Education Strategy baseline €819m in 2014/15);</li> <li>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);</li> <li>3. Progress towards Bologna target of at least 20% of those who graduate in 2020 to undertake a study or training period abroad;</li> <li>4. Number of innovation vouchers project agreements with industry to increase by 12% by 2020 (487 in 2016);</li> <li>5. Increase number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) by 20% by 2020 (163 in 2017);</li> <li>6. Increase number of spin-outs established during the year by 40% by 2020 (Innovation 2020 target, 29 in 2014);</li> <li>7. Improve Employer satisfaction rates with HEI collaboration with enterprise by 25% as tracked in National Employer Survey (companies &lt; 50 employees – 55% rated collaboration as good/very good; companies with 51 – 250 employees – 60% and companies &gt; 251+ employees – 75%);</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>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</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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);</li> <li>2. Increase by 30% the number of funded postdoctoral positions in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (Innovation 2020 target);</li> <li>3. Double overall Higher Education research income derived from industry to €48m (Innovation 2020 target - €24m in 2014);</li> <li>4. Increase research projects between enterprise and the public research system by 20% by 2020 (2014 Baseline is 878);</li> <li>5. Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020 (over €200m secured by end of 2016);</li> <li>6. Increase applied research in the Institutes of technology.</li> </ol>

HE System Performance Framework	
<b>Objective 4</b>	<b>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</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All HEIs will have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 which will embed whole-of-HEI approaches to institutional access strategies;</li> <li>2. Implement new data initiatives and indicators to support the development and implementation of evidenced based National Plans for Equity of Access by 2019;</li> <li>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;</li> <li>4. Sustain the expansion from underrepresented groups with 2,000 additional enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and 1,000 from Further education access programmes;</li> <li>5. Increase in enrolments from DEIS schools by ensuring that every such school will be participating in a HEI led access programme;</li> <li>6. Completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts will be specifically targeted for improvement.</li> </ol>
<b>Objective 5</b>	<b>Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality &amp; academic excellence</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff in all HEIs;</li> <li>2. All HEIs to engage in International benchmarking by 2020;</li> <li>3. Improve problematic non-progression rates by 10% (overall baseline of 15% for 2014/15);</li> <li>4. Improve non-progression rates in STEM disciplines by 10% (differing discipline baselines);</li> <li>5. All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019;</li> <li>6. The HEA will develop guidelines to steer the process of total quality management, in line with best international practice.</li> </ol>
<b>Objective 6</b>	<b>Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence</b>
<b>High Level Targets</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementation of the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan and the 2016 Expert Group recommendations;</li> <li>2. HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019 (TUs within 3 years of establishment);</li> <li>3. All HEIs to submit their annual Governance Statements to HEA on time;</li> <li>4. 100% compliance by HEIs with public procurement rules;</li> <li>5. Draft annual financial statements to be submitted by HEIs to C&amp;AG within stipulated C&amp;AG guidelines;</li> <li>6. Full transparency in HEI financial statements about accounting for Trusts and Foundations;</li> <li>7. 100% compliance by HEIs with public pay policy;</li> <li>8. 100% compliance by HEIs with public sector numbers controls;</li> <li>9. Implementation of recommendations from rolling governance reviews;</li> <li>10. HEA will develop individual compacts with the HEIs which reflect the overall ambitions of the System Performance Framework and local/regional opportunities;</li> <li>11. Institutional strategic compacts will be assessed by a panel of experts, including international participants, to assess their coherence and capacity for delivery.</li> </ol>



# Appendix 3

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## Article – ‘Sister Apprentices’

# A family affair: Megan and Mollie take on apprenticeships at DIT

Posted: 4 July, 2018

Excited students from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) programme, Access to Apprenticeship, recently gathered with friends and family to celebrate their graduation. Amongst them were two exceptional young women, sisters Megan and Mollie Northridge.



[Access to Apprenticeship](#) was initially developed to address the obstacles facing young people from areas of social disadvantage in accessing an apprenticeship; however, the secondary role of encouraging more young women to apply for an apprenticeship was also on the minds of DIT educators.

**Jennifer Byrne**, a Cabinetmaker and a Lecturer on the Institute's Timber Product Technology programme, has also taught the wood trades in Apprenticeships for many years. She believes one of the principal difficulties in recruiting young women is that they seldom get to work with their hands in school. "Girls attending single-sex schools rarely get the chance to study subjects like woodworking and their innate talents might not be discovered unless someone in their family or social network works in the trade. It is a pity that we do not see more women coming through apprenticeships, as they tend to pay more attention to detail and raise the standard of the work overall."

Megan agrees and says that her interest in practice-based learning wasn't fostered at second-level. "My school used to have Woodwork as a subject, but got rid of it before I started, and when I was in 6<sup>th</sup> year, the message was College, College, College; I didn't even know that an apprenticeship was an option for me." Mollie chimes in, "If I could have studied subjects like metalwork, I would have stayed in school; spending hours every day in a classroom wasn't for me."

What most appealed to the sisters during the 12-week programme was the freedom to explore the different types of apprenticeships on offer in DIT. Megan says, "It wasn't a case of the Lecturers saying I'm going to do this and you guys watch, and it was like here's your plans, go get your tools, and away you go. It was the same on work placement, I thought I would shadow someone, but immediately I was told weld that over there." The experience paid off for the girls, Megan will shortly begin a Welding and Plumbing apprenticeship with Jones Engineering on Intel Ireland's site in Leixlip while Mollie is looking forward to taking on more work experience in carpentry with Dublin City Council.

When asked what they would say to anyone considering an apprenticeship, Megan remarked, "Honestly, do it – try getting onto this course and even if you don't get into apprenticeship straight away, DIT give you your SafePass and your manual handling training. You get to meet companies while you're in the programme, we met fifteen different employers and visited their sites to see what they do, it was great." Mollie struck the same chord observing that the opportunities presented by Access to Apprenticeship are diverse with so many jobs and learning pathways open to graduates.

## About Access to Apprenticeship

Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD launched the Access to Apprenticeship pilot programme in DIT Linenhall last July. Supported by J.P. Morgan and ESB, the programme aims to address critical challenges faced by young people aged 16-24 from areas of social disadvantage from accessing an apprenticeship. Over three months, participants sample a range of craft apprenticeships, complete personal development modules and undertake a two-week work placement with an employer in a trade of their choice. To date, 48 young people have taken part in the programme with over 50% taking on an apprenticeship or further training upon completion. Recruitment for the next training block will begin in autumn 2018. For more information, please contact [julie.stafford@dit.ie](mailto:julie.stafford@dit.ie).