

Higher Education System Performance

2017/2018

Fourth Report of the Higher Education Authority
to the Minister for Education and Skills

July 2019

Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction	7
Part A: REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 2017/18	10
1. Knowledge, skills and employability	12
1.1 Student enrolment in Irish higher education	13
1.2 Tertiary educational attainment	14
1.3 Higher education graduate outcomes	16
1.4 Addressing skills and labour market needs	19
1.5 Broadening pathways to higher education learning	22
2. National and international engagement	24
2.1 Internationalisation of the student body in Ireland	25
2.2 International mobility of staff and students in Irish higher education	28
2.3 Enterprise, social and community engagement	30
3. Research, development and innovation	34
3.1 Postgraduate research enrolments	35
3.2 Research, development and innovation in Irish higher education	39
3.3 Horizon 2020 funding in Irish research and development	40
3.4 Private sector funding for research	40
4. Diversity and equality of opportunity	42
4.1 New entrants from under-represented groups	43
4.2 Progress review of the HEA's <i>National Access Plan</i>	44
4.3 Improving the quality of student data – to measure equity of access to higher education	45
4.4 Funding access: the role of PATH	46
4.5 Student success	46
5. Quality teaching and learning	48
5.1 National Professional Development Framework	49
5.2 Digital teaching and learning	50
5.3 The student experience	50

6. Governance, leadership and operational excellence	56
6.1 Gender equality in Irish higher education	57
6.2 Governance of higher education	59
6.3 Higher education system performance	60
CONCLUSION	64
Part B: SUMMARIES OF MISSION-BASED PERFORMANCE COMPACTS FOR 2018-2021	68
1. Knowledge, skills and employability	69
2. National and international engagement	84
3. Research, development and innovation	99
4. Diversity and equality of opportunity	114
5. Quality teaching and learning	129
6. Governance, leadership and operational excellence	144

Joseph McHugh TD
Minister for Education and Skills
Marlborough Street
Dublin 1

12 July 2019

Dear Minister,

It is my pleasure and privilege, on behalf of the Board of the Higher Education Authority, to present to you the 2017/2018 Higher Education System Performance Report. This report responds to your Department's *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* and seeks to identify the strengths, challenges and probable barriers to progress of the higher education system.

In this report we set out key messages under each of the six objectives of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. The messages are informed by various data sources, and collectively they provide a current update on the performance of higher education institutions. However, we do caution that further work is needed to establish new and revised targets (based on appropriate baseline data and indicators) against which to accurately measure future progress in the higher education system. This work is already under way. Also reflected in this report are the strategy and performance dialogue process as well as the individual HEIs' mission-based performance compacts for 2018-2021, which were submitted to us recently.

In evaluating the current performance of the Irish higher education sector, it is apparent that all higher education institutions have responded exceptionally well to the challenges presented by the funding cuts and staffing restrictions of the last ten years. They have been innovative and successful in managing significantly reduced state investment, and have done so in the face of increasing student populations. They have identified alternative sources of funding. They have adapted to evolving social policies in relation to access and inclusivity. For all these reasons, we are presented with a relatively benign and positive picture of the current state of higher education, and both the leadership and staff in the HEIs deserve our thanks and commendation.

However, this positive scenario has come at a cost: many non-frontline areas have been neglected and now require both attention and funding. A recent rolling review, undertaken on our behalf by Deloitte, brings to light a number of issues and practices of concern, and rectifying these will require funding and resources. Some institutions note that they are experiencing financial pressures, and it is important that we do not conclude that the current success of the sector can continue into the future without significant additional State funding in certain areas. International comparisons position Ireland at the lower end of per-student investment and of higher education research activity, and our student-to-staff ratio is higher than in most comparable countries. These are significant risk factors which, if unattended, might compromise future success. The Authority plans to carry out a risk assessment of the system and will communicate with you and your Department in this regard when this is complete.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Horgan,
Chairman

The background of the page is a complex, abstract graphic composed of numerous overlapping circles and arcs in various shades of blue, from light sky blue to deep navy blue, and a solid black area. The circles are of different sizes and are positioned in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement. The text 'Executive Summary' is centered within this graphic.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

This Higher Education Authority (HEA) report is the fourth in a series on the performance of Ireland's higher education system. The report demonstrates a system that continues to respond, to make progress but also faces challenges.

Student places have increased to meet national demographic demand. There are new entry routes that widen participation in higher education and there are additional places to facilitate the growth in international student numbers. This growth is necessary, but it continues to place pressure on our higher education system as state funding contributions have not kept pace. The expansion in international student numbers and associated student fees, alongside other actions that HEIs have taken to diversify their sources of income, has partially bridged the funding gap. This cannot be assured into the future and for that reason system sustainability is threatened.

Capital investment is needed to support system modernisation. Targeted and appropriate resourcing will, for example, enable faster movement to more creative and flexible modes of higher education provision, alongside the maintenance of more traditional routes. More than in most places, education levels in Ireland are a key determinant of social and economic life outcomes. Creating and sharing higher education opportunities as widely as possible is therefore a necessary and appropriate principle of our system. Breaking down barriers and putting appropriate supports in place will enable and empower learners from all backgrounds, at all life stages.

The maintenance of a quality teaching and learning environment is also vital to our system's reputation in an increasingly competitive international market. The market is for students, but also for knowledge, skills and economic investment. The quality of Irish graduates continues to be among the top cited reasons for significant, skills-based, foreign direct investment here. We cannot guarantee that we can maintain that quality in a scenario where institutions are under-resourced or constrained in their ability to manage the resources available to them.

Creating, sustaining and embedding enterprise and ideas in Ireland also requires Irish higher education institutions to excel in research, innovation and the development of new knowledge. Ireland has moved from 20th to 11th in global scientific rankings over recent years. The system continues to demonstrate an increase in the technology readiness level (TRL) of outputs and outcomes and is responsive to a growing demand for short-term applied and contract research. Meeting this demand for research at all levels requires a steady pipeline of highly qualified and capable postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers. Developing this cadre of people will require an increase in research funding opportunities and enhanced levels of early-career research supports to create an environment that can compete in a strengthening jobs market.

Small to medium enterprises are also central to innovation, job creation and job retention across Ireland. An open and flexible higher education system is essential to facilitate regional engagement. Ireland's distributed network of higher education institutions works hard to meet the needs of students, enterprises and regions, but also needs to be more closely integrated and aligned to bring a broad range of expertise and appropriate scale to every corner of our country.

This report therefore sets out the success and contribution of Ireland's higher education system. It identifies the strengths of our system, but also the challenges facing our higher education institutions. Some of these challenges need institutional responses, but others are external to institutions and will require system-level or State interventions or decisions, if they are to be comprehensively addressed.

The background of the page is a complex, abstract graphic composed of numerous overlapping circles and arcs in various shades of blue, from light sky blue to deep navy blue, and a solid black circle. The circles are of different sizes and are positioned in a way that they create a sense of depth and movement, resembling a stylized globe or a series of orbits. The overall effect is modern and dynamic.

Introduction

Introduction

The *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020*, published in January 2018, sets out a range of objectives to which the system is required to respond. The framework references a number of national strategies on higher education, skills, employment, research and innovation, entrepreneurship, equity of access, gender equality, internationalisation and national planning and foresight.

This report sets out the HEA's evaluation of higher education system performance in 2017/2018. In doing so, the HEA has sought to address the six key system objectives for higher education and to report on the strengths, weaknesses/challenges, and direction of travel of the Irish higher education system in 2017/2018. The report is informed by analysis of a range of material (data, metrics and indicators) gathered by the HEA in 2018, together with the higher education institutions' Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021 – synopses of which are presented in Part B of this report. The HEA is currently reviewing the process for beyond 2020 to ensure optimum and efficient collection of data from higher education institutions (HEIs) that will reflect current national strategic targets that can be measured over time to inform system performance and progress.

This report for 2017/18 addresses each of the system objectives and their associated high-level targets, and it provides a current overview of the Irish higher education system. There are some key messages emerging from the analysis – these highlight the progress that has been made but also identify the challenges the system faces.

The system continues to grow both in student numbers and in graduate numbers. The noticeable increase in remote enrolments, in particular over the last number of years, shows positive strides for flexible learning provision in the higher education system. This is complemented by initiatives such as Springboard+ which has seen increased enrolments across all sectors. The European Commission surmises however, that while enrolment in higher education is traditionally high in Ireland, this reflects to some extent an undervaluation of vocational pathways in Ireland. Tertiary attainment and employment rates of recent graduates in Ireland remain above EU rates. The higher education system is, in the main, addressing the skills and labour market needs of the economy with continued focus of ICT and foreign languages. These two key areas remain a challenge for higher education with uptake failing to match demand for both of these core skills.

A rise in full-time international numbers as well as increased mobility by students and staff from Ireland demonstrates positive international engagement by HEIs. This international outlook reflects Ireland's worldwide reputation for high quality education, but is also an increasingly important point of leverage in an unfolding Brexit scenario.

Levels of engagement and collaboration between HEIs and enterprise are encouraging. Many HEIs continue to be flexible and responsive in bridging student, enterprise and skills needs. Employer groups are broadly satisfied with higher education engagements and outcomes, but meeting the skills needs of students and matching these to employers' requirements remains a matter for concern. A number of HEIs have therefore set out ambitious plans to extend and reform the ways in which they teach and engage so as to establish work-based learning on a firmer footing and to enable it to become a core contributor to our growth as a society and as an economy.

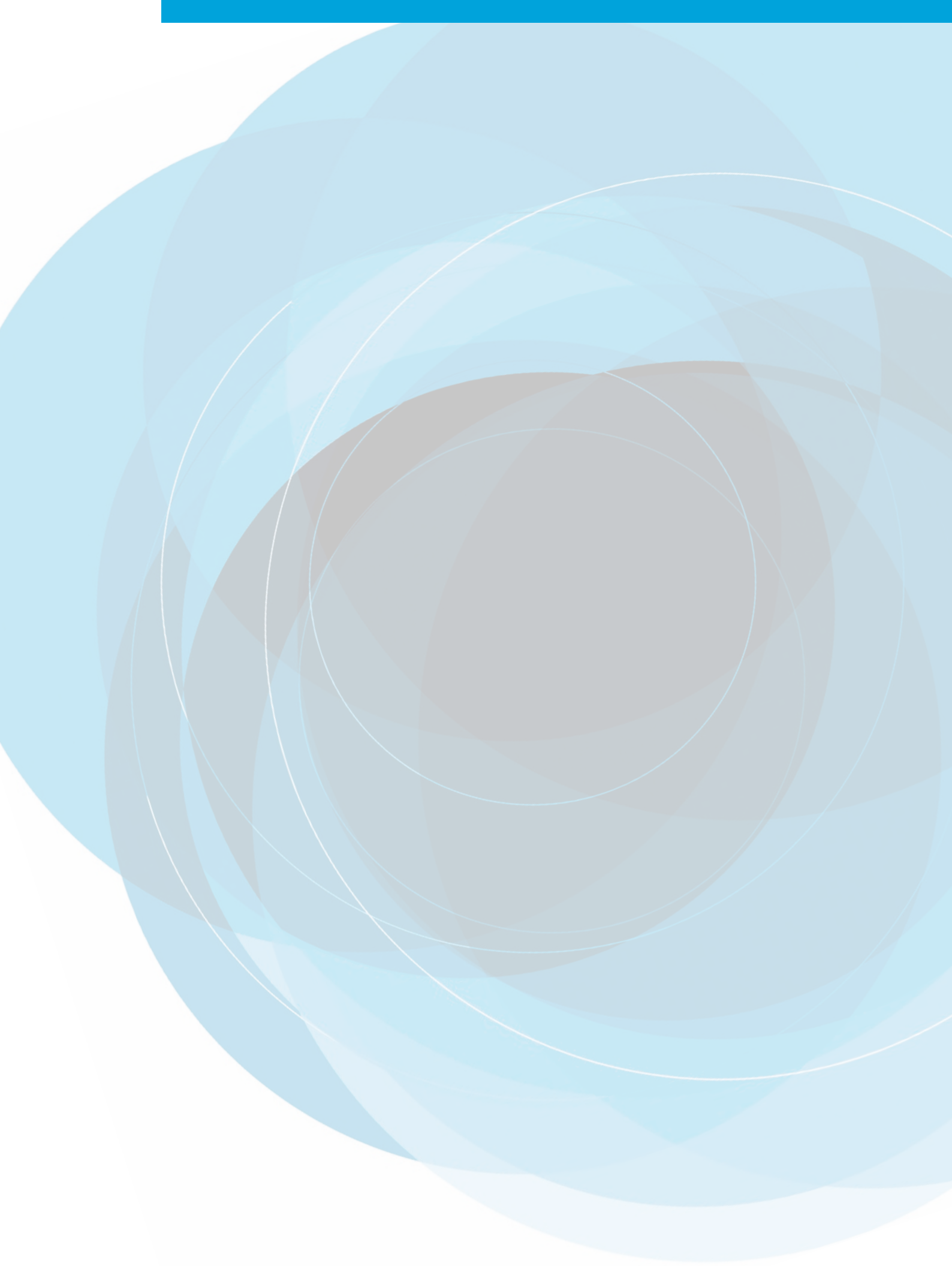
Looking at the HEIs' performance in the areas of research, development and innovation, there is some cause for concern for the drop in year one doctoral and master's research enrolments over the past number of years, and this is mirrored by a decrease in graduate numbers for these two programme types. To meet targets such as that for an increase in funded postdoctoral positions and for an increase in private funding for publicly performed research and development, the pipeline of postgraduate researchers and subsequent graduates must be addressed. Increasing the availability of scholarship-type funding and so increasing the cadre of PhD and master's candidates may be necessary to help to address the fall in research registrations and rebalance the attractiveness of a research career in the context of strong job market opportunities for graduates. This is particularly important if Ireland is to achieve the research intensity target of 2.5% of GDP as set out in *Innovation 2020*.¹

Equity of access and broadening the student body of HEIs to reflect the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population remains a priority for higher education. While progress has been made in this regard, there remain some considerable gaps and some groups remain under-represented in higher education. There is substantial work under way to enhance the access, participation, completion and outcomes for students from groups that are under-represented in higher education. The use of data to support sustainable student success is of significance and the HEA's *Access Data Plan* as well as the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education's *Data-Enabled Student Success Initiative* should prove valuable here.

Much work continues to be done to enhance the quality of the higher education learning environment. The introduction of a national professional development framework continues to impact positively on the teaching and learning practices of those who engage with it. Future investigations will provide deeper insight into the long-term impact of engagement of higher education practitioners with the framework across disciplines. A key voice in reflecting on the system's improvement of the quality of the learning environment is the student. The yearly increase in response rates to the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and the increased indicator scores from 2016 to 2018 are both positive. ISSE provides essential information to HEIs, which can and should be interrogated further at institutional level to accurately address issues raised in student feedback. Recent non-progression and completion rates in HEA-funded HEIs remain a cause for concern in some sectors and levels. Significant concern remains around the number of teaching staff per student, with Ireland faring poorly compared to its OECD counterparts. In addition to high student-staff ratios, there has been a significant reduction in Exchequer funding per student over the last number of years. The more recent reinvestment by the Government in higher education funding is welcome, but this does not necessarily translate to teaching and research purposes, which are vital to ensure an optimum student experience.

The HEA has moved in recent years to strengthen its approach to accountability, governance and performance management in higher education. The publication of two recent gender equality reports in higher education, for example, is significant and although progress is slow, HEIs are making some advances on leadership, governance, management and staffing across the sectors. To expedite change further however, it is vital that HEIs engage fully and that senior management lead from the front in progressing gender equality within their organisations. The HEA's reviewed approach to the oversight and governance of HEIs in 2015 has strengthened reporting of annual governance. In addition, the HEIs have, and continue to, engage with the HEA in the strategy and performance dialogue process with all HEIs submitting their mission-based performance compacts to the HEA in 2019.

1 DJEI, *Innovation 2020 Excellence Talent Impact: Ireland's strategy for research and development* (Dublin: DJEI, 2015). Available at: <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Reports-Publications/Innovation-2020.pdf>



Part A

Review Of Performance And Progress In Higher Education, 2017/18

This part of the report evaluates higher education system performance against each of the six key system objectives set out in the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*.

Objective 1	Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills and 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.
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.
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.
Objective 4	Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.
Objective 5	Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence.
Objective 6	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 1

Knowledge, skills
and employability



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Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills and 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.

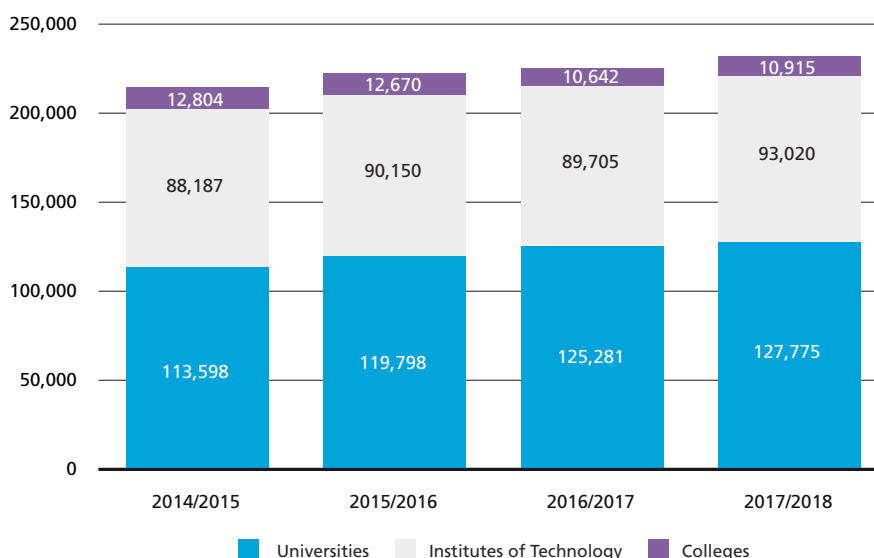
A number of high-level targets are set out under System Objective 1 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. These targets relate to the talent pipeline emerging from the higher education sector. This chapter reports on the current situation in Ireland, where student enrolments and the number of graduates continue to increase. The areas relating to knowledge, skills and employability include:

- The numbers of students enrolled in Irish higher education
- Tertiary educational attainment
- Higher education graduate outcomes
- How to address Ireland's skills and labour market needs
- How to broaden pathways to higher education.

1.1 Student enrolment in Irish higher education

Across the higher education system in Ireland, student enrolment numbers continue to grow. Enrolments in all HEA-funded Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) continue to increase year on year, as is shown in figure 1.1. An 8 percentage point increase in enrolments is seen from 2014/15 to 2017/18 across all sectors. While a slower increase of 1 percentage point is noted in 2016/17, there is a return to a 3 percentage point increase in 2017/18.

Figure 1.1 Enrolments in Irish higher education institutions*, 2014/15 to 2017/18



* Full-time, part-time and remote enrolments for all HEA-funded institutions, including RCSI. For further information, see <http://hea.ie/statistics-archive/>

A breakdown of enrolments by full-time, part-time and remote enrolments from 2014/15 to 2017/18 is provided in table 1.1, with significant increases for this period observed among remote learners.

Table 1.1 Enrolments in Irish Higher Education Institutions by mode of study, 2014/15 to 2017/18

Academic Year	Full-time Enrolments	Part-time Enrolments	Remote Enrolments	Total Enrolments
2014/2015	173,286	36,036	5,267	214,589
2015/2016	179,354	37,249	6,015	222,618
2016/2017	180,610	37,633	7,385	225,628
2017/2018	183,642	40,101	7,967	231,710

1.2 Tertiary educational attainment

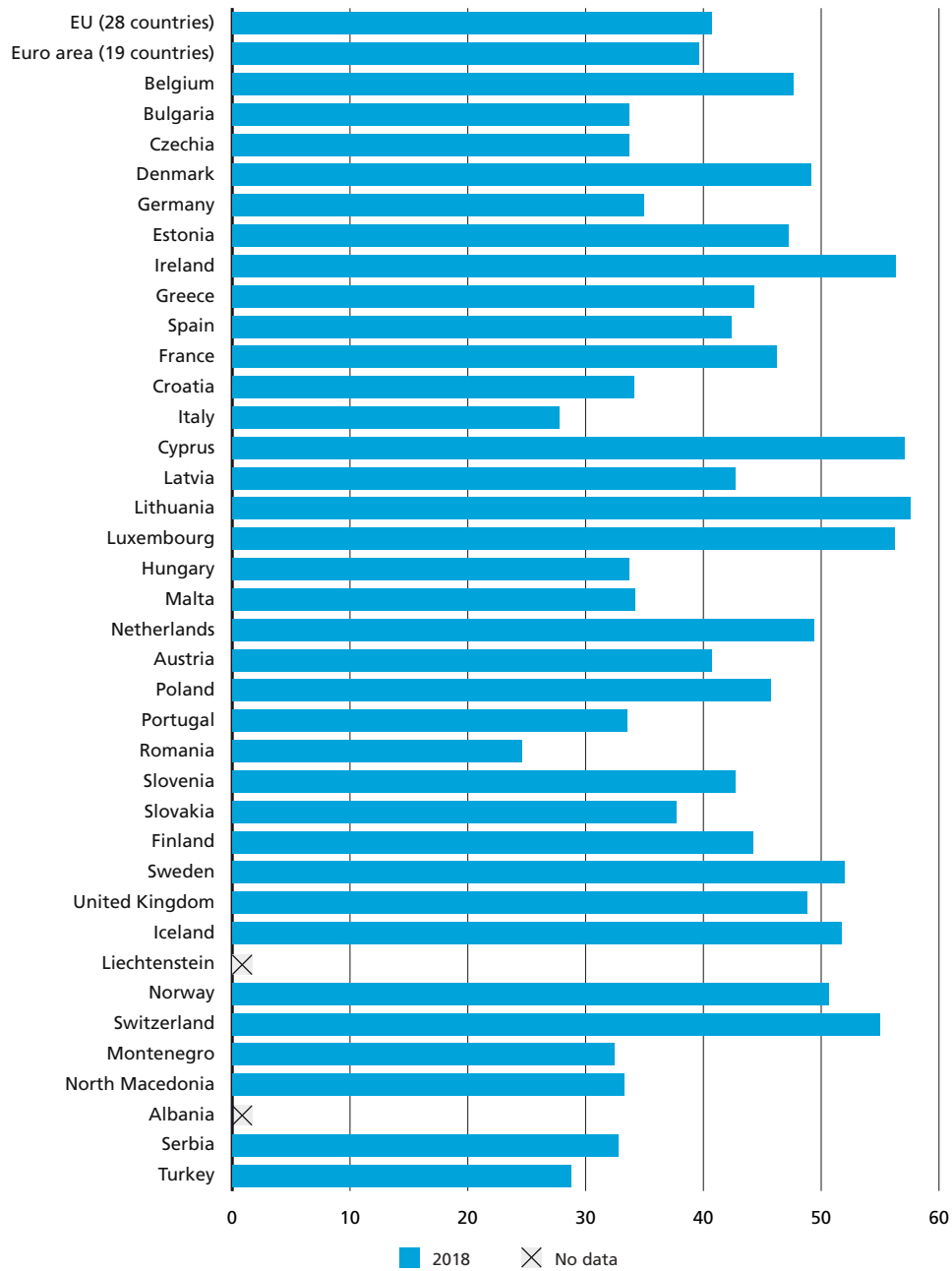
When HEI enrolment and graduate data are compared to international data, Ireland continues to be placed much higher than the OECD average. The most recent OECD *Education at a Glance*² reports that tertiary educational attainment was 53% for young adults (25-34 years old) in 2017 compared to OECD average of 44%. The report notes that while tertiary educational attainment is high in Ireland, the employment rate in 2017 for tertiary-educated males (90%) is higher than that of their female counterparts (81%). This is the same gap as the OECD average. This gap narrows to 5 percentage points for younger tertiary-educated adults (25-34-year olds) compared to those in the 35-64 age bracket where it stood at 10 percentage points in 2017.

Eurostat³ also provides data on tertiary attainment across 28 EU countries. In 2018, as shown in figure 1.2, tertiary education attainment was at 55.4% (provisional figure) among 30-34-year olds in Ireland while the figure for 2017 was 54.5%. This compares to an EU average of just over 40%.

2 OECD, *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, 2018. Available at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2018/ireland_eag-2018-51-en#page1

3 Eurostat, *Tertiary educational attainment, age group 30-34* (2019), <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tesem030&plugin=1>

Figure 1.2 Eurostat tertiary educational attainment, age 30-34 across 28 EU countries



Source: Eurostat, see <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&language=en&pcode=tesem030&plugin=1>

The European Commission's *Education and Training Monitor 2018*⁴ for Ireland acknowledges that Ireland has a very high tertiary attainment rate and has set ambitious goals for the future. The authors note that while enrolment in higher education is traditionally high in Ireland, this to some extent reflects the possible undervaluation of vocational pathways. With *the System Performance Framework* setting a tertiary attainment target of 60% for 30-34-year-olds by 2020, the European Commission surmises that the further education and training sector's potential to provide pathways to sought-after qualifications is not yet fully exploited. However, significant advancements continue to be made between further education and higher education in relation to Ireland's national apprenticeship system. As outlined in the recent *Review of Pathways to Participation in Apprenticeship*,⁵ apprenticeship numbers are growing annually in response to national policy to establish apprenticeship as a major route to skills development in Ireland – see the *Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020*.⁶ As at December 2018, there were over five and half thousand apprenticeship registrations (as per SOLAS registration data) with a target of 9,000 registrations per annum from 2020 across both the further education and higher education sectors.

1.3 Higher education graduate outcomes

In line with enrolment numbers, an upward trend is observed each year in the number of graduates, with the exception of 2015. The reason for this is that the programmes of Initial Teacher Education were extended from three to four years at undergraduate level and from one to two years at postgraduate level in 2014/15, resulting in significantly fewer Education graduates in 2015. The greatest percentage of graduates come from Business, Administration and Law which account for almost one quarter of all graduates each year.

Table 1.2 Graduates by field of study, 2014 to 2017

Discipline	2014	2015	2016	2017
Generic programmes and qualifications	197	160	498	229
Education	5,249	3,690	5,302	6,460
Arts and Humanities	9,030	9,004	10,024	9,191
Social Sciences, Journalism and Information	4,600	4,090	4,032	4,480
Business, Administration and Law	15,700	15,771	16,110	16,329
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	5,473	5,213	5,697	5,571
Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	4,096	4,080	4,218	4,321
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	6,877	6,718	6,864	7,152
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary	1,051	1,057	1,131	1,088
Health and Welfare	11,109	11,180	12,366	12,411
Services	3,147	3,320	3,391	3,283
Total	66,529	64,283	69,633	70,515

4 European Commission, *Education and Training Monitor 2018 Ireland*, 2018. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/et-monitor-report-2018-ireland_en.pdf

5 SOLAS, *Review of pathways to participation in apprenticeship* (Dublin: SOLAS, 2018). Available at <http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/PathwaysApprenticeshipReviewNov18.pdf>

6 DES, *Action Plan to Expand Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Ireland 2016-2020*, (Dublin: DES, 2017). Available at <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Action-Plan-Expand-Apprenticeship-Traineeship-in-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf>

The HEA's report on *Graduate Outcomes Survey Class of 2017*⁷ is the first in a series on graduate outcomes for the Irish higher education system and provides a comprehensive and current overview of how graduates transition to employment and further study. The survey aims to demonstrate the contribution that our higher education graduates and institutions make to Irish social, cultural, civic and economic progress. Findings from the survey show that employment outcomes were best for Education graduates with 93% working or about to start a job within nine months of graduation. This was followed by Health and Welfare (87%), ICT (82%) and Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction (82%). While Arts and Humanities graduates (63%) reported the lowest percentages working or about to start a job, these graduates had among the highest percentages in further study (24%).

According to the report and as can be seen in table 1.3, as level of educational attainment rises, employment prospects improve and the level of salaries increases.

Table 1.3 Educational attainment, percentage in employment and salary of Graduate Outcomes Survey Class of 2017*

Level of educational attainment	% in employment	Salary (€)
Honours degree	75%	29,601
Postgraduate taught	86%	40,840
Postgraduate research	91%	45,325

* Data was collected in respect of 2017 graduates of 23 higher education institutions approximately nine months after their completion of study with a single census date, 31 March 2018.

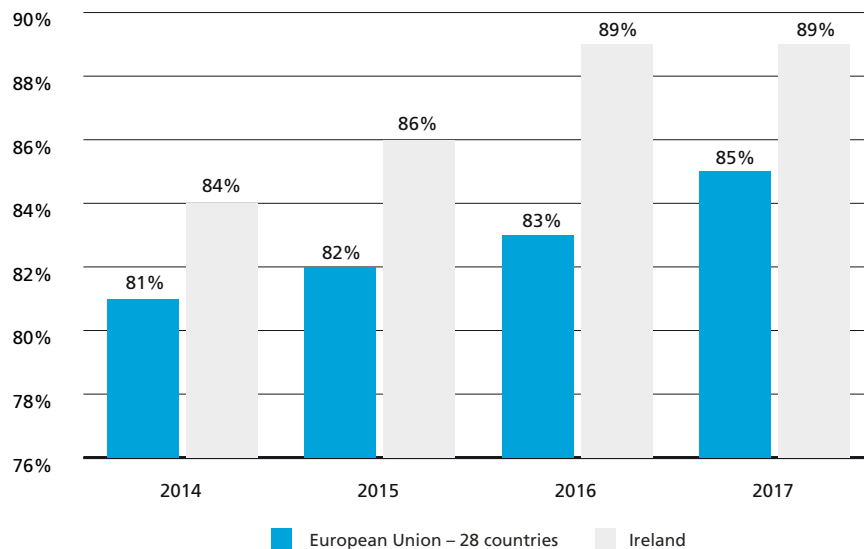
1.3.1 Employment rates of recent graduates – EU comparison

Eurostat data⁸ from 2014 to 2017 on the employment rate of recent graduates by educational attainment shows that Ireland is ahead of the EU average each year – this data covers those aged 20-34 who have left education between one and three years before the reference year (see figure 1.3). A 2 percentage point increase was recorded between 2014 and 2015 while there was a 3 percentage point increase between 2015 and 2016. In 2017, the employment rate of recent graduates remained at 2016 levels of 89%.

7 HEA, *Graduate Outcomes Survey Class of 2017* (Dublin: HEA, 2019). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/02/HEA-Graduate-Outcomes-Survey.pdf>

8 European Commission, *Education and Training Monitor 2018 Ireland*, 2018. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/document-library-docs/et-monitor-report-2018-ireland_en.pdf

Figure 1.3 Ireland v EU employment rate of recent graduates (age 20-34) by educational attainment, 2014 to 2017



According to the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (Ibec),⁹ employment growth in Ireland is yet to show any signs of slowing. In Q3 2018, employment was 3% higher than the same period in 2017. Sectors such as retail and manufacturing did record losses of 1.3% and 1.8% respectively, which was probably because of structural changes in both sectors. Ibec expects the economy to continue to grow strongly in 2019 but at a weaker rate than in recent years with the economy close to capacity. It should be noted that Ibec's forecasts are based on the assumption that an agreement on Brexit is reached and if this is not the case, Ibec suggests that 2019 will be significantly more challenging. Project Ireland 2040's *National Development Plan 2018-2027*¹⁰ is also cognizant of how 'global uncertainty, Brexit and technological disruption' might impinge on the ambitious employment targets set in the Government's National Planning Framework. This underlines the importance of investment in both higher education and in further education and training in each region in Ireland to ensure the pipeline of skills and talent necessary to sustain enterprise clustering and new investments.

⁹ Ibec, *Ibec Quarterly Economic Outlook* (Dublin: Ibec, 2019). Available at: [https://www.ibec.ie/IBEC/Publications.nsf/vPages/Economic_Outlook--economic-outlook---january-2019-07-01-2019/\\$File/ibec_Q4_2018.pdf](https://www.ibec.ie/IBEC/Publications.nsf/vPages/Economic_Outlook--economic-outlook---january-2019-07-01-2019/$File/ibec_Q4_2018.pdf)

¹⁰ DPER, *Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018-2027* (Dublin: DPER, 2018), p.58. Available at <https://assets.gov.ie/7336/b0a7bcedecc9478ca07582c5461a4776.pdf>

1.4 Addressing skills and labour market needs

Ireland's *National Skills Strategy 2025*¹¹ points out that in the context of a constantly evolving labour market, the Irish economy will need a mix of transversal, cross-sectoral and sector-specific skills:

- Transversal skills – core generic skills of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, critical and analytical thinking, teamwork, communication and business acumen
- Cross-sectoral skills – particularly skills in ICT, data analytics, foreign languages and cultural awareness, business (including sales and marketing) and engineering
- Sector specific skills – particularly those relating to financial services; the ICT sector; manufacturing; medical devices; biopharma; food and beverages; leisure, tourism and hospitality; freight, transport and logistics; wholesale and retail; and construction.

In relation to skills and labour market needs, the areas of particular importance addressed are:

- The skills needs in Information and Communication Technology
- The demand for teachers
- The demand for foreign language skills
- The skills challenges that Brexit will pose.

1.4.1 Developing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills

ICT is identified as a dominant theme in the *National Skills Strategy* and this is in line with the HEA's *ICT Skills Action Plan*¹² in which technology it is identified as one of the key drivers of change in the economy. The *ICT Skills Action Plan* sets out three strategic priorities: to increase the output of high-level graduates; to enhance ICT capacity and awareness in the education system; and to ensure that Ireland maintains a strong ICT talent pool and to promote Ireland as a centre for high-level ICT skills. Both the HEA and HEIs have made considerable progress in ICT provision. The HEA has allocated annual funding to the HEIs under the Information Technology Investment Fund (ITIF) since the early 2000s. Under this initiative funding is provided for computing camps to encourage students to consider ICT and computing careers. The HEA allocated an additional €250,000 in 2018 to support further provision of ICT summer camps by HEIs.

To increase the output of high-level ICT graduates, the *ICT Skills Action Plan* set the objective of making available an additional 1,250 places on core undergraduate ICT courses leading to a Level 8 award. This target has not been met for a number of reasons, including insufficient demand for ICT course places, high attrition rates in ICT courses, and ongoing resource challenges relating to staffing, physical space and equipment in some ICT schools. The EGFSN's recent report, which forecasts the future demand for high-level ICT skills from 2017 to 2022, cautions that supply is not in step with the forecasted high demand for ICT skills.¹³ This report highlights how the skills needs of the ICT market are evolving rapidly and are posing new challenges to the education and training system, as well as the entire socioeconomic system. The views of a number of stakeholders are reflected in the report and many of these are very important for the higher education sector. For example, to improve the supply of ICT skills, it will be necessary to improve the flexibility and provision of the education and training system as well as to increase apprenticeships and internships in the field.

11 DES, *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 – Ireland's Future* (Dublin: DES, 2016). Available at https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

12 HEA, *ICT Skills Action Plan (2014-2018)* (Dublin: HEA, 2014). Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/ICT-Skills-Action-Plan-2014-2018.pdf>

13 EGFSN, *Forecasting the Future Demand for High-Level ICT Skills in Ireland, 2017-2022* (Dublin: DJEI, 2019). Available at: <http://www.skillsireland.ie/Publications/2019/High-level-ICT-Skills-Demand-Analysis.pdf>

Another emerging finding from the EGFSN's forecast on future demand for high-level ICT is the need for further uptake, particularly among females, of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects at both second level and third level. The report is in line with the *ICT Skills Action Plan* and the *STEM Education Policy Statement*¹⁴ in emphasising the need for participation in STEM to commence early in a person's life. HEIs have an important role to play here in collaborating with schools to promote STEM subjects. The supply of STEM teachers is a matter of concern; and as the *STEM Education Implementation Policy*¹⁵ points out, the HEA, HEIs, the Department of Education and Skills and the Teaching Council all have a role to play in informing policy on the supply of STEM teachers. Teacher supply issues, however, are not limited to STEM subjects.

1.4.2 Meeting the demand for teachers

In November 2018, the Minister for Education and Skills published the *Teacher Action Supply Action Plan*¹⁶ in response to the challenges experienced by some schools in the recruitment of post-primary teachers in specific subject areas. The *Action Plan* includes measures to take account of the projected increase in student numbers at second level up to 2024 and the implications of curriculum development and reform. Key actions for the higher education sector include increasing the number of places provided on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and the introduction of new undergraduate post-primary initial teacher education programmes, particularly in the priority subject areas (Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Computer Science, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Irish and Home Economics).

In addition, the HEA has continued to oversee reform of teacher education provision across Ireland, in line with the *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education (Sahlberg I)*¹⁷. The report recommended a restructuring from nineteen providers into six centres. In two instances, full incorporation is now complete (Maynooth University/Froebel College; and DCU/St Patrick's College, Drumcondra/Mater Dei Institute of Education/Church of Ireland College of Education). The final incorporation (NUI Galway/St Angela's College, Sligo) is expected to be completed by September 2019. Other centres continue to progress deeper collaboration, as recommended in the report.

The breadth of work being undertaken by the centres for teacher education is captured in their performance compacts, which demonstrate the responsiveness of the system to this identified national priority. In line with the *Teacher Supply Action Plan*, as described above, additional student places are being made available by the centres of teaching, which are also responding to new curriculum demands through the provision of new programmes in emerging subject areas, such as computer science. In addition, some of the centres of teaching are expanding flexible provision to initial teacher education programmes – for example, those being implemented as part of Strand 1 of the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) – and in doing so they complement measures to increase the diversity of the teaching profession.

14 DES, *STEM Education Policy Statement 2017-2026* (Dublin: DES, 2017). Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/STEM-Education-Policy/stem-education-policy-statement-2017-2026-.pdf>

15 DES, *STEM Education Implementation Policy 2017-2026* (Dublin: DES, 2017). Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/STEM-Education-Policy/stem-education-implementation-plan-2017-2019-.pdf>

16 DES, *Teacher Supply Action Plan* (Dublin: DES, 2018). Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/teacher-supply-action-plan.pdf>

17 See <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Report-of-the-International-Review-Panel-on-the-Structure-of-Initial-Teacher-Education-Provision-in-Ireland.pdf>

1.4.3 Developing foreign language skills

As highlighted in *Language Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education*, competence in a number of languages is a key skill.¹⁸ According to this report 'knowledge of foreign languages is essential for Ireland's cultural, social and economic well-being'. Figures from Eurostat for 2016¹⁹ show that 33.1% of Irish adults aged 25-34 years old knew one foreign language and 18.5% knew two foreign languages at the time of the survey, compared to EU averages of 38.7% and 24.5% respectively.

The *Language Connect* report makes reference to the challenges that Ireland faces in developing a multilingual society; and for higher education, this includes, but is not limited to, the low uptake of foreign languages and the shortage of qualified teachers of foreign languages. Stemming from the *Teacher Supply Action Plan*, a number of working groups have been set up. One such group is the Data Working Group which is currently gathering accurate data on the issue of supply and demand for foreign language teachers. There are also initiatives that have been undertaken nationally to enhance the number of students studying a foreign language. For example, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education funds two national projects relating to language learning and skills for teachers of foreign languages in higher education.

1.4.4 Skills needs and Brexit

The implications of Brexit on skills needs are addressed in a recently commissioned report by the EGFSN.²⁰ The report makes key recommendations for education and training provision for the Freight Transport, Distribution and Logistics (FTDL) sectors. The EGFSN indicates that measures are required, both nationally and internationally, to address the poor perception of careers in the sector and opportunities associated with it. The report also recommends the enhancement of international trading and logistics/supply chain content in education and training provision. Skills gaps were also identified across all sectors in customs clearance and financial management.

The most recent Springboard+ 2019 call for proposals²¹ reflects the work of EGFSN and asks providers to take account of any skills needs that might arise as a consequence of Brexit. A more difficult challenge is to quantify the social and economic impacts that might follow from the departure from the EU of our nearest neighbour and most significant trading partner. Equipping and preparing graduates for uncertainty, to be responsive, to manage their own careers and lives has always been a feature of higher education. These skills are useful to individual graduates, but they are also increasingly valued by the export-oriented innovative companies to which many of them will make a significant contribution.

18 DES, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* (Dublin: DES, 2017), p. 13. Available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Foreign-Languages-Strategy/files_languages_connect_strategy.pdf

19 See <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>

20 EGFSN, *Addressing the Skills Needs Arising from the Potential Trade Implications of Brexit* (Dublin: DJEI, 2018). Available at: <http://www.skillsireland.ie/Publications/2018/Addressing%20the%20Skills%20Needs%20Arising%20from%20the%20Potential%20Trade%20Implications%20of%20Brexit.pdf>

21 See <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/01/Springboard-2019-Call-for-Proposals.pdf>

1.5 Broadening pathways to higher education learning

Broadening pathways and making more flexible learning opportunities available to those who wish to enter higher education in Ireland is critical to ensuring that skills and labour market needs are met. As outlined in *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025*,²² Ireland's labour market enjoys several strong potential competitive advantages – including a high proportion of young people in the population, increasing employment levels and a skilled Irish and immigrant population. The report does note, however, that Ireland needs to increase its lifelong learning levels substantially to enable people to reach their full potential.

For its purposes, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) classifies as lifelong learning the participation of adults aged 25-64 years in formal and/or non-formal learning activities in the four weeks prior to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). It should be noted that the LFS replaced the Quarterly National Household Survey (QNHS) in Q3 2017 and so it is not possible to accurately compare lifelong learning estimates before and after this period. The most recent LFS lifelong learning data analysed by SOLAS²³ suggests increases in lifelong learning participation, with 14% of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning in Q4 2017, exceeding the 2020 target of 10% set out in the *National Skills Strategy*.

To meet the demand from the adult population for higher education opportunities, an increase in flexible learning opportunities is also necessary, according to the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*.²⁴ The *National Strategy* reports on the OECD's finding that Irish higher education students have the narrowest age range across all OECD countries, reflecting the current unresponsiveness of Irish higher education to the skills needs of adults in the population. However, as can be seen in table 1.1, percentage point increases in part-time and remote enrolments are evident from 2014/15 (19% of total enrolments) to 2017/18 (21% of total enrolments), suggesting a response by HEIs to the *National Strategy* and to the clear need to increase flexible provision.

Initiatives such as Springboard+ continue to provide free higher education upskilling in areas of identified skills need, with an emphasis on upskilling of people who are unemployed. However, unemployment is less than half what it was in 2011 when Springboard first commenced; and for that reason Springboard+ in 2019 continues to have a dual focus on upskilling and reskilling people those who remain out of the workforce and upskilling those in employment. Springboard+ complements the core State-funded education and training system and is one of a number of initiatives designed to support people getting back into employment as well as building the supply of skilled graduates for vacancies arising across key sectors of the economy. The number of approved Springboard+ enrolments continues to grow, with a 15% increase across all sectors (university, institute of technology and private colleges/other) between 2017 and 2018.

22 DES, *Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 – Ireland's Future* (Dublin: DES, 2016). Available at https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

23 SOLAS, 2018, *Lifelong learning in Ireland* (Dublin: SOLAS, 2018). Available at <http://www.solas.ie/SolasPdfLibrary/Adult%20Participation%20in%20Learning%202018.pdf>

24 DES, *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 – Report of Strategy Group* (Dublin: DES, 2011). Available at <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Strategy-for-Higher-Education-2030.pdf>

System Objective 1: Knowledge, skills and employability

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) – *flexible programme provision*

Cork Institute of Technology has a long-standing reputation as a leader in the provision of programmes to flexible learners. While maintaining the current range of activities including part-time provision, short courses, in-work courses, etc., CIT plans to grow provision of online and blended programmes over the period of the new performance compact. For example, the Faculty of Business and Humanities have developed a Special Purpose Award in Leadership Development in partnership with Boston Scientific. Over 90 staff have gone through this programme, delivered in the workplace and in CIT and co-delivered by both industry and academics. The CIT Faculty of Business and Humanities has also recently received funding for a new Springboard programme in Capital Markets which is addressing a skills shortage in the financial services sector. To increase the number of students studying a foreign language CIT has also developed a dedicated programme BBus(Hons) in International Business with Language which they are promoting through CAO. A working group has also been set up to lead the development of employability statements in CIT, with the Institute's first overall employability statement now complete and with the HEA. The working group will now proceed to develop a template for employability statements for all disciplines in order to ease and streamline completion of employability statements down to individual programme level at CIT.

Maynooth University (MU) – *variety of programme provision at undergraduate and postgraduate levels*

Maynooth University's goal over the coming five years is to realise the full potential of their new undergraduate curriculum, with an emphasis on fully embedding and developing their new programme offerings. MU intends for this to be informed by the needs of stakeholders, and developed in partnership with students, to ensure the adaptability and employability of their graduates over a lifetime of change. This will result in a superior student experience, and will support MU's students in becoming lifelong learners and engaged responsible global citizens, empowered to make a difference in the world. MU also intend to extend their approach by undertaking a related reform and expansion of their taught postgraduate programmes. The University's development and introduction of the new undergraduate curriculum demonstrates the value of choice, flexibility, and interdepartmental collaboration in creating a unique programme offering that is particularly attractive to, and stimulating for, students. MU's strategy is to build on this success at undergraduate level to develop a distinctive postgraduate portfolio that is agile and responsive to student needs, and challenges them to meet their academic and professional goals. The strategy for increased postgraduate enrolments is based on a benchmarking exercise, comparing enrolments at MU to those in the other Irish universities and to appropriate international comparators. This has led to a strategic target to increase total taught postgraduate enrolments from a baseline of 1,245 FTE (2016/17) to 1,770 by 2020/21. MU are prioritising growth in those areas where there is demand for advanced skills within the economy and therefore demand for postgraduate courses.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 2

National and
international
engagement



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.

The high-level targets set out under System Objective 2 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* relate to national and international engagement. In relation to internationalisation, the Department of Education and Skills has set out four clear strategic priorities aimed at 'increasing the numbers of international students and researchers coming to our institutions, increasing outward mobility for Irish students and academics/researchers, connecting the benefits of internationalisation with enterprises in support of national economic ambitions and building world class networks of learning and innovation'.²⁵

This chapter reports on how Irish higher education is taking up opportunities to engage with the wider world, both nationally and internationally; it looks at:

- The internationalisation in the student body
- The international mobility of staff and students
- The enterprise, social research and community engagement of Irish higher education.

2.1 Internationalisation of the student body in Ireland

International student numbers are on the rise in Irish higher education. Full-time international students accounted for 12.5% of all full-time students in 2017/18 compared to 10.5% in 2014/15. The target set in the Department's *International Strategy* is for international students to make up 15% of all full-time students by 2020.

Table 2.1 Full-time international student numbers in Ireland*, 2014/15 to 2017/18

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Total full-time enrolments	173,286	179,354	180,610	183,642
Full-time international enrolments	18,130	20,597	20,972	22,929
EU enrolments	3,956	4,447	4,178	4,474
Non-EU enrolments	13,741	15,581	16,196	17,719
Enrolments of unknown origin	433	569	598	736
Full-time international enrolments as % of total full-time enrolments	10.5%	11.5%	11.6%	12.5%

* HEA Student Record System statistics

25 DES, *Irish Education Globally Connected an International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016-2020* (Dublin: DES, 2016), p. 7. Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/International-Education-Strategy-For-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf>

The OECD's *Education at a glance 2018* provides a detailed breakdown of all international or foreign student enrolment as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment and shows that 8.2% of Ireland's tertiary population in 2016 were international or foreign students (see table 2.2). This compares to 5.7% for the OECD and 8.7% for the EU22. The figure also represents a 0.8 percentage point increase from the OECD's reported figure of 7.4% in 2015. It should be noted that the OECD methodology is not identical to that used by the HEA to capture international students and therefore, figures will not match.

Table 2.2 International and foreign student mobility in tertiary education (2016)*

	Share of international or foreign students by level of tertiary education					Number of international or foreign students (in thousands)
	Total tertiary education	Short-cycle tertiary programmes	Bachelor's or equivalent level	Master's or equivalent level	Doctoral or equivalent level	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
OECD						
International students						
Australia	17.5%	8.6%	14.3%	46.3%	33.9%	336
Austria	16.3%	1.2%	18.2%	20.2%	28.3%	70
Belgium	12.0%	7.4%	8.7%	20.3%	44.2%	61
Canada	11.9%	10.3%	10.4%	17.8%	31.8%	189
Chile	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	1.4%	8.0%	5
Denmark	10.8%	15.8%	5.7%	18.8%	33.7%	34
Estonia	6.8%	0.0%	4.9%	9.9%	12.0%	3
Finland	7.8%	0.0%	5.3%	12.3%	21.1%	23
France	9.9%	4.9%	7.4%	13.3%	39.5%	245
Germany	8.0%	0.0%	5.0%	13.4%	9.4%	245
Hungary	8.9%	0.8%	6.5%	16.0%	11.6%	26
Iceland	6.8%	24.9%	4.3%	9.0%	35.7%	1
Ireland	8.2%	2.1%	6.6%	15.2%	27.0%	18
Japan	3.7%	5.3%	2.5%	7.1%	18.2%	143
Latvia	7.7%	2.1%	6.2%	16.2%	11.4%	6
Luxembourg	47.0%	9.0%	26.6%	73.1%	84.8%	3
Mexico	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	2.7%	13
Netherlands	10.7%	0.6%	8.8%	16.7%	40.1%	90
New Zealand	19.8%	26.7%	15.7%	26.1%	48.1%	54
Norway	3.9%	0.7%	2.3%	7.1%	21.6%	11

Share of international or foreign students by level of tertiary education						Number of international or foreign students (in thousands)
Total tertiary education	Short-cycle tertiary programmes	Bachelor's or equivalent level	Master's or equivalent level	Doctoral or equivalent level		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
Poland	3.4%	0.0%	3.2%	4.1%	2.0%	55
Portugal	5.8%	2.2%	3.3%	7.0%	25.6%	20
Slovenia	3.3%	1.4%	2.8%	4.7%	9.7%	3
Spain	2.7%	1.9%	0.9%	8.0%	15.5%	53
Sweden	6.6%	0.2%	2.5%	10.7%	34.7%	28
Switzerland	17.6%	0.0%	9.6%	28.9%	54.9%	52
United Kingdom	18.1%	4.1%	14.1%	36.1%	43.2%	432
United States	5.0%	2.4%	4.2%	10.1%	40.0%	971
Foreign students						
Czech Republic	11.5%	5.5%	10.2%	13.0%	15.9%	43
Greece	3.4%	0.0%	3.7%	1.0%	1.5%	24
Israel	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	4.3%	6.3%	10
Italy	5.1%	7.1%	5.1%	4.7%	14.2%	93
Korea	1.9%	0.2%	1.7%	6.8%	9.3%	62
Slovak Republic	6.0%	0.7%	4.6%	8.0%	9.1%	10
Turkey	1.3%	0.2%	1.4%	4.3%	7.4%	88
OECD total	5.7%	2.7%	4.3%	11.9%	25.7%	3,520
EU22 total	8.7%	3.8%	6.5%	12.9%	22.7%	1,585

* Source OECD, 2019. *Education at a glance 2018*: OECD indicator B6, What is the profile of internationally mobile students? < <http://www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2018-data-and-methodology.htm>>.

2.2 International mobility of staff and students in Irish higher education

Since 1987, over 60,000 higher education students and staff from Ireland have travelled for periods of study and/or work in 32 other European countries under the EU's Erasmus Programme. The programme has seen more than 100,000 Europeans come to Ireland on similar exchanges, generating in the process an additional 500,000 visits from family and friends to Ireland in that period. The Erasmus+ National Agency at the HEA continues to make plans to raise the total outward-bound number of students and staff to 25,000 for the Erasmus+ period 2014-2020. In 2017/18, the HEA provided a breakdown of Erasmus+ student and staff allocation (intra-European) as shown in Table 2.3.²⁶

²⁶ See <http://eurireland.ie/assets/uploads/2018/02/Final-MEP-Booklet-with-Erasmuspdf.pdf>

Table 2.3 Erasmus+ student and staff allocation (intra-European) 2017/2018

HEI	Total Grant €	Students	Staff	Total
University of Limerick	1,235,380	670	44	714
National University of Ireland, Galway	1,075,440	427	19	446
University College Cork	891,635	343	67	410
Trinity College Dublin	868,670	384	24	408
University College Dublin	852,985	410	15	425
Dublin City University 672,795	274	23	297	
Dublin Institute of Technology	622,315	326	9	335
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	439,775	178	19	197
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	253,710	115	13	128
Cork Institute of Technology	224,675	110	22	132
Mary Immaculate College	209,600	104	6	110
Waterford Institute of Technology	160,055	66	18	84
Limerick Institute of Technology	150,840	67	14	81
National College of Art and Design	144,705	50	14	64
Institute of Technology, Sligo	128,125	58	16	74
Institute of Technology, Carlow	122,360	58	17	75
Dundalk Institute of Technology	82,390	41	4	45
Letterkenny Institute of Technology	76,670	38	11	49
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art Design & Technology	72,315	44	6	50
Institute of Technology, Tallaght	63,850	32	9	41
Institute of Technology, Tralee	50,895	19	12	31
Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown	49,165	17	5	22
Athlone Institute of Technology	43,770	14	9	23
Royal Irish Academy of Music	22,685	3	12	15
St. Angela's College	21,405	12	4	16
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	19,095	44	6	50
St. Nicholas Montessori College Ireland	17,905	8	6	14
Marino Institute of Education	9,755	5	3	8
Pontifical University	6,435	0	0	0
Hibernia College	5,525	0	5	5
TOTAL	8,594,925	3,917	432	4,349

Sourced from: <http://eurireland.ie/assets/uploads/2018/02/Final-MEP-Booklet-with-Erasmuspdf.pdf>

In relation to higher education staff mobility, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, in partnership with the HEA, is currently piloting a new opportunity for staff to engage with the Erasmus+ mobility programme. The initiative focuses on supporting the professional development of staff through international mobility and on recognising disciplinary excellence in learning, teaching and assessment (DELTA). Building on the HEA's existing Erasmus+ mobility process, the Erasmus+ DELTA scholarship will provide national recognition to those staff who use their period abroad to enhance teaching and learning within their disciplines.

2.3 Enterprise, social and community engagement

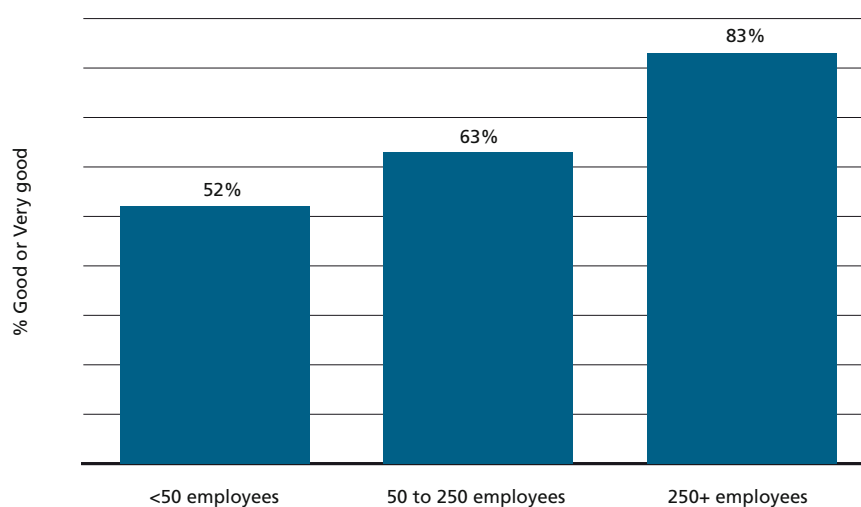
Reflecting the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030's* vision for HEIs to have a strong engagement with individual students, communities, society and enterprise, the *System Performance Framework* sets out targets for creating a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community.

2.3.1 Engagement with enterprise

The HEA's *Strategy for Higher Education-Enterprise Engagement*²⁷ places its primary focus on enterprise engagement and aims for Ireland to be recognised, nationally and internationally, for innovative, high-impact partnerships between its education and enterprise communities by 2020 – which will, in turn, help to create better skills, better jobs and better lives.

In a national context, the recent publication of the *National Employer Survey*²⁸ reports high levels of satisfaction with graduates among employers. Information from the survey also indicates that the larger the organisation, the more positive their level of collaboration with educational institutions – see figure 2.1. Further to this, the majority of collaborations are cited as being of a work-oriented nature, such as work placements, upskilling and apprenticeships.

Figure 2.1 Rating of current level of collaboration with educational institution

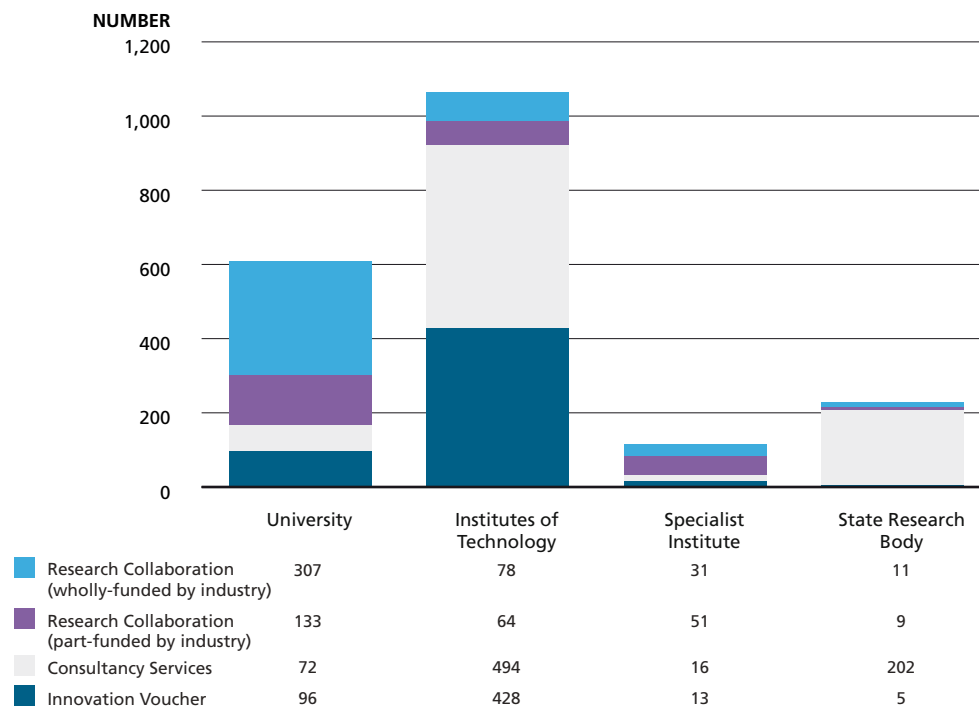


²⁷ HEA, *Collaborating for Talent and Growth: Strategy for Higher Education-Enterprise Engagement* (HEA: Dublin, 2015). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/Enterprise-Engagement-Strategy.pdf>

²⁸ Fitzpatrick Associates Economic Associates, *Irish National Employer Survey* (Dublin: HEA/QQI/SOLAS, 2019). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/01/21-01-19-J8961-Irish-National-Employer-Survey-Final-Report.pdf>

The most recent *Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey*²⁹ produced by Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI), in conjunction with the HEA, provides a clear view of knowledge transfer performance in Ireland. Data is collected from research performing organisations (RPO) who are defined as the universities, institutes of technology and other State-funded entities undertaking research. KTI reports ‘thriving collaboration’ between RPOs and enterprise. According to the KTI review, ‘over 1,000 different companies have signed agreements with RPOs relating to research related projects and there are over 300 companies for whom this is a repeat engagement over the past three years’. The total number of each type of agreement entered by the RPOs in 2017 is shown in figure 2.2 (as reported by KTI). Universities and specialist institution groups are inclined to engage in collaborative research, while institutes of technology are more likely to engage in shorter-term projects and in projects funded by companies through Innovation Vouchers.

Figure 2.2 The number of collaboration and consultancy services agreements with industry in 2017 by type of research performing organisation



* Source: KTI, 2017. *KTI Review and Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2017* (2018), p. 24.

29 KTI, *KTI Review and Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2017* (Dublin: KTI, 2018), p.21. Available at: https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/About_KTI/Reports-Publications/KTI-Review-and-Annual-Knowledge-Transfer-Survey-AKTS-2017.pdf

2.3.2 Socially engaged research

Socially engaged research involves collaboration between HEIs and research stakeholders to create or improve policies, practices, products, services and experiences. It aims to improve, understand or investigate an issue of public interest, including societal challenges. According to the Irish Universities Association's Campus Engage, engaged research is advanced *with* civil society organisation partners rather than *for* them.³⁰ A very large proportion of higher education research is, in practice, engaged research, and institutions are adapting their research reporting systems to capture relevant data on engaged research partnerships – the number of people involved, the EU and national funding generated, as well as the economic, health, social, cultural, and environmental impact of such partnerships.

2.3.3 Engagement with the wider community

The *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030* refers to community engagement as one of the three core roles of higher education, and Irish HEIs are working to meet this commitment. This work involves collaborating on civic and community engagement (CCE) activities within accredited community-based learning, sponsoring engaged research for impact, as well as supporting student volunteering and other areas of public engagement activity on campuses. Currently, all universities and TU Dublin, have dedicated CCE units and associated staff to support this work. In practice, community-based learning involves HEIs working in partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs) to act on local, national and global societal challenges and so enhance student learning outcomes. Across the sector, HEIs are offering students access to accredited community-based learning activity through their course work (including research projects), are implementing systems to manage civil society organisation partnerships, and are providing quality learning experiences to enhance students' work-ready skills.

A detailed support framework for measuring higher education civic and community engagement is presented by the Irish Universities Association's *Campus Engage*.³¹ This framework aims to help HEIs map and report on the growing range of engagement activities.

In this context, the recent findings from the *Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings*³² are welcome. These show that Irish universities perform particularly well in meeting sustainable development goals such as promoting good health and well-being, building sustainable cities and communities, and creating partnerships to achieve these goals. The goals also include targets relevant to engagement – for example, to encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, and to build on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships. Overall, Irish universities are among the highest performing institutions in these rankings, second only to Canadian universities.

30 IUA, *Engaged Research: Society and Higher Education Working Together to Address Societal Challenges* (Dublin: IUA, 2017). Available at: <https://www.iua.ie/publication/view/engaged-research-society-and-higher-education-addressing-grand-societal-challenges-together-2/>

31 IUA, *Measuring Higher Education Civic and Community Engagement, A Support Framework* (Dublin: IUA, 2018). Available at: <http://www.campusengage.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Measuring-HE-Civic-Community-Engagement-A-Framework-Web.pdf>

32 See <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/university-impact-rankings-2019-canada-leads-way>

System Objective 2: National and international engagement

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) – international engagement

The College recognises that an ambitious national target of 15% has been set for enrolment of full-time international students by the middle of the next decade. While MIC has adopted this target as a notional development level, it does so by acknowledging fully that to reach it would mean growing enrolments by several orders. Nevertheless, the College's early success in international engagement has been identified by the HEA as exemplary in the evaluation of *Erasmus+* outcomes. In addition, feedback through international student satisfaction surveys indicates that MIC scores highly in terms of its capacity to provide a very high-quality student experience. Together with burgeoning relationships with prestige institutions in the United States whose disciplinary traditions and ethos

MIC shares (including Boston College, the University of Notre Dame and Teachers College at Columbia University), these factors provide a robust platform for significant enhancement of the College's standing as an internationally engaged HEI. The College will enhance the substance of its engagement with the broader community of stakeholders in its educational provision by involving external partners, as appropriate, in programme conceptualisation, development and review. One of the objectives set by the College is to augment its graduate employability value by incorporating key 'professional' skills (such as project management, presentation skills etc.) into its student experience by working with local industry to insert such options into extra-curricular skills development menus.

Dublin City University (DCU) – enterprise engagement

DCU plan to implement an Enterprise Engagement Plan that will lead to a step-change in the scale and depth of the University's interactions with enterprise partners. During the lifetime of their strategic plan, DCU will leverage the opportunities provided by the broad range of industry partners of its SFI research centres (e.g. INSIGHT, ADAPT, iFORM etc.), and the international network afforded by their Fraunhofer partnership. They plan to establish a small number of deep strategic alliances with partners aligned with their new research priorities (ICT, Bio etc. as outlined elsewhere in this Compact). The planned establishment of BioDesign Europe at DCU (in partnership with the world-renowned BioDesign Institute at Arizona State University) in 2019/20 will afford additional opportunities in this regard. The establishment of DCU's unique Innovation Campus (DCU Alpha) as part of their last Strategic Plan affords a broad range of opportunities for enterprise engagement. The campus now hosts over 40 tech (predominantly ICT) companies (mainly SMEs). In 2018/19, DCU plan to open a major Digital Innovation co-working space on their campus, with space for 350 individual innovators. When fully occupied, the University expect between 50 and 80 start-ups to occupy the space. DCU plan to pursue a programme of active engagement with both current tenants and these new entrants with a view to establishing collaborative partnerships utilising government instruments (e.g. innovation vouchers/partnerships) and will appoint an Enterprise Engagement Officer to accelerate progress in this regard.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 3

Research, development
and innovation



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.

The high-level targets set out under System Objective 3 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* relate to research, development and innovation. This chapter offers an overview of the current research situation in Irish higher education as well as reporting on our research priorities, our research funding and our engagement with external partners. It looks in particular at the following:

- Postgraduate research enrolments, including breakdown by programme type, by gender, institution type and field of study
- Research, development and innovation in Irish higher education
- The role of Horizon2020 funding in research, development and innovation in Irish higher education
- Private sector funding for research activity in HEIs.

3.1 Postgraduate research enrolments

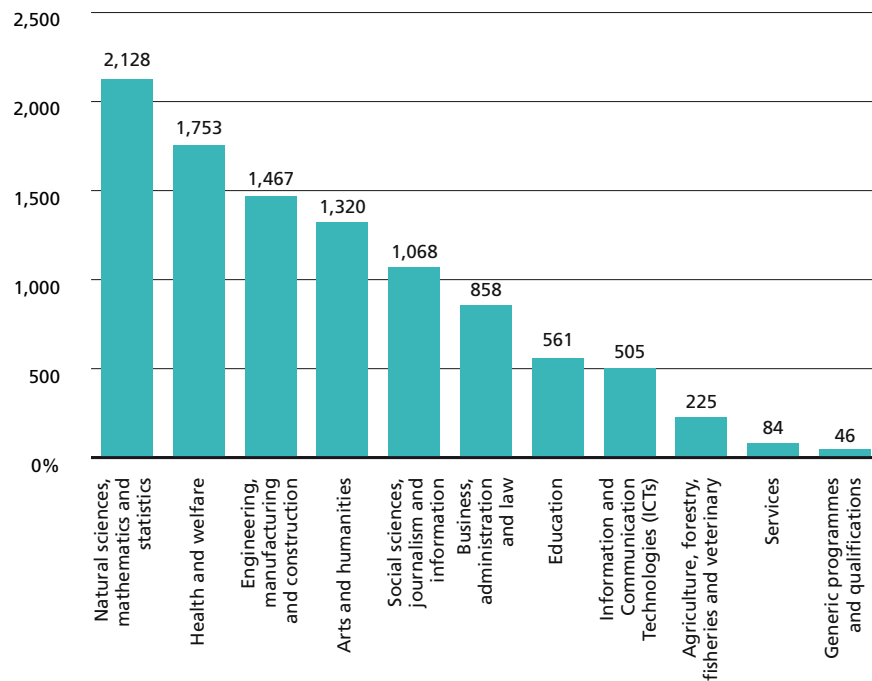
Postgraduate research enrolments, across all full-time and part-time doctorate and masters research programmes, have increased marginally year on year, as set out in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Postgraduate research enrolments by programme type, 2014/15 to 2017/18

Programme type	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Full-time doctorate	6,800	6,928	6,806	6,888
Part-time doctorate	1,358	1,440	1,551	1,625
Full-time masters research	1,145	1,115	1,156	1,150
Part-time masters research	303	290	289	352
Total	9,606	9,773	9,802	10,015

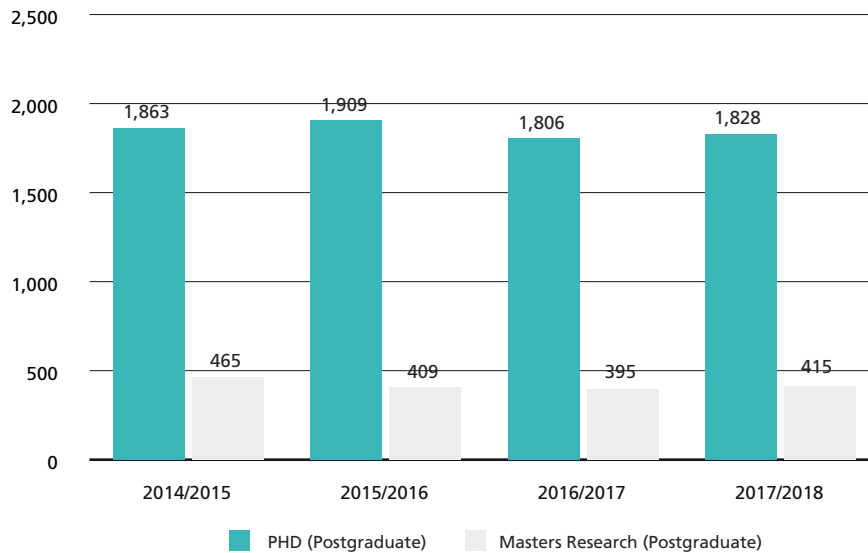
A breakdown of the most recent postgraduate research enrolment numbers by field of study (2017/18) is illustrated in figure 3.1. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics and Health and Welfare make up 21% and 18% respectively of postgraduate doctoral and masters research enrolments. Researchers in the fields of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Education account for 2%, 5% and 6% of enrolments respectively.

Figure 3.1 Doctoral and masters research enrolments by field of study, 2017/18



The *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* targets an increase in postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise in year one consistent with the approach used in *Innovation 2020*. The number of year one masters research and doctoral enrolments in 2017/18 was 2,243 compared to 2,328 in 2014/15 – see figure 3.2. High employment rates for tertiary graduates may explain this 4 percentage point decrease in postgraduate research enrolments (year one) from 2014/15 and 2017/18.

Figure 3.2 Doctoral and masters research enrolments in year one, 2014/15 to 2017/18



Postgraduate research graduate numbers by programme type, institute type and gender from 2014 to 2017 are presented in table 3.2.

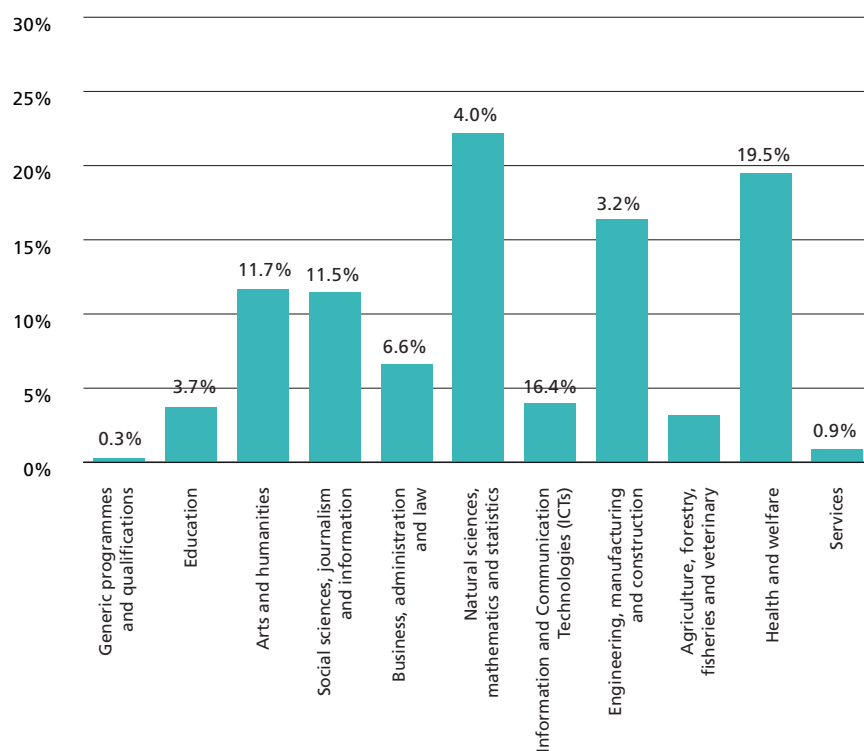
Table 3.2 Postgraduate research graduates by programme type, institute type and gender, 2014-2017

Programme type	Institute type	Gender	2014	2015	2016	2017
Doctorate	Universities	Male	764	686	692	634
		Female	794	610	731	683
	Colleges	Male	28	30	30	23
		Female	49	35	39	20
	Institutes of technology	Male	59	30	39	47
		Female	55	38	37	38
Doctorate total			1,749	1,429	1,568	1,445
Masters research	Universities	Male	151	119	150	169
		Female	135	107	145	139
	Colleges	Male	17	11	4	1
		Female	33	17	17	10
	Institutes of technology	Male	36	40	50	48
		Female	34	59	40	38
Masters research total			406	353	406	405
Grand total			2,155	1,782	1,974	1,850

The number of doctoral graduates across all sectors decreased by 17 percentage points from 2014 to 2017 while there was a 14 percentage points decrease in masters research graduates. The fall in investment in postgraduate supports during a period of severe global recession, which hit Ireland hard post-2008, and saw a return of outward migration, impacted the decisions of many to enrol in or to continue in research careers.

The most recent graduate data, as presented in figure 3.2, reflects that of postgraduate enrolments; the highest percentages of graduates come from Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics (22.2%) followed by 19.5% from Health and Welfare and 16.4% from Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction.

Figure 3.3 Doctoral and research graduates by field of study, 2017



3.2 Research, development and innovation in Irish higher education

The higher education sector underpins Ireland's research, development and innovation (RDI) system and directly contributes to our national ambition to be a global innovation leader. Activities range from bespoke and applied research on immediate challenges (via Innovation Vouchers and in collaboration with industry) to basic and fundamental research via masters and PhD studentships and to individual curiosity-driven and researcher-led projects on new or emerging areas of societal or economic relevance. Communicating the value and impact of basic research remains a priority. The scale and speed of technological change requires ever more collaborative approaches between those who create knowledge and those who use it – to translate ideas into solutions. At the same time, it is important to nurture talent and to develop the research infrastructure appropriate to our national needs and ambitions. In that regard, it is welcome that the Project Ireland 2040 *National Development Plan 2018-2027*³³ commits to increasing the output of science and technology researchers and to expanding the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL), in this way 'increasing research capacity with additional PhD and MSc enrolments in third-level institutions' alongside a 'scaling-up SFI and Enterprise Ireland Research Centres and Technology Centres in higher education' in all regions.

Addressing gaps in the funding system for postdoctoral researchers through competitive support for excellent research across all disciplines, and with a particular focus on inter-disciplinary research, was identified as a key action point in *Innovation 2020*, Ireland's strategy for research and development, science and technology.³⁴ A 30% increase in the number of funded postdoctoral places by 2020 is envisaged. *Innovation 2020* highlights the key role postgraduate education delivered by HEIs plays in Ireland's research system. As outlined earlier, while overall postgraduate enrolment numbers have increased slightly year on year, the number of postgraduate enrolments in the first year of their research programmes decreased between 2014/15 and 2017/18 (see figure 3.1) and research graduate numbers are also reported to have decreased (see table 3.2).

33 DPER, *Project Ireland 2040 National Development Plan 2018-2027* (Dublin: DPER, 2018), p.60-61. Available at <https://assets.gov.ie/7336/b0a7bcedecc9478ca07582c5461a4776.pdf>

34 DJEI, *Innovation 2020 Excellence Talent Impact: Ireland's strategy for research and development* (Dublin: DJEI, 2015). Available at: <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Reports-Publications/Innovation-2020.pdf>

At the time of writing, the most recent survey of research and development in the higher education sector (HERD)³⁵ reported that total expenditure on R&D in the higher education sector in 2014 was €730.1 million, up from €664.4 million in 2012. In relation to types of research, 47% of all research spend in the Irish higher education in 2014/15 went on applied research, 45% was spent on basic research and 8% was spent on experimental research. Institutes of technology report 71% of all research spend in 2014/15 was on applied research, 20% was on basic research and 9% was on experimental research. In universities, the figures for 2014/15 were 44% on applied research, 49% on basic research and 7% on experimental research.

3.3 Horizon 2020 funding in Irish research and development

Horizon 2020 is the EU's main funding programme for research and development for the period 2014 to 2020, and it set a target of €550m funding to be secured by Irish HEIs by 2020. As of April 2019, Irish HEIs and industry have between them secured over €630.4m in Horizon 2020 funding.

The 2018 edition of the European Innovation Scoreboard³⁶ reveals a positive trend in most EU countries (EU28) – Ireland moved up one place from 10th on the 2014 baseline to 9th in 2017. Malta, the Netherlands, and Spain made greater progress with Sweden remaining the EU innovation leader. Ireland's performance was ranked best in innovation in SMEs, level of employment in knowledge-intensive activities and sales impacts, but was behind the trend (upper-mid-table) in providing an innovation friendly environment, in the provision of finance and support, in industry investment and in the registration of intellectual assets. In 2018, six Irish researchers from Trinity College Dublin, NUI Galway and University of Limerick were awarded prestigious and highly competitive European Research Council (ERC) starting grants³⁷ for their projects (Ireland secured two such awards in 2017). ERC starting grants are designed to support outstanding researchers of any nationality who are starting to develop an independent career. A further three Irish scientists hosted at universities outside Ireland also secured ERC awards in 2018.

3.4 Private sector funding for research

Private sector funding for research carried out in HEIs arrives in a number of ways.³⁸ The bulk of it (95%) comes from industry support for collaborative research, Innovation Voucher projects and consultancy services. There is also commercialisation revenue from licensing, as well as revenue from spin-out company dividends and from equity sales representing 4%. The remaining 1% comes from the use of facilities and equipment. *Innovation 2020*³⁹ sets out a target of €48m per annum for private funding of publicly performed R&D, which would represent a doubling in such funding from 2014 to 2020.

35 DJEI, *Survey of Research and Development in the Higher Education Sector 2014-2015* (Dublin: DJEI, 2017), p.23. Available at: <https://dbei.gov.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Survey-of-R-D-in-the-Higher-Education-Sector-2014-2015.pdf>

36 European Commission, *European Innovation Scoreboard 2018*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en

37 European Commission Representation in Ireland, *Six Irish researchers to be awarded European Research Council's Starting grants in 2018*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/ireland/news/six-irish-researchers-to-be-awarded-european-research-councils-starting-grants-in-2018_en

38 KTI, *KTI Review and Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2017* (Dublin: KTI, 2018), p.21. Available at: https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/About_KTI/Reports-Publications/KTI-Review-and-Annual-Knowledge-Transfer-Survey-AKTS-2017.pdf

39 DJEI, *Innovation 2020 Excellence Talent Impact: Ireland's strategy for research and development* (Dublin: DJEI, 2015). Available at: <https://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/Reports-Publications/Innovation-2020.pdf>

System Objective 3: Research, development and innovation

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) – research and development engagement with industry

Trinity has initiated a five-year industry engagement strategy in 2014 with a target of doubling the level of research and development investment from industry. This target was reached in 2018 and the numbers continue to improve, supported by investment in the industry engagement team. The large SFI-funded centres, including AMBER, CONNECT and ADAPT, primarily drive this industry engagement. Further growth will depend on renewed and/or increased engagement by industry with the SFI centres. With funding from Knowledge Transfer Ireland, Trinity has established a pilot project to conduct a detailed market evaluation to determine both the scale of supply and demand for a consultancy unit representing the full range of Trinity's expertise and the results of this work will inform future KPIs. Whilst noting that postgraduate research numbers have decreased by approximately 20% at TCD over the last two years, it should be noted that the numbers of postdoctoral researchers and research fellows is increasing correspondingly, with postdoctoral researchers increasing from 436 in 2017 to 503 in 2020 and research fellows almost doubling from 87 in 2017 to 161 in 2020. It should also be noted that there is a sectoral decrease in the number of postgraduate research students which is due, in part, to decreased levels of funding opportunities available to potential research students.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) – research collaboration

GMIT's primary structure for research collaboration with enterprise is via its Medical and Engineering Technologies (MET) Technology Gateway, co-funded by Enterprise Ireland. The MET Technology Gateway's interdisciplinary supports provide cutting edge, industry focussed solutions for the MedTech and general manufacturing sectors. By actively engaging with clinical and industry partners, the MET Technology Gateway produces both scientific knowledge and technology outputs across a range of sectoral specialisations. These engagements enable enterprises to develop technology solutions to meet market needs, providing client companies with more seamless and cost-effective design improvements, and assessments of their new products. In addition to helping companies accelerate their product development, MET enables companies to generate the new knowledge and competitive differentiation required to access International markets. GMIT plans to utilise the MET Gateway as a key instrument in the delivery of this strategic initiative, building on MET success to date by continued promotion of the Gateway's strengths and expansion of its offerings to other segments of the Life Sciences sector. GMIT intends to capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the current €3 million extension to its Dublin Road enterprise Innovation Hub, co-funded by Enterprise Ireland. The iHub building extension facilitates GMIT specialisation of its enterprise development supports for the MedTech sector.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 4

Diversity and equality of opportunity



SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 4

Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

Objective 4 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* targets significant improvement in equality of opportunity through education and training and aims for a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. This chapter gives an overview of how higher education system is meeting those challenges. It looks in particular at the following areas:

- Statistical breakdown of new entrants from under-represented groups
- Progress review of the HEA's *National Access Plan* – how much progress is being made towards achieving greater equity of access to higher education?
- Improving the quality of student data – to measure equity of access and to support sustainable student success
- Funding access: the role of PATH
- Student success.

4.1 New entrants from under-represented groups

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide a breakdown of HEA data on new entrants from under-represented groups, including mature new entrants, disability new entrants, socio-economically disadvantaged new entrants and part-time new entrants from 2014/15 to 2017/18. The number of mature new entrants remains as it was in 2016/17 at 9% of all new entrants. There is a one percentage point decrease for disability new entrants between 2016/17 and 2017/18 equating to 293 new entrants. Socio-economically disadvantaged new entrants remain at 26% of all new entrants in 2016/17.

Table 4.1 New entrants (under-represented groups), 2014/15-2017/18 (HEA data)

NEW ENTRANTS (UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS)	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
New entrants	42,393	43,460	43,569	43,541*
Mature new entrants	5,085	4,752	4,138	3,804
Mature as % of new entrants	12%	11%	9%	9%
Disability new entrants	3,655	3,343	4,417	4,582
Disability as % of new Entrants	9%	8%	10%	10.5%
Socio-economically disadvantaged new entrants	10,667	11,362	11,318	11,408
SEG as % of new entrants	25%	26%	26%	26%

* The methodology applied here is in line with that used in the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019*.

As Table 4.2 shows, the number of part-time new entrants is at its highest level since 2014/15. Interestingly, mature part-time new entrants in 2017/18 make up a lower percentage (84%) than they did in previous years.

Table 4.2 Part-time new entrants, 2014/15-2017/18 (HEA data)

NEW ENTRANTS (UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS)	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
All part-time new entrants	3,782	4,078	3,930	4,168
Mature part-time new entrants	3,339	3,520	3,372	3,498
Mature part-time as percentage of all part-time new entrants	89%	87%	86%	84%

4.2 Progress review of the HEA's *National Access Plan*

The HEA's *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 (National Access Plan)* identified the following six main groups whose participation in higher education it wished to increase: people with disabilities, mature students, students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, students progressing from further education, part-time students, and members of the Irish Traveller community. The *Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021* was published in December 2018.⁴⁰ The *Review* acknowledges that progress has been made in the participation of groups that had historically had very low higher education participation rates, but it also makes it clear that some considerable gaps do remain and that some groups continue to be under-represented in higher education.

Data from the *Equal Access Survey 2017/18* shows that 20% of the new entrants who responded to the survey came from socio-economically disadvantaged groups. It must be noted that this is survey data with a distinct methodology and so should be treated with caution. New entrants here are classified to a socio-economic group based on their identification of their father's socio-economic occupation. As discussed in section 4.3, the HEA will soon move to analysing such data based on small area socio-economic groups, and this is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of new entrants by deprivation index.

In assessing progress to date against the *National Access Plan*, the *Progress Review* cautions that targets for participation by under-represented groups might not be realised when broader social, cultural and economic factors are considered. For example, near-full employment will tend to reduce the number of full-time mature students in higher education. Also, the number of Traveller students who participate in higher education is likely to be affected by increases or decreases in the number of Traveller students completing senior cycle at post-primary school.

⁴⁰ HEA, *Progress Review of the National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021* (Dublin: HEA, 2018). Available at <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/01/HEA-Progress-Review-2021-NAP.pdf>

In addition to specific under-represented groups, the *Progress Review* indicates that at the commencement of the *National Access Plan* there were 3,959 new entrants to higher education from DEIS schools, representing 12% of all new entrants to higher education from DEIS and non-DEIS schools. The *Review* also shows that the number of new entrants to higher education from DEIS schools increased by 509 students for the 2016/17 academic year to 4,468. This is a 1.5% increase since the commencement of the *National Access Plan* during a period where new entrants to higher education also increased from 40,865 to 43,569. The majority of HEIs currently work closely with local DEIS schools and HEI-led access programmes are expected to lead to increases in the numbers of new entrants coming from DEIS schools.

4.3 Improving the quality of student data – to measure equity of access to higher education

There are two noteworthy initiatives that improve the quality of data about students and that can help to improve our view of equity of access to higher education and ensure more sustainable student success.

4.3.1 A better measure of equity of access

The HEA's *Access Data Plan*⁴¹ is a significant initiative to improve the capacity of the HEA to measure and monitor equity of access to higher education. The new *Access Data Plan* estimates the socio-economic position of students based on what is known about the 'small area' in which their parents reside. The geocoding of the areas where students come from will enhance the baseline data for the identification of inequalities in access to higher education and will enable the development of more targeted policy interventions. Student addresses are being collected by HEIs and preliminary work is being undertaken to analyse this geocoded data.

4.3.2 Using data to support sustainable student success: the role of DESSI

The National Forum for the Enhancement for Teaching and Learning's Data-Enabled Student Success Initiative (DESSI), launched in October 2017, aims to guide Irish HEIs on how they can use data to support students' success. To date, 19 HEIs have participated in DESSI. In 2018, the initiative involved 31 site visits with over 700 participating institutional staff and students, institutional strategy workshops hosted in 14 HEIs, the development of two open-access professional development short courses focused on learning analytics practice and strategy development, and a national learning analytics symposium. The initiative also involved the development of a guide to learning analytics platforms – to inform decisions about purchasing or developing analytics platforms at institutional level.

⁴¹ HEA, *A Data Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education* (Dublin: HEA, 2017). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/HEA-Data-Plan-Report-2017-V16-Haase-Pratschke-Final.pdf>

4.4 Funding access: the role of PATH

According to the recent *Progress Review*, HEIs have made ‘a significant contribution to delivering against ambitious national targets over the first phase of the *National Access Plan*’.⁴² Increased Government funding of over €16 million, in the form of Programme for Access to Higher Education Fund (PATH) support, sits alongside the *National Access Plan* and represents a major contribution to ensuring increases in participation across the target groups.

Under PATH, regional clusters of HEIs and centres of teacher education were requested to submit project plans to the HEA, detailing how as cluster partners they would work together to improve access in their region over the next three years. Under each of the three strands of PATH, the relevant centres of education (PATH 1) and regional clusters (PATH 2 and 3) will submit biannual reports describing progress to date in the implementation of their respective projects, including progress on participation by the target groups identified in the National Access Plan. Funding to facilitate the attraction and retention of an additional 2,000 new undergraduate students (full-time or part-time) is released to centres and clusters on the basis of satisfactory reporting on the progress of the six target groups outlined in section 4.2. At least 10% of all places will also be targeted at lone parents.

The allocation of this PATH funding underlines a commitment in the *National Access Plan* to the development of regional and community strategies. It also supports HEIs to engage more directly, more locally, and in a more coordinated way with disadvantaged communities to attract more disadvantaged students into higher education.

4.5 Student success

As part of the implementation of the *National Access Plan*, a Student Success Working Group was established to advise the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA on issues contributing to student success in higher education, in particular for those from under-represented target groups. The working group was asked to consider the issues that contribute to student non-completion and the measures required to address these. With the publication of the HEA’s *Analysis of Completion in Irish Higher Education*,⁴³ which includes a socio-economic analysis on data received from the *Equal Access Survey*, more up-to-date evidence is now available to support this work. Two key findings were noted for completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts.

- *Rate of completion based on type of second-level school*: students coming from DEIS schools have a higher education completion rate of 65%, compared with 72% for those from standard schools and 76% for those from fee-paying second-level schools.
- *Rate of completion for selected high-points courses*: students from disadvantaged backgrounds perform just as well as those from affluent backgrounds – 9% non-completion rate for those from disadvantaged areas compared with 10% for those from affluent areas.

Recently, a national advisory group has been established by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning – to build on the work of the 2017 HEA Working Group on Student Success. One of the focuses of the advisory group is to consider how best to support institutions in developing their student success strategies. All HEIs are required to have a student success strategy in place by 2020, and this must embed a whole-of-HEI approach to institutional access strategies. Every institution participating in the strategic and performance dialogue process has committed to having this student success strategy in place for 2020.

42 HEA, *Progress Review of National Access Plan and Priorities to 2021* (Dublin: HEA, 2018), p.30. Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/12/HEA-Progress-Review-NAP-2021.pdf>

43 HEA, *An Analysis of Completion in Irish Higher Education: 2007/08 Entrants* (Dublin: HEA, 2019). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2019/02/HEA-Analysis-of-Completion-in-Irish-Higher-Education-Report-Release.pdf>

System Objective 4: Diversity and equality of opportunity

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) – equity of access

The Institute is committed to promoting equitable access to and successful participation in higher education for all. It flows from a philosophy of integration and social inclusiveness and aims to support the widening of access for traditionally underrepresented learners by delivering targeted strategies to promote, facilitate entry to and successful participation in higher education. Through the Institute's involvement with the Shannon Consortium cluster, LIT has been successful with applications to the HEA through the PATH 2 & 3 funding initiatives. The Institute will continue to pursue initiatives which encourage participation by students from sections of society which are significantly under-represented in higher education. Under PATH 3 LIT plan to further support entry from four local DEIS schools and will specifically target recruitment from the Traveller Community and Early School Leavers.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) – student success

In order to advance DkIT's commitment to the access and participation agenda, the institute is furthering the development and implementation of an overall Student Success Strategy. The Student Success Working Group (formerly the Student Retention Working Group) was first established in June 2017 and was tasked with developing a Retention Policy for the Institute. This followed the adoption of Student Retention as an Academic Council theme for three academic years (2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/2018). During the development of the policy, the Institute decided to broaden its remit to develop a Student Success Strategy. This is in line with the requirement of the most recent Higher Education *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. This objective aims to "significantly improve the quality of opportunity to education and training and recruit a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population". One of the high-level targets under this objective is that "all HEI's will have a student success strategy in place by 2020 which will embed whole of HEI approached to Institutional access strategies". DkIT's strategy in the first instance will focus on student retention (as directed by Academic Council) and can be further expanded to include access initiatives in order to meet the HEA deadline of 2020.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 5

Quality teaching
and learning



SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 5

Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality and academic excellence.

System Objective 5 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* aims to consistently enhance the quality of learning in Irish higher education. This chapter looks at:

- The implementation of Ireland's National Professional Development Framework for those who teach in HEIs
- The integration of digital policies in teaching and learning in higher education
- The student experience of teaching and learning – how this is measured and how it is reflected in progression and completion rates.

5.1 National Professional Development Framework

Ireland's first National Professional Development Framework for all who teach in Irish higher education was launched in 2016. An initial implementation (pilot study) was conducted during the academic year 2016/2017 involving 230 staff from universities, institutes of technology and private colleges across 22 groups. In 2018, the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education published a report of its findings on this initial implementation, detailing the impact of the framework and providing insights into what worked and why at an institutional level, as well as recommendations from participants in the pilot.⁴⁴

The National Forum has identified the professional development of all those who teach as one of its four key strategic priorities for the period to 2021, and its work will focus on promoting evidence-based, flexible, inclusive professional development opportunities that reflect the needs of HEIs. In addition, the National Forum's new Senior Lead for Sectoral Engagement will be meeting with staff and senior managers across all HEIs to ensure that the National Professional Development Framework is understood across the sector and that support is provided to institutions as they engage with it.

A new online interface for professional development was launched by the National Forum in 2019 allowing those who teach to avail of open-access short courses across 17 specified areas. Online versions of these short courses will be rolled out on a phased basis over the two-year period up to 2021. Ten professional development projects that were also funded under the 2016 round of the National Forum's Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund were completed in 2018. The lessons learned, resources and impact arising from these projects will be captured and communicated to the sector in 2019 and will serve to inform professional development work over the coming years. Of the 16 projects funded through the 2018 round of the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund, 13 focus on the professional development of those who teach in higher education.

⁴⁴ National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, *Ireland's National Professional Development Framework Summary Findings from the Initial Implementation* (Dublin: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, 2018). Available at: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/PD_Framework_2018_AW_Web.pdf

5.2 Digital teaching and learning

The National Forum has also identified teaching and learning in a digital world as one of its four key strategic priorities for the period to 2021. The National Forum's review of the existing higher education policy landscape for digital teaching and learning provides an overview of the current situation in Ireland.⁴⁵ It acknowledges that 'the use of digital technology has changed the environment of teaching and learning in higher education' and explains that practitioners in higher education can often be in situations now that didn't arise prior to this era of digital teaching and learning. This report and with the National Forum's *Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning*⁴⁶ together provide timely resources for HEIs as they complete their digital teaching and learning policies. In 2019, the National Forum will organise regional workshops and webinars dedicated to the topic of digital policy development, and it will also publish a curated collection of resources related to digital and open education policy development.

5.3 The student experience

The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* highlights the importance of a high-quality student experience and how this requires a commitment to specific improvements in the teaching and learning environment – in respect of the breadth of curriculum and skills assessed as well as in the quality of teaching itself. The strategy recommended that HEIs capture feedback from students and this has been carried out via a national survey, the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE), which was established in 2013. The *National Strategy* also addresses (under Teaching and Learning) how HEIs might prepare first-year students better for their learning experience, so that they can engage with it more successfully. In this regard, progression/retention and completion are now reported on. Each of these topics is discussed below – ISSE, progression/retention rates and completion rates.

5.3.1 Irish Survey of Student Engagement

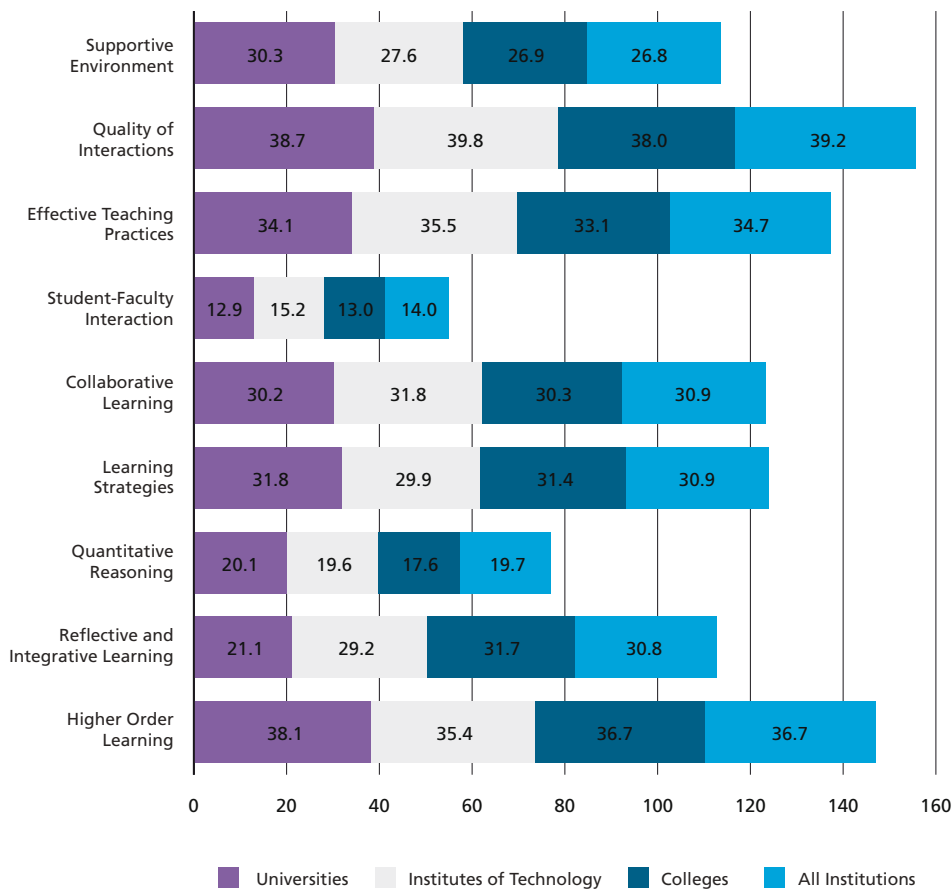
In 2018, the *Irish Survey of Student Engagement*⁴⁷ saw another yearly increase in response rates, with a total of 38,371 students from 27 higher education institutions participating in the survey. The findings provide insight into the amount of time and effort that students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities, and, also, how effectively institutions facilitate, encourage and promote student engagement in activities that are linked to learning'. On a national level, findings show some positive improvements across engagement indicators. Figure 5.1 presents engagement indicator scores by institute type for 2018 as reported on in the ISSE 2018 survey.

45 National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, *A Review of the Existing Higher Education Policy Landscape for Digital Teaching and Learning in Ireland*, (Dublin: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, 2018). Available at: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/TL_EnablingPoliciesReview_WEB.pdf, 3.

46 National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, *Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning*, (Dublin: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, 2018). Available at: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/TL_Briefing_EnablingPolicyGuide_WEB.pdf.

47 ISSE, *The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) Results from 2018*, (Dublin: ISSE, 2018), p.3. Available at: <http://studentsurvey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ISSE-Report-2018final.pdf>

Figure 5.1 ISSE indicator scores by institute-type, 2018



Note: Indicator scores provide signposts to the experiences of students. They are not percentages, and they should be compared within each indicator and not between indicators.

Aggregate indicator scores for all responses increased over the period 2016 to 2018, but there were some variations when respondents are analysed by year group:

- For first year students, all indicator scores except those for Effective Teaching Practices increased from 2016 to 2018
- For final year students, all indicator scores except those for Reflective and Integrative Learning and Student-Faculty Interaction increased from 2016 to 2018
- For taught postgraduate students, all indicators increased from 2016 to 2018.

In the 2018 report, a further analysis of postgraduate taught data is presented. Some key findings are highlighted – such as that among taught postgraduate students, Education and Health and Welfare respondents are more likely to report high levels of workplace readiness than Arts and Humanities respondents. Greater levels of interaction with academic staff are also reported by full-time students, students aged 23 and under, non-Irish students and those studying master's programmes. In addition, Arts and Humanities respondents are most likely to report interactions with academic staff while Information and Communication Technologies respondents are least likely to do so.

In 2018 ISSE also undertook a first national pilot survey for postgraduate research students, which provided invaluable feedback to the higher education system on their experience. A very positive response rate of 2,983 postgraduate research students (32.5%) is reported and the report⁴⁸ on the survey provides a breakdown of results across a variety of experiences. Of particular note is the finding that three quarters of postgraduate researchers who responded to the survey evaluate their experience as 'good' or 'excellent'.

5.3.2 Progression/retention rates

As described in the HEA's most recent *Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education*,⁴⁹ the rates of non-progression (or non-retention from the HEI's perspective) among first-year students continue to be cause for concern. Across all sectors and NFQ levels, 14% of students did not progress to the next year in 2014/15 compared to 15% in 2013/14. These rates varied within and between sectors as is shown in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Non-progression rates by sector and NFQ level, 2014/15 vs 2013/14

Sector	Level (% of new entrants in IoTs in 2014/15)	% Non-progressed (2014/15)	% Non-progressed (2013/14)
Institutes of technology	Level 6 (13%)	27%	26%
	Level 7 (38%)	25%	27%
	Level 8* (49%)	15%	16%
	All Levels	21%	21%
Universities	Level 8	10%	11%
Colleges	Level 8	8%	6%
All Institutions	Level 8	11%	12%
	All Levels	14%	15%

* There were 32,010 new entrants at Level 8 across all sectors in 2014/15. Of these students, 20,626 (64%) are in the university sector, 9,134 (29%) in the institute of technology sector, and 2,250 (7%) in the college sector.

Significantly, students with higher prior educational attainment on entry are more likely to progress to the second year of study than those with lower prior educational attainment. There are also variations in progression rates across sectors, disciplines and NFQ levels. The more varied profile of new entrants to higher education is in line with national priorities⁵⁰ to broaden equity of access to higher education and should be taken into consideration when interpreting progression rates set out in the *Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education*.

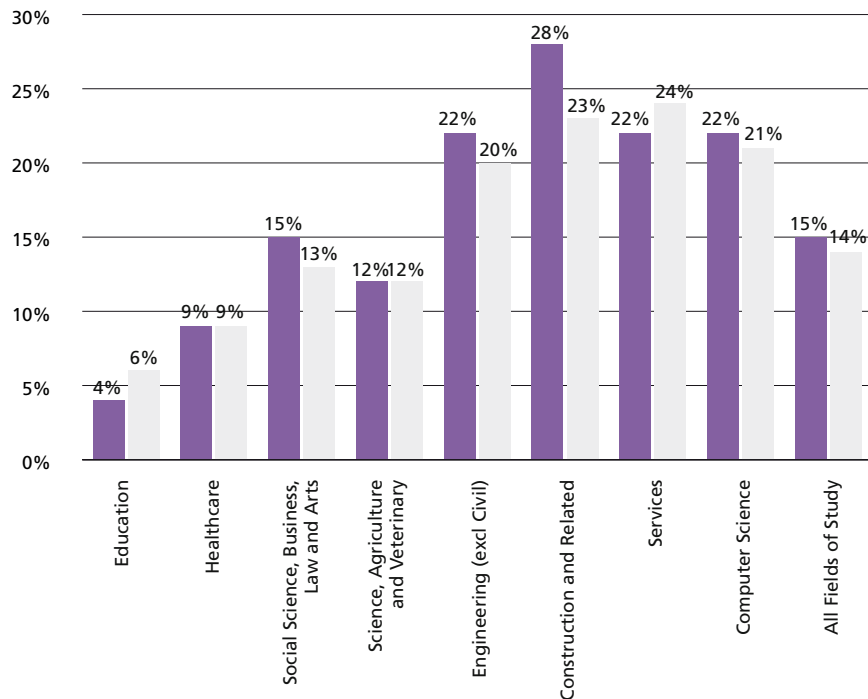
Non-progression rates by field of study in 2013/14 to 2014/15 and in 2014/15 to 2015/16, as also reported in the HEA's 2018 progression report, are set out in figure 5.2.

48 ISSE, *The Irish Survey of Student Engagement for Postgraduate Research Students (ISSE-PGR) Results from 2018*, (Dublin: ISSE, 2018). Available at: <http://studentsurvey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ISSE-PGR-Report-2018final.pdf>

49 HEA, *A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education (2014/15 to 2015/16)* (Dublin: HEA, 2018). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/05/HEA-Progression-Report-2018-FINAL.pdf>

50 DES, *Action Plan for Education* (Dublin: DES, 2018). Available at: <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/action-plan-for-education-2018.pdf>

Figure 5.2 Non-progression rates by field of study 2013/14 to 2014/15 and 2014/15 to 2015/16



5.3.3 Completion rates

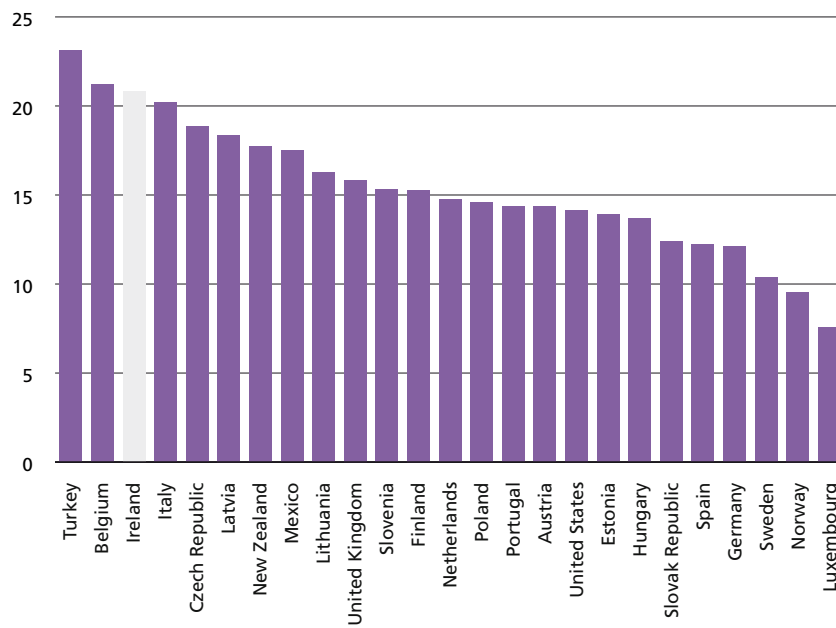
As mentioned above (4.5 Student success) the HEA recently completed its first completion analysis covering all HEA-funded higher education institutions, so deriving valuable baseline figures against which to measure completion rates in the future. The following are some of the key findings from this analysis:

- Overall, 76% of 2007/08 new entrants (full-time undergraduates) completed their studies in the institution they started in
- Completion rates range across sectors from 94% in colleges (NFQ Level 8) to 61% in institutes of technology at NFQ Level 7
- The overall completion rate at Level 8 in institutes of technology was 74%, compared with 83% in universities and 94% in colleges
- The highest completion rate across all fields of study was in the Education field at 91%, followed by Health and Welfare at 84%, while the lowest completion rate was in the Computing field at 55%
- The overall completion rate for males was 71% compared with 81% for females
- For students who entered with between 505 and 550 Leaving Certificate points, the completion rate was 95% compared with 43% for those who entered with between 205 and 250 points
- A total of 76% of entrants graduated: 58% of them on time and 71% up to one year late
- The probability of non-completion for students in institutes of technology (23.9%) is only slightly higher than that for students in universities (23.5%).

5.3.4 Staff-student ratio

Of particular concern for the overall student experience and the quality of teaching and learning is the staff-student ratio. According to the OECD's *Education at a Glance 2018* report, the number of students per teaching staff in Irish tertiary education was 20.8 in 2016 (see figure 5.3), higher than in all other OECD countries except Belgium and Turkey.

Figure 5.3 Number of students per teaching staff in tertiary education across OECD countries, 2016*



* Note that this data was not available for some OECD countries for 2016

System Objective 5: Quality teaching and learning

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) – professional development framework

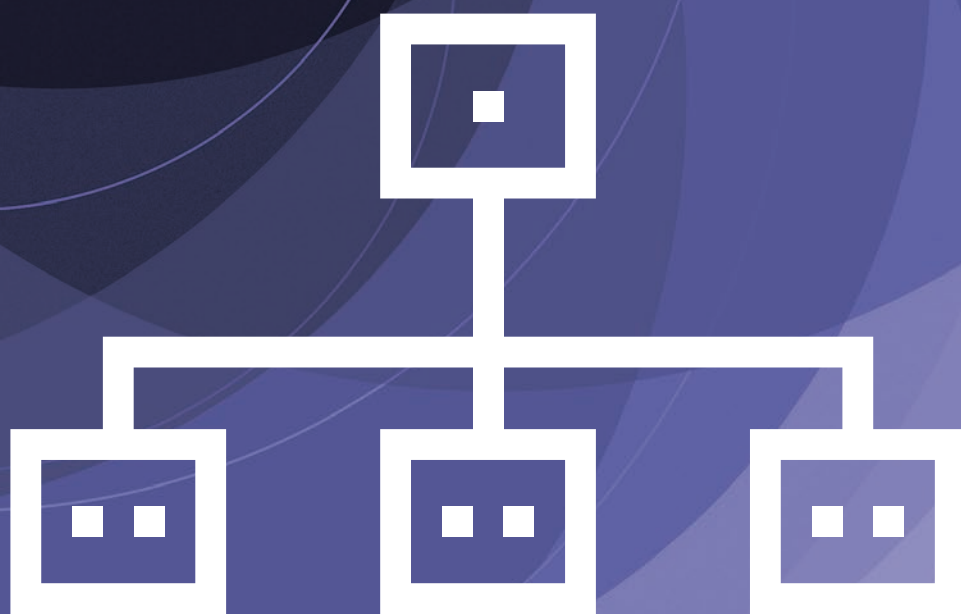
NUIG aim to ensure that staff who teach and design their programmes are provided with professional training and development opportunities, to ensure that the University's research-led teaching continues to generate a creative and stimulating environment, enriches the student experience and produces graduates of the highest quality (aligned to *Vision 2020* objective). NUIG plan to align their existing professional development and training programmes for academic staff with the National Professional Development Framework (where appropriate) and ensure that the opportunity to avail of professional development in the area of teaching, learning, curricular design, and assessment are available to all staff who teach at NUI Galway. Subject to resource availability, the existing programmes will be expanded, and routes will be identified for both early career and established academic staff. This alignment was completed in 2018/19, and extended provision is to commence in 2020/21. NUIG aim to recognise and reward leadership and the scholarship of teaching and learning through the introduction of a new professorial promotion route by AY 2018/19, augmented by identified promotion criteria for Senior Lectureship in AY 2019/2020.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) – digital teaching and learning

IADT has sought to foster a world class learning environments for their students across a range of key disciplines. IADT have done this through the provision of Institute-wide Wi-Fi, as well as offering 'eduroam' Wi-Fi which is the secure, worldwide roaming access service developed for the international research and education community, and which allows students, researchers and staff from participating institutions to obtain Internet connectivity across campus and when visiting other participating institution. The Virtual Learning Environment 'Blackboard Learn' (a web-based server software) is used by all Faculties, to offer students access to lectures and notes both on and off campus. IADT also provides all students and staff access to Lynda.com which is an online learning platform that supports learning in the areas of business, software, technology and creative skills. Remote File Access is available for all staff and students, which allows them to work on-the-go, on campus and off. The majority of disciplines in the Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies have base rooms and studios for learning and teaching in the creative areas. This allows hands-on experience for students, taught in small groups. Facilities provided to students include two TV/Film Studios, Art Studios, Virtual Learning Environment, full Radio Broadcasting studio and production suites, a number of computer labs, both for PCs and MACs. In 2017, IADT saw a refurbishment of their Atrium Building which is the key hub of IADT activity. Collaborative, flexible spaces for groups to work in have been provided with modular compact furniture to enable flexibility of group sizes.

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 6:

Governance, leadership
and operational
excellence



SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 6:

Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

System Objective 6 of the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020* aims to ensure that Irish HEIs are built on the solid foundations of good governance and good practices in all of their operational policies. This chapter looks at some of the key areas that contribute to this objective, including:

- Progress towards gender equality, which is seen as central to the pursuit of excellence in Irish higher education
- Governance oversight
- Higher education system performance.

6.1 Gender equality in Irish higher education

Two significant reports were published in recent years in relation to gender equality in Irish higher education, namely the *Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan*⁵¹ and the *Expert Group for the Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*⁵².

6.1.1 Higher education gender equality taskforce action plan

The Gender Equality Taskforce, established in November 2017, developed an action plan aimed at accelerating the rate of progress towards gender equality in Irish HEIs and ensuring that progress is constant and sustainable. Data analysis by the Gender Equality Taskforce examined the likely rate of change towards gender parity at professor grade from the 2014-2016 average level of 21% female professors. This showed that achieving gender balance at professor level in the university sector could take 20 years if the flexible cascade model approach alone is implemented (as recommended by the HEA Expert Group). Following this model, the proportion of men and women to be recruited or promoted to a certain level is based on the proportion of each at the career level immediately below. The introduction of a later retirement age could also slow down staff turnover.

51 Gender Equality Taskforce, *Accelerating Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions: Gender Action Plan 2018-2020* (Dublin: Gender Equality Taskforce, 2018). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/11/Gender-Equality-Taskforce-Action-Plan-2018-2020.pdf>

52 HEA, *Report of the Expert Group: HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* (Dublin: HEA, 2016). Available at: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/hea_review_of_gender_equality_in_irish_higher_education.pdf

6.1.2 Expert Group for the review of gender equality in Irish higher education institutions

Progress since the Expert Group report was published in 2016 has been exceptionally slow. The HEA's *Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender*⁵³ presents gender-disaggregated data on the leadership, governance, management and staffing of the universities, affiliated colleges and the institutes of technology, along with three-year-average data on the gender breakdown of professors, associate professors, senior lecturers and lecturers. The HEA annual staff profile publications show that there has only been a 1-2% change per year in the numbers of women in senior positions. The most recent three-year-average data (2015-2017), highlights some key statistics:

- A total of 23% of professors and 32% of associate professors in the university sector were female
- In the colleges sector, 52% of senior lecturers were female
- In the institute of technology sector, only 34% of senior lecturers were female.

HEIs have made significant progress in meeting some of the recommendations set out by the Expert Group in the Gender Equality Taskforce Action Plan, including the following:

- All universities have an Institutional Gender Action Plan in place
- All HEIs have indicated that in new recruitment processes the shortlist of candidates will be gender balanced and experience in advancing gender equality will be used as criteria against which candidates will be assessed
- Vice-presidents for equality have been appointed by three universities. Institutes of technology indicate that resource constraints have prevented them making such appointments, but in most cases, the equality role has been combined with an existing senior role. Even so, some institutes of technology are considering the appointment of dedicated vice-presidents for equality
- The recommendation '... to ensure gender balance of all key decision-making bodies' has been implemented or is in progress in all HEIs
- All HEIs are adopting measures to develop gender awareness among staff and to enhance provision of support for staff members with caring responsibilities
- HEIs are embedding the gender dimension into the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula and setting up gender-disaggregated data collection systems. However, there are varying levels of progress across the institutes of technology in implementing this.

⁵³ HEA, *Higher Education Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender* (Dublin: HEA, 2018). Available at: <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/01/Higher-Education-Institutional-Staff-Profiles-by-Gender-2018.pdf>

6.1.3 Athena SWAN awards

In a major national initiative aimed at encouraging and recognising commitment to advancing the careers of women in academia, the Athena SWAN charter was launched in Ireland in 2015. The *Report of Expert Group National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*⁵⁴ outlined an expectation that the HEIs will aim to apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award by 2019. The group acknowledge that the establishment of new technological universities (TUs) and other potential mergers will involve considerable organisational change and their recommendation is that all TUs should apply for and achieve an Athena SWAN institutional award within three years of being formally established. Table 6.1 shows that in 2018, all seven universities had achieved an Athena SWAN bronze award as had Dublin Institute of Technology (now TU Dublin).

Table 6.1 Athena SWAN bronze awards for all HEA-funded institutions, 2015-2018

Sector	No. of Athena SWAN bronze awards 2015	No. of Athena SWAN bronze awards 2016	No. of Athena SWAN bronze awards 2017	No. of Athena SWAN bronze awards 2018
Universities	2	5	5	7
Colleges	0	0	0	0
Institutes of Technology	0	0	0	1

6.2 Governance of higher education

In 2015, the HEA reviewed its approach to the oversight and governance of HEIs. *The Governance Framework for the Higher Education System*⁵⁵ was developed in 2015 and represented the culmination of a process to build on the significant existing governance and accountability infrastructure already in place – to put in place a series of new and improved mechanisms, to provide more robust assurance of compliance with legislative and other requirements, and to address any issues that might arise in a more timely and responsive way. As part of this overall review of governance, the HEA is now more rigorous in the information it seeks from HEIs in their annual governance returns – for example, in the area of procurement management.

54 HEA, *Report of Expert Group National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* (Dublin: HEA, 2016), <http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/HEA-National-Review-of-Gender-Equality-in-Irish-Higher-Education-Institutions.pdf>

55 HEA, *The Governance Framework for the Higher Education System* (Dublin: HEA, 2015). Available at: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/01/governance_framework-15.5.17.pdf

6.2.1 Rolling governance reviews

Following some instances of non-compliance in the area of procurement, the HEA put in place a rolling review of procurement practices in HEIs.⁵⁶ Among other things, the review recommended that HEIs should demonstrate awareness of the guidelines through comprehensive documented procurement policies and procedures. It also recommends that roles and responsibilities should be formally set out and made available as part of the procurement guidance documentation and that version control and approval matrices should be included on all policies and procedures as a matter of good document management. As noted earlier, the HEA monitors progress here by requiring HEIs to address procurement compliance in their annual governance statements.

In addition to the first rolling governance review on procurement, in 2017 the HEA commissioned IP Pragmatics to carry out a review of intellectual property management and conflict of interest in HEIs. The review resulted in a report published in February 2018⁵⁷ which makes ten recommendations, primarily in relation to conflicts of interest and spin-out companies. The process of implementing these recommendations has commenced, and enhanced engagement is under way between the HEA, Knowledge Transfer Ireland (KTI) and other stakeholders with the aim of strengthening IP policies and procedures.

6.3 Higher education system performance

As with the first framework, the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* mandates the HEA to use the new Framework to conduct a process of strategy and performance dialogue with individual institutions. This process will see the agreement of performance compacts between individual institutions and the HEA, with institutions leveraging their own individual missions, capacities, strengths and priorities to contribute to regional, national and system objectives as set out in the 2018-2020 framework. An additional 2018-2020 feature is that, where governance or compliance issues arise, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.

The HEA set out its approach to implementing the Framework in early 2018. This involves using a new cycle of strategy and performance dialogue up to 2021, which will measure and report on the system level response to the Government's key objectives as set out in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. In setting out the process, the HEA took account of institutional and sectoral feedback and implemented learning gained over the course of the previous Framework (2014-2016) and its associated strategic dialogue process.

6.3.1 Submission of compacts

All HEIs have developed and submitted individual mission-based performance compacts to the HEA in 2019. These reflect the overall ambitions of the *System Performance Framework* and the local/regional opportunities that apply to the individual HEIs. Each compact covers a three-year timespan commencing September 2018 and covering academic years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ IP Pragmatics, *Review of IP Management and Conflicts of Interest* (Dublin: IP Pragmatics, 2018). Available at: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2018/02/KTI_HEA-IP-management-and-Conflicts-of-Interest-Report-Feb-18.pdf

In developing mission-based performance compacts, institutions were required to set out a description of their proposed approach to deliver on each of the six key system objectives with reference both to the national targets set out in the Framework and to their own strategic plans, so ensuring that the strengths, individuality and diversity of institutional missions are reflected appropriately. Each HEI's performance compact details a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six framework headings. These priorities are 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).

The HEA will measure individual HEI performance against these agreed mission-based performance compacts and will use the process to verify the contribution that HEIs are making to meeting the national priorities and the key objectives of Government for higher education as set out in the Framework.

6.3.2 Review of compacts

Institutional strategic compacts will be assessed by a panel of experts, including international participants, to assess their coherence and how capable they are of being delivered.

The first round of this annual process of formal strategy and performance review will commence from September 2019. The HEA expects to hold review meetings with institutions in early 2020.

The process for engagement and performance assessment will be broadly similar to that employed in earlier cycles including (a) measuring individual HEI performance against an agreed compact and (b) providing a system level verification of the contribution by HEIs to meeting the national priorities and key objectives of Government for higher education.

The HEA will require annual self-evaluation reports from HEIs to include:

- An update on metrics/indicators
- A report on progress on strategic priorities and initiatives
- Impact assessment case studies.

Where an institution fails to make sufficient progress, or makes an inadequate contribution to meeting national objectives, the HEA may, based on material assessed and its underpinning metrics and indicators, withhold up to 5% of institutional funding.

The review process will also offer an annual opportunity for financial recognition for a number of good practice strategic initiatives. These initiatives will be identified by the review panel based on the impact assessment case studies provided by HEIs in response to meeting national objective areas.

An annual system performance report will be prepared by the HEA and will review the performance and progress of the Irish higher education system with reference to the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*.

System Objective 6: Governance, leadership and operational excellence

Examples from Mission-based Performance Compacts 2018-2021

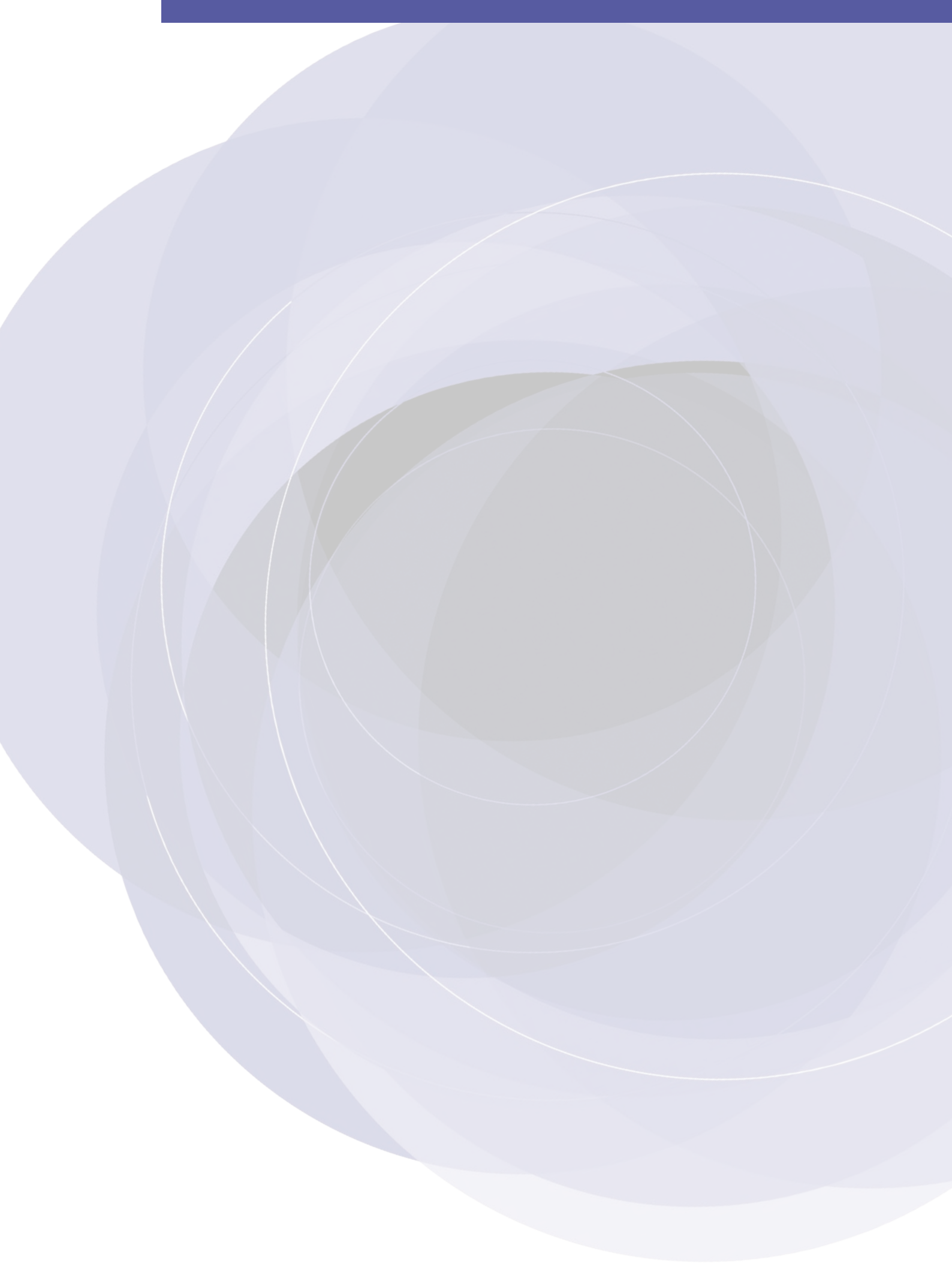
Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC) – gender equality

Both Institute of Technology Carlow's Governing Body and Academic Council consist of at least 40% women and at least 40% men, in line with HEA recommendations, and the broader Institute management team currently consists of 40.6% women and 59.4% men. The Institute's President is female, as is 33.3% of its senior management team. The Institute will continue to work towards achieving at least 40% women and 40% men on all its key decision-making bodies and is in the process of ensuring that this happens on a systematic basis. The Institute has also committed to ensuring that all interview panels consist of at least 40% women and at least 40% men and has rolled out unconscious bias, recruitment and selection training to all members of its management team. The Institute of Technology Carlow has also put new structures in place to ensure it is best placed to implement the 2018 Task force Action Plan and achieve an Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional award. A high level Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Committee, chaired by the President, has been established, along with a cross-institutional Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team. An Office of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has been established, and the Institute has appointed a Director to that office, along with the necessary administrative support, to further Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives in the Institute. The Institute has also developed and launched an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion fund, the first of its kind across the IoT sector. The Institute has recently completed a robust self-assessment exercise to identify key actions for inclusion into an Institute of Technology Carlow Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP – www.itcarlow.ie/resources/equality-diversity-inclusivity.htm) to be implemented across the Institute. This plan addresses the recommendations from the Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan 2018. The Institute has also been working towards an Athena SWAN award since early 2017 and submitted its application for an Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award in November 2018.

University College Cork (UCC) – governance

UCC's future plan with regard to governance, leadership and operational excellence is informed by the university's performance during the five years of the previous strategic plan 2013-17. During this period, UCC has demonstrated significant progress in improving governance, leadership and operational excellence:

- Implement an improved effective, transparent and accountable governance model and culture within the University Work with the sector and the HEA to implement the recommendations as set out in the Public Accounts Committee Report on the Examination of the Financial Statements for the Third Level Sector.
- Establish an action plan with allocation of responsibilities and timelines to deliver on all the recommendations by 2021. Specific actions to be delivered in 2018 include:
 - Ensuring all staff are fully aware of their obligations under Standards in Public Office and Ethics in Public Office legislation, and the requirement to declare any real or perceived conflict of interest as set out in recommendation no. R.28 of the above examination. A revised Conflict of Interest Framework will be developed.
 - Provide Full disclosure of Foundations, Trusts transactions and balances in the disclosure notes or as an appendix to the financial statements in line with recommendation R.53.
 - Ensure that all significant advance payments are approved up front by the Head of Finance as per Recommendation R.113.



Conclusion

Conclusion

Conclusion

This latest report into Ireland's higher education system performance, *Higher Education System Performance 2017-2018*, is the fourth in a series on the progress by, and challenges facing, the sector. The report underlines the sector's contribution to national, social and economic wellbeing.

The higher education sector continues to respond and expand to meet social, enterprise and demographic demands. Student numbers continue to grow; and despite ongoing resource constraints, the quality of the student experience appears to have been maintained, for now. For example, the first ISSE pilot national survey for postgraduate research students,⁵⁸ carried out in 2018, found that three quarters of postgraduate researchers who responded to the survey, evaluate their experience as 'good' or 'excellent'. However, the significant reduction in funding available per student since 2008 could have a negative impact on the quality of the student experience over time. While Ireland has seen a 5% increase in investment in higher education between 2016 and 2017, the European University Association's report on public funding⁵⁹ concludes that the 'trend remains fragile and insufficient to redress the sector's financial situation in view of the large-scale cuts implemented since 2008'.

In 2018, the Irish Universities Association (IUA), the representative body for Ireland's seven universities, commissioned Indecon Research Economists to conduct the first ever sectoral impact assessment of its member universities.⁶⁰ This independent report sets out how the seven IUA member universities contribute to the national economy and the social and cultural fabric of the country. The report found that the economic impact of Irish universities amounts to €8.89 billion annually to the Irish economy, including a €4.17 billion graduate earnings premium, €386 million in export earnings, €1.53 billion in R&D impact, and €2.8 billion in other direct and indirect impact. The Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), the representative body for Ireland's technological higher education sector (technological university and 11 institutes of technology), has highlighted the contribution of a unique but complementary aspect of our higher education system, such as in the areas of applied research and modernised apprenticeship provision.⁶¹ In combination, the Irish system therefore allows students to progress from Level 6 to Level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications, while closely linking student outcomes to regional and national needs. The system is becoming increasingly flexible, providing new and revised pathways for traditional and hard to reach participant groups. For example, institutions have committed to innovative approaches to lifelong learning in their performance-based compacts, summaries of which are provided in Part B of this report.

58 Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE), (Dublin: ISSE, 2018). Available at: <http://studentsurvey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ISSE-PGR-Report-2018final.pdf>

59 Enora Bennetot Pruvot, Thomas Estermann and Valentia Lisis for the European University Association (EUA), *Public Funding Observatory Report 2018*, p.11. Available at: https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/eua%20pfo%202018%20report_14%20march%202019_final.pdf

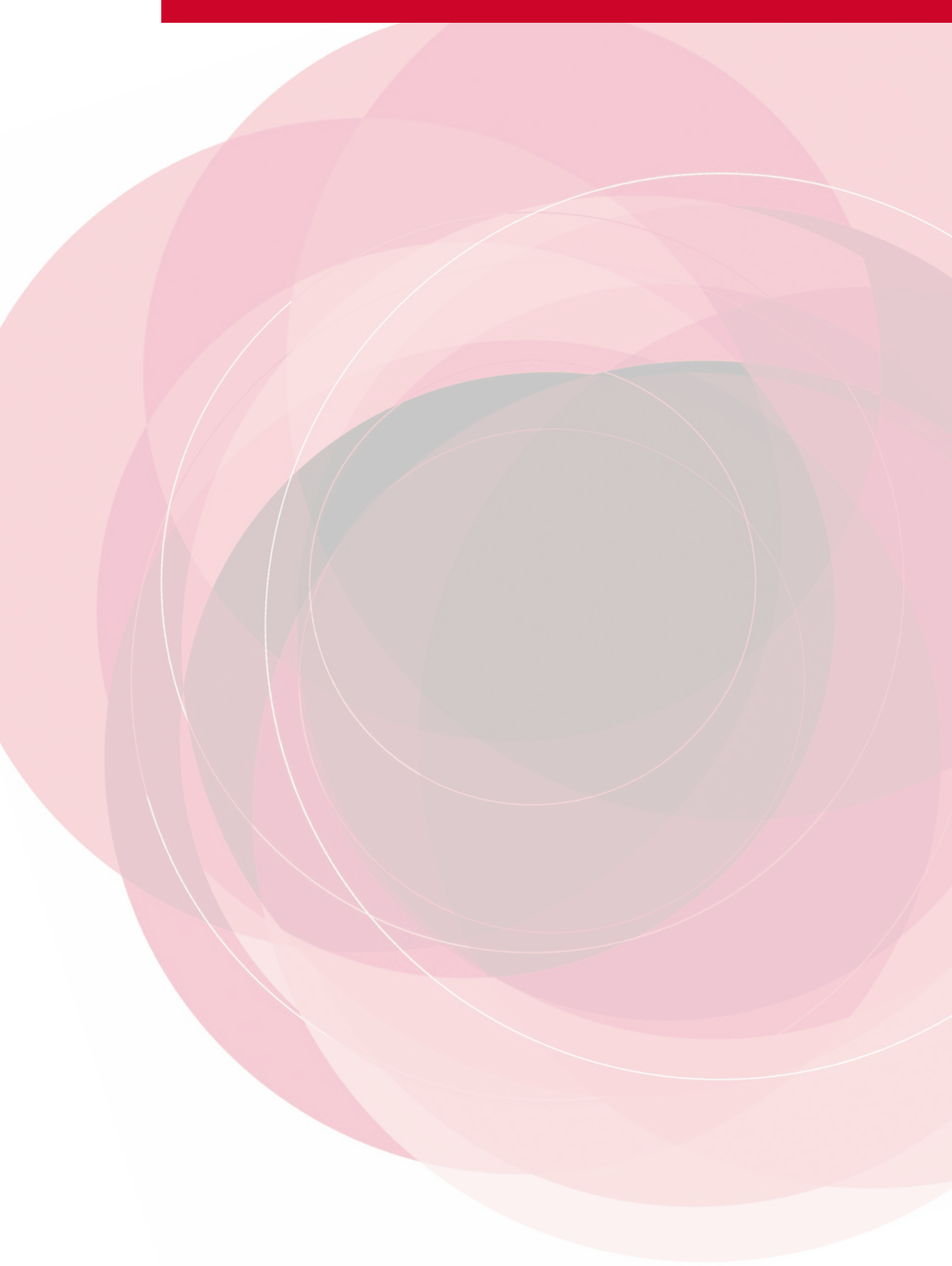
60 Indecon International Economic Consultants for the Irish Universities Association, *Indecon Independent Assessment of the Economic and Social Impact of Irish Universities*, (Dublin: IUA, 2019). Available at: https://saveourspark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Full_Indecon_Report_Independent_Assessment_of_the_Social_and_Economic_Impact_of_Irish_Universities_4-4-19.pdf

61 Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), *Submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Skills*, (Dublin: THEA, 2018). Available at: http://www.thea.ie/contentFiles/THEA_submission_on_uptake_of_Apprenticeships.pdf

The challenges identified in earlier reports remain. In responding to the *System Performance Framework 2018-2020*, which set out national objectives and priorities, institutions have outlined their proposed individualised responses in their mission-based performance compacts, as recently agreed with the HEA. Over the course of 2018, in negotiating these compacts, the HEA and HEIs discussed the balance of institutional autonomy and accountability. While HEIs are committed to the themes of *economic renewal; social and cultural development and equity; public sector reform; and the restoration of Ireland's national reputation* as set out in the framework, they remain constrained in the tools they have available to facilitate improved innovation and responsiveness. As already indicated, the funding environment remains challenging. While funding allocations have marginally increased in recent years to match immediate student number growth, an underlying and historic deficit remains unaddressed; and overall, Ireland lags behind our competitor countries in our state funding per higher education participant.

Balancing institutional sustainability and the need for HEIs to invest in a quality student and research environment with a growing external demand for a responsive and multi-engaged higher education sector from all facets of the economy and society remains a difficult task. Despite this, institutions at all levels, from front line staff to senior management and their governance teams, remain committed to meeting student and national needs through careful deployment of the available resources.

For its part, the HEA will use the *System Performance Framework* and related institutional commitments to hold institutions to account, to recognise positive contributions and to report on progress over the 2018-2020 period.



Part B: Summaries Of Mission-Based Performance Compacts For 2018-2021

This part of the report summarizes the mission-based performance compacts for 2018-2021 of the higher education institutions, as submitted to the HEA in 2019.

The summaries are ordered by System Objective, and then in alphabetical order by institution.

1. Knowledge, skills and employability

System Objective 1

Providing a strong talent pipeline combining **knowledge, skills and 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 for knowledge, skills and employability

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 1 (knowledge, skills and employability) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- 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%.
- 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).
- Increase tertiary attainment among 30-34 years olds to 60% by 2020 (52.9% 2016).
- 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).
- Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines in all HEIs by 2020 (baseline to be established and tracked).
- Increase number of available Springboard places by 30% by 2021 in both universities and institutes of technology.
- Double target to 9,000 annual new apprenticeship registrations by 2020 (over 4,500 in 2017) with 78 separate apprenticeships in place.
- 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).
- Achievement of the targets in the new ICT Action Plan.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for knowledge, skills and employability, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Build on Athlone Institute of Technology's well-established relationship with industry, to maintain, develop and evolve contemporary and relevant educational, training, and research provision.
- Transition companies that may not have a formal in-house R&D capacity to innovation activity through collaboration, and to increase the competitive advantage of companies through knowledge transfer.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Building on the work of MEND (SME Portal) and the Regional Skills Forum to develop an institutional database that links regional and national skills needs to better inform systematic programme development at all levels.
2. Include a work placement or 'live project' as an element of all Level 8 awards.
3. Continue to develop agile programme architecture and associated QA processes to respond to bespoke industry needs from Level 6 to Level 10.
4. Develop an online distance learning strategy to support a broader student demographic and to deliver education and training needs that are flexible and accessible.
5. Strengthen the link between undergraduate and postgraduate activities, including linked capstone activities, work placements, shared learning spaces and dissemination activities.
6. Develop an online distance learning unit to support part-time, lifelong learning, flexible and international access.
7. Offer international language as either an integrated element of programmes or as additional credits across all faculties.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Provide enhanced educational opportunities, increased economic capital and positive societal impact for Cork and the region.
- Advance the creation of the Munster Technological University, in partnership with IT Tralee.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Boost graduate retention in the region through the establishment of the CIT STEM Academy and strong participation in the national initiatives such as Springboard+.
2. A working group has been set up to develop a template for employability statements for disciplines in order to ease and streamline completion of employability statements at programme level.
3. Support Ireland's Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS3) through CIT's participation as founding members of the Agri-Tech Innovation Hub supported by the Regional Development Fund.
4. Develop and promote flexible online distance education offerings aligned to regional and national workplace needs, with a focus on artificial intelligence.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To ensure that our graduates are equipped with the appropriate skills, across a range of dimensions, to flourish in the rapidly evolving workplace.
- To increase the number of students entering undergraduate and postgraduate teacher education programmes, in line with national strategies for growth in teacher-supply.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. To initiate a curriculum review, through modification of annual programme review process to include student learning experience, and technological awareness.
2. To increase the number of students engaging with reflective portfolios by 40% from 2017 baseline by 2019/20.
3. Design and roll-out of optional modules in all of the following areas: 1) design, 2) ethics/philosophy, 3) sustainability, 4) creativity by 2020/21.
4. DCU will complete publication of an employability statement at disciplinary level on 100% of undergraduate programmes by 2020/21.
5. In line with PATH I commitments, DCU will increase places available on the Professional Masters in Education (PME) programme by 10%, allocating additional places to under-represented groups by 2018/19.
6. To increase places available on postgraduate Masters in Education for post-primary education by a % to be agreed with Task Force on Teacher Supply.
7. To progress accreditation by the Teaching Council of a revised BEd for post-primary for introduction in 2021/2022.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- 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.
- Extend practice/work-based/apprenticeship education across all undergraduate levels.

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Establish a dedicated Task Force for Retention to support colleagues' efforts in tackling non-progression in difficult areas.
2. Make DIT's successful '1st year Framework for Success' more pervasive, and support colleagues in rolling out the elements of the framework appropriate to their students and programmes. 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.
3. A full review of 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.
4. It is intended that work-placement initiatives will be increased from its current level by 5% for each year of the plan, and this will be constantly monitored.
5. DIT will continue to support the development of apprenticeship over the period of the compact through the delivery of its unique 'Access to Apprenticeship' programme, with the aim to prepare young people from Dublin's inner-city communities to access apprenticeship positions.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- Strategically position DKIT within the national higher education landscape as the cross-border Higher Education Institute serving the North-Leinster South-Ulster region with agility, responsiveness and innovation.
- Increase student numbers with a particular focus on part-time and industry focused provision in lifelong learning and postgraduate provision. Place the learner at the centre of strategy maintaining access and participation pathways, while continuing to deliver on its existing provision across all disciplines including growing STEM provision, particularly in the School of Engineering.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increased overall student numbers from circa 5,480 (4,922 WTEs) students in 2017/2018 to 6,463 (5,589 WTEs) students by 2020/2021, having regard to the access, transfer and participation agenda.
2. Enhanced campus development.
3. Deepening and enhanced regional engagement to encompass all of its catchment area (North and South).
4. Increased research and innovation activities.
5. Positioning DKIT to effectively compete in the higher education landscape.
6. Continued strategic focus on the Northern Ireland market.
7. Focus on part-time/flexible provision.
8. Fundamental analysis and enhancement of existing undergraduate provision including the academic programmes structure having regard to Northern Ireland.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has two stated priorities:

- GMIT is and will continue to be proactive in developing the employability of all our graduates. Both the curriculum and teaching, learning and assessment strategies are designed with this as a core aim.
- The motivations for flexible/blended delivery/e-learning include flexibility of learning provision; enhanced efficiency of classroom time; more and better learning opportunities for distance learning and resident students; a means of inter-institutional collaboration regionally, within the country and with other international higher education institutions.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Provide an opportunity for every student to engage in work-based learning (WBL) on at least one occasion over a four-year programme.
2. Develop further HE apprenticeship programmes in conjunction with industry partners.
3. Enhance the 'Transition Out' module through the development of an Employability Toolkit covering a range of activities to enhance students' competency for employment.
4. Engage with industry to develop and deliver relevant labour market activation programmes;
5. Develop a strategy for enhancing CPD and lifelong learning programme provision.
6. Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines.

7. Enhance staff capacity to develop and deliver online/blended programmes including a suite of online resources to support staff.
8. Enhance support available to staff developing and delivering online/blended programmes.
9. Development of policies and guidelines related to the quality assurance of online/blended programmes.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- To attract, retain and grow student numbers through our unique suite of courses within the HEI sector, to include flexible and part-time learning, regionally and nationally to meet the skills needs of the creative and cultural industries (CCI) sector, as well as the public and community sectors.
- To transfer and embed knowledge, skills and employability in IADT students and graduates for leadership roles regionally and nationally, that respond to Europe's skills needs in the CCI sector as well as the public and community sectors.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. IADT will grow student numbers in the age range 25-65 to 10% from a base line of 6.7% for the academic years 2018/2019 to 2019/2020. This amounts to 1.65% growth per academic year in student numbers from this age cohort.
2. IADT will grow student numbers in the age range 25-65 to 15% from a base line of 10% for academic years 2020/2021 to 2024/2025.
3. IADT will increase the number of students studying on a flexible basis by 25% by 2021.
4. Every programme to have a minimum of one module delivered exclusively online to support flexible and distance learning for students by end 2021.
5. Develop a suite of new professional certificates (SPA's) and postgraduate programmes by 2021 to meet identified industry needs.
6. Intake in animation, film, applied psychology and creative music production to be increased by 15% per annum to meet demands of industry.
7. Expansion of portfolio courses at IADT to meet progression demand.
8. Increase the numbers studying in our two city centre locations by 2021.
9. Review and grow sustainable part-time and continuing professional development provision with a focus on industry provision.
10. Explore opportunities for joint programme development and delivery with other education providers and private training companies, both nationally and internationally;
11. Review and explore opportunities to develop a higher apprenticeship programme for the creative industries sector.
12. Review of all programmes for entrepreneurship and employability skills content.
13. Embed digital literacy across all programmes.
14. Offer increased opportunities for cross-institute modules in key employability skills development.
15. Establish an integrated curriculum and extra curricula programme of personal and professional education for all stages.

16. 100% of undergraduate programmes to have an embedded work placement or work-based project by end 2021.
17. Create opportunities for developing employability outside the curriculum through voluntary and community work and placements.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Create a rich learning environment through an innovative, flexible and multi-disciplinary curriculum model.
- Expand our innovative use of technology to further enhance the teaching and learning environment, and continue to develop a learner-centred approach to academic quality enhancement.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. At least 30% of students registered on a programme that leads to an award, of at least honours bachelor degree level (NFQ Level 8), will fall within one or more of the following classes: (a) students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis; (b) students who are registered on a programme that has been designed with the involvement of business, enterprise, the professions and other related stakeholders.
2. TU Dublin graduate attributes will be agreed and mechanisms implemented to ensure programme alignment with these attributes, while accommodating some personalisation of learning, including work experience options.
3. A 25% increase in full-time students with flexible pathway options, including alternative progression routes, work placement options, blended programme options, online programmes, multi-disciplinary options and modules with significant support offered by learning technologies.
4. Develop new models of apprenticeship and skills training, including pathways from further education to higher education.
5. Leverage digital technology to support teaching, learning and assessment in a digital environment.
6. Create an inclusive and welcoming environment for all learners assisted by developing and adopting the principles of universal design in teaching and learning.
7. Further develop peer-mentoring and first year experience initiatives.
8. Integrate learner analytics, National Student Survey output and quality assurance reviews into academic quality assurance systems for teaching and learning.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- Institute of Technology Carlow will maintain its position as market leader of lifelong learning WTE student numbers to 2020 through our continued effective response to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors.
- Institute of Technology Carlow will optimise the learner experience and prioritise the development of graduate attributes that meet the needs of learners, social innovation, public and private enterprise, nationally and globally. We will continuously improve the learning experience so that all learners acquire skills and develop as independent learners.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Institute of Technology Carlow will develop greater opportunities for part-time, flexible and blended learning, further enhancing our national leadership in the provision of lifelong learning.
2. We will also ensure that our programmes are accessible and flexible, and that they make the best use of contemporary teaching methods. The Centre for Teaching & Learning and the Faculty for Lifelong Learning, in partnership with our other faculties, have, through their programmatic reviews implemented new approaches to teaching and programme design.
3. At the same time, the Library has greatly expanded access to online information resources. We will also be strategic in rising to the challenges associated with delivering high-quality education via flexible and online delivery, including Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and other emerging forms of technology-enhanced learning.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Improve student experience with the intention of increase participation and retention in all categories/levels.
- Increase support for new business start-ups and for growth of existing businesses.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Work placements/professional practice and transferrable competencies to be introduced into (Level 8) programmes.
2. Implement the student retention plan to improve retention.
3. Through marketing and promotion, grow to an overall enrolments of new apprenticeship (recorded as numbers per programme).
4. Number of companies being supported (both internally and externally located).
5. Through marketing and promotion, grow to an overall enrolments of both IT Sligo and collaborative Springboard (recorded as places, enrolments and programmes).
6. Organise sector-specific innovation events in collaboration with industry.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Enhance and develop ITTD's portfolio of programmes and their composition in line with designation as a technological university.
- Engage with industry, enterprise, community and professional bodies in programme design and delivery to ensure that programmes are aligned effectively to labour market and society needs.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Continue to support lifelong learning and increase part-time student numbers by 2% annually over the next three years through continuous innovation in our programme portfolio.
2. Support access and participation through continued provision of programmes at Level 6 and Level 7, maintaining numbers at or above current levels.
3. Increase the number of students registered on new apprenticeship programmes, Springboard and ICT Skills programmes.
4. Increase the number of blended/distance/in-company programmes to advance the region and national objectives in relation to lifelong learning.
5. Increase the number of students registered on programmes at level at Level 9 (taught) and Level 9 and 10 (research).
6. Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines by 2020.
7. Increase the number of students undertaking structured work placements/internships.
8. Increase the number of new interdisciplinary programmes developed.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has two stated priorities:

- Sustainability and growth – ensure a strong vibrant and innovative organisation which will deliver on its mission and goals for all of its stakeholders on a collaborative basis through sound financial planning which is predicted on targets identified through comprehensive market analysis.
- Teaching, learning and graduate readiness – enable our students to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of society via the provision of a student-centred educational environment which is underpinned by excellence in teaching and learning. Our graduates will be distinctive by virtue of their educational experience and will possess essential skills and attributes relevant to both the workplace and civic society.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Growth of student numbers by the development of a demand-led programme portfolio for delivery across multiple platforms. Attracting students through a wider range of pathways; traditional school leavers; mature students; access students; students with disabilities; and international students.
2. Enhancing the standard of teaching and learning through the implementation of the TLA&E Strategy 2017-2021 and delivering upon the goals contained within.
3. Leveraging work placement to facilitate graduate 'work readiness' and to inform market-led programmes.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Maintain and grow the numbers engaged in lifelong learning and the population of new entrants accessing their studies via flexible means.
- Develop and implement a tailored plan to improve the employability of graduates.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Determine baseline data for education attainment in this North West region and in terms of the LYIT student population across the relevant age cohorts.
2. Examine opportunities for programme development in relation to the new apprenticeships in conjunction with our further education partners.
3. Design programmes specifically for part-time students and utilise the opportunities available via minor, special purpose, and supplemental awards to meet the needs of industry.
4. Detail a plan focused on maintaining and increasing the numbers from the North West region engaged in lifelong learning and new entrants undertaking their studies through flexible approaches utilising the opportunities available via Springboard.
5. Opportunities for realistic simulation of employment challenges and work-based projects will be encouraged.
6. Opinions of employers will be canvassed regarding employability skills and available capacity among employers for enhanced levels of work placement will be assessed.
7. A piece of work will be conducted to align Institute aims for students to achieve advanced digital literacy skills and the targets in the ICT Action Plan.
8. The activity above will be reflected in a suite of employability skills statements specific to each discipline and informed by best practice.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Enhancement of LIT's flexible model of education to achieve new online and blended programmes which increase student enrolments, support continuous professional development (CPD) and enable lifelong learning.
- Expansion of work-based learning and work placement opportunities across all academic programmes including apprenticeships.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Development of a Flexible Learning Programme Portfolio Plan for each academic department.
2. Development and roll-out of Level 9 Postgraduate Certificate in Online & Blended Learning.
3. To increase the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning as well as increasing the numbers of higher education entrants studying on a flexible basis.
4. LIT's newly established Work Based Learning Area aims to support all students to identify their career objectives and achieve their full personal and professional potential.
5. Work in partnership with academic and other Institute departments to support students in the attainment of real-life work experiences to enhance employability.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- To advance the national STEM/STEAM agenda by leading authentic pedagogical interventions for early years, primary and post-primary children.
- To contribute to the national objective of addressing the current teacher supply challenge at post-primary level.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Create a new Department of STEM Education within the Faculty of Education that serves to drive STEM/STEAM programme development and research activities including delivery of a new and highly innovative Level 9 professional development programme in STEM practice.
2. Develop a new STEAM external engagement initiative – CRAFT (Creative Arts/Future Technologies) – which will deliver new science education strategies using next generation technologies (including digital coding, robotics, IoT, AR and AI).
3. Help to augment the profile of STEM and STEAM on the primary and post-primary curricula by promoting and delivering National Science Week initiatives in Limerick and Tipperary.
4. Introducing three new four-year initial teacher education concurrent programmes at Level 8 (240 credits), specifically targeting STEM subjects.
5. Develop, and introduce on a phased basis, a total (post 2021) of 50 new places per annum, for post-primary ITE.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- We will further develop the unique Maynooth undergraduate curriculum, offering students new fields of study and subject combinations, greater choice of electives, additional opportunities to develop critical and analytic skills, and an enhanced range of co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences, all with the objective of providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills and employability, and responding effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors.
- We will enhance the attractiveness, sustainability and flexibility of our taught master's portfolio, enabling an increase in taught master's enrolments from 1,000 to 1,400, with a balance of full-time and part-time provision.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will continue to develop the undergraduate curriculum, with an emphasis on:
 - a. fully embedding and developing our new programme offerings
 - b. increasing opportunities for experiential learning
 - c. the further development of analytic, critical thinking and research skills from first year to final year
 - d. interdisciplinary learning modules and pathways
 - e. language learning
 - f. increasing opportunities for work placements for a greater number of students enhanced flexibility of provision

2. We will review and optimise the structure of the BSc degree, and, informed by our research strengths, will increase enrolments and the range of subject offerings, better to address the needs of students and skills requirements of society.
3. We will provide students with an enhanced range of co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences, affording them broader opportunities to develop their skills and competencies for work, life and engaged citizenship; this will include work, service learning and other experiential learning placements for a greater number of students across a wide range of courses.
4. We will establish a Master's Task Force (MTF) to oversee a review and restructuring of the taught master's portfolio, taking a faculty- and university-wide view, and sponsoring a greater level of interdepartmental collaboration to optimise the contribution of each department and each faculty member to the overall programme portfolio.
5. We will ensure that our master's programmes prepare graduates for challenging and varied careers, both in the overall design of our programmes and by the inclusion of elements focused on employability.
6. We will increase part-time and flexible provision to meet the need to reskill and upskill through lifelong learning, including through Springboard provision.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has two stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 1a: As part of our commitment to the value of an education in Art and Design, NCAD will develop flexible pathways for students in Fine Art and Design at undergraduate level. This initiative will enable NCAD to contribute to the HEA's high-level target of increasing the numbers of HE entrants studying on a flexible basis (target 4.1.2), but it will also contribute to targets such as increasing the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning (4.1.1), increasing the tertiary attainment of 30-34 year olds (4.1.3), as well as working towards contributing to sustaining the expansion from under-represented groups within HE (4.4.4).
- Strategic Initiative 1b: Developing Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus, and making it available to all Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture students over the lifetime of the compact will mean that all undergraduate students in the College will be provided with the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their undergraduate programme.

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Offering a studio-based education on a flexible basis and alongside full-time pathways poses challenges in terms of creating a meaningful learning experience for students.
2. Having established and addressed challenges to the viability of offering a flexible pathway to a BA Fine Art, a significant level of planning will be required to enable roll-out from September 2021.
3. The process of considering a range of further possibilities for developing flexible pathways in Design will commence, exploring questions of demand and industry appetite.
4. The process of considering the possibility of developing an 'access' initiative in partnership with local communities will commence.

5. Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus availability across Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture will ensure that:
 - a. At undergraduate level, 60% of students will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their programme
 - b. At postgraduate level:
 - 50% of postgraduate programmes will offer work-based opportunities as part of the curriculum (baseline is 30%)
 - further 20% of programmes will be preparing to encompass work-based opportunities as part of the curriculum from September 2021.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Develop and implement an employability strategy to ensure our students are academically well-developed and prepared for life, work and citizenship.
- Develop greater opportunities for part-time, flexible and blended learning, further enhancing our leadership in the provision of online learning and growing our cohort of part-time and flexible learners to 20% of the student body (from 15% in 2014/15 and 18% in 2016).

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. 70% of undergraduate students will have the opportunity to undertake a work-based learning experience by the end of AY 2020/21 through several new initiatives: Employability Award; Campus Jobs project.
2. A suite of discipline-linked graduate attributes will be defined and embedded within all undergraduate programmes, identifying attributes that students will develop through their programmes.
3. Development of new work-based learning programmes in niche areas which provide an alternative progression pathway for adult learners using a combination of blended learning and apprenticeship style education.
4. Development of NUI Galway's Continuing Professional Development Strategy and portfolio of modules to include standalone CPD modules, special purpose awards and professional development awards addressing the training needs of workers regionally and nationally.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- Provide lifelong learning opportunities in the North West Region and beyond through flexible and innovative modes of delivery.
- Continue to identify new areas for development that meet the needs of public, social and private enterprise locally, regionally and nationally.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Establish baseline of the number of students aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning at STAC by end of 2019.
2. Review mature entry routes and aim to increase the number of mature entrants to undergraduate/postgraduate programmes by 2% in 2019.

3. Collaborate with NUIG in rolling out the Employability Awards to 300 students by 2020/21 across both campuses.
4. Deliver a Professional Diploma in Home Economics to out-of-field teachers through blended and flexible modes of learning in AY 2018/19.
5. Work in association with NUIG to:
 - a. Develop a personal portfolio tool for students to record their achievements leading to the award of digital badges by 2019/20.
 - b. Meet the professional needs of employees through the delivery of innovative programmes of learning and active engagement with communities.
 - c. Expand the suite of standalone modules (including CPD modules and professional development awards) to meet the needs of workers, regionally and nationally.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has one main stated priority:

- Deliver the first phase of the E3 Institute in Engineering, the Environment and Emerging Technologies.

Trinity College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increasing the percentage of under-represented groups.
2. Increase flexible and online delivery.
3. Provide more opportunities for internships and student mobility.
4. Develop mutually beneficial relationships with employers.
5. Delivery of new teaching facilities and an innovative interactive learning space at the new Learning Foundry.
6. The Learning Foundry will be a launchpad for a new kind of education experience, with a focus on collaborative and project work. It will have capacity for 1,800 additional places for students of STEM, which constitutes an increase of 50% STEM places over ten years.

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has a key priority:

- Strengthen graduate skills by engaging collaboratively with employers through the Regional Skills Forum, and introducing degree structures that embed greater opportunities for extended work placements.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Create credit-bearing opportunities for all students to access a breadth of learning and develop graduate attributes.
2. Ensure flexibility in the delivery of UCC's programmes, strengthen the provision of online programmes and enhance access to lifelong learning and greater CPD opportunities.
3. Continue our commitment to widening participation and enhancing access for all students, fostering an inclusive environment that mainstreams diversity and equality.

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.
6. Deliver deeper active learning experiences by embedding meaningful student-involved research in all undergraduate programmes and integrating practical skills development through a combination of placements, university-wide modules and an improved laboratory experience for STEM students.
7. Respond to the crisis in teacher-supply by collaborating closely with the Department of Education & Skills in setting out a plan of action that will enable UCC to increase student intake and the range of subjects offered.
8. Develop a UCC Student Success Strategy that will deliver an outstanding, student-centred education with a research-based curriculum at its core.
9. Create a central, accessible, modern space for staff and students that promotes connection and collaboration in the new Student Hub building.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has three stated priorities:

- All students will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their course by 2025 (High-level Target 4) is aligned to the UCD Education Strategy Action 2.1.
- UCD will continue to recognise the importance of the employability of our students and adopt as appropriate to each discipline employability statements in line with High-level Target 5 Employability Statements for all disciplines in all HEIs by 2020.
- Expand our provision of Initial Teacher Education to include a primary teaching PME and the development of an Undergraduate 4+1 Education pathway for primary and secondary school teachers.

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increase the opportunities for students to acquire and develop skills to enhance their competitiveness in the world of work through internships, placements, volunteering, membership of student societies, engagement with UCD Innovation.
2. Expand our recognition of co-curricular activity through our co-curricular award scheme.
3. The UCD Career Development and Employability Strategy 2015-2025 Action 1.6 states: Review UCD Academic Regulations to facilitate the inclusion of employability statements within programmes as appropriate.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Addressing the needs of students and employers to sustain and grow employability. Employability, as a holistic approach, is a key priority of UL. UL has developed a range of programmes, in particular the Co-operative programme (Co-op) for undergraduates which has resulted in a high employability of its graduates.
- Building on its strengths in modern foreign languages and in response to Languages Connect. UL recognises the critical role of language training, in particular for Ireland to engage with the EU and globally, for our graduates to achieve their full potential and for UL to develop

its international programmes. Consequently, UL has developed its Languages Strategy, in response to, and closely aligned to the National Strategy, 'Languages Connect', through the long-established University of Limerick Language Centre.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. To provide a seamless and flexible set of programmes, UL is combining its graduate school and CPE into a single body under the Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies allowing tailoring of its education and training to the needs of postgraduate students be they full- or part-time.
2. UL is liaising with key employers to develop Executive Education and other CPD offerings that contribute to the up- and reskilling of their workforce in line with the National Skills Strategy targets.
3. UL also works with specific sectors through partnerships, such as Limerick for IT and Limerick for Engineering. The provision of Co-op, already available for all undergraduate students will be expanded to include postgraduate programmes.
4. UL will grow its flexible learning offer (part-time, blended, distance, low residency and fully online, work-based learning offers and cumulative degrees) to support the needs of a diversity of learners and especially mature learners.
5. UL will expand the portfolio of languages on offer, in particular to include Mandarin and will support local schools as they develop their Leaving Certificate courses in addition to non-curricular community-based heritage languages through the President's Volunteer Award scheme.
6. The strategy will be extended to support the development of programmes of study that combine a discipline and a second language (Sciences, Health, joint BA degree with Mary Immaculate College (MIC)). In delivering on this, UL is responding to national imperative to grow teacher provision, including in modern foreign languages, to address current shortages.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- o To increase the number of programmes available in flexible (non-full-time) mode to recruit an additional 1,500 flexible learners over three years.
- o To issue employability statements on all programmes by 2020.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Further development of the Institute's online and digitally-enhanced teaching capability, in support of the further development of the Institute's online programme portfolio. This will account for significant numbers of new learners.
2. To further expand its activities in CPD by focusing on a particular cohort – staff within the second-level and further education sectors – for new programme development.
3. To reorient its programme portfolio to make it more available to the employed people who may not be available to take modules in day-time.
4. The development of a student charter that will specify the expectations students may have of the organisation regarding career development and employability. As an expression of this commitment in the charter, the Institute will issue employability statements to completing students.

2. National and international engagement

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 for national and international engagement

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 2 (national and international engagement) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- Increase the output value of internationalisation to €1.15bn per annum by 2020 (International Education Strategy baseline €819m in 2014/15).
- International students to represent 15% of full-time students by 2020. (In 2016/17, 11.6% of all full-time students in HEA-funded higher education institutions were international students).
- Progress towards Bologna target of at least 20% of those who graduate in 2020 to undertake a study or training period abroad.
- Number of Innovation Vouchers project agreements with industry to increase by 12% by 2020 (487 in 2016).
- Increase number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) by 20% by 2020 (163 in 2017).
- Increase number of spin-outs established during the year by 40% by 2020 (Innovation 2020 target, 29 in 2014).
- 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%).
- 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.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for national and international engagement, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Design and develop programmes to enhance internationalisation among students, researchers and staff, creating greater awareness of mobility initiatives to priority international markets, European partner institutes and enterprises thereby increasing international student numbers on undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes; offering modules online to international partner institutes and supporting the expansion of joint programmes. In addition, outward mobility opportunities will support diversified career frameworks that create rich opportunities for mobility of excellent researchers and staff.
- Formally embed research excellence with teaching and learning activities to support staff development, student progression, and knowledge creation.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increased provision of a broad range of knowledge intensive services with a focus on start-ups and SMEs, increasing Innovation Voucher projects with industry.
2. Increased technology transfer to enterprise, increasing licence option assignments.
3. Expand delivery of cultural awareness training to staff in all faculties and offer modules to all students interested in study/placement abroad to further increase outward mobility of both students and staff.
4. Offer international language as either an integrated element of programmes or additional credits across all faculties.
5. Expand transnational education offering at existing and new partner universities in priority markets.
6. Offer international students registered at international partner universities the opportunity to complete a module of Athlone Institute of Technology approved programme online with the goal of transferring to Athlone Institute of Technology to complete the final year of study or postgraduate studies.
7. Continue to develop student success supports for international students.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Continue to be a leader regionally and nationally in respect of its high performing enterprise engagement and knowledge transfer/exchange activity.
- Continue to develop high-value internationalisation activities aimed at making CIT an international HEI with an internationalised student body.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Continue to develop, enhance and promote the full range of engagement activities which form a strong bridge to enterprise and underpin the success of both enterprises and the institute.
2. Identify and eliminate barriers to effective technology transfer activity.
3. Develop the supports and resources needed to grow innovation and entrepreneurship activities – e.g. WREN project: Women's Rural Entrepreneurship Network project, aiming to promote skills among women in Cork and Limerick rural areas.
4. Expand and increase opportunities for student participation in work placement, study opportunities abroad and to gain an international experience.
5. Expand and enhance CIT's strategic international partnerships.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To advance DCU's international engagement across four key pillars: Mobility, Partnership, Student Recruitment and Student Experience.
- To implement an Enterprise Engagement Plan that will lead to a step-change in the scale and depth of our interactions with enterprise partners.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Open a Global Hub within the new DCU Student Centre on the DCU Glasnevin campus to celebrate global diversity.
2. Development of a DCU Language Plan, to support the delivery of language education within the formal and co-curriculum by 2019/20.
3. To increase by 40% the number of international study abroad and short programme students (based on 2016/17 baseline) by 2020/21.
4. Appointment of new Erasmus+ Coordinator to coordinate institutional engagement with Erasmus+ initiatives.
5. To introduce a strategic coordination board for DCU Alpha, DCU Invent and DCU Ryan Academy to complement the financial and governance oversight by DCU Invent board and DCU Commercial board.
6. To open Talent Garden (TAG) on DCU Alpha campus, encompassing TAG Innovation School and DCU Business School 'digital skills' collaboration.
7. To appoint an Enterprise Engagement Officer to coordinate and drive university-enterprise initiatives across DCU.
8. Increase by 20% the number of DCU engagements with DCU Alpha companies by 2021.
9. Expansion of DCU's Matchmaker (via DCU Invent) and partner-specific Hackathon events (via DCU Ryan Academy for Entrepreneurs) to increase the scale of the engagement with enterprise partners.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

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

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Development of the curriculum to support internationalisation.
2. Seek opportunities to extend DIT's reach internationally and continue to develop and grow targeted international partnerships that align with DIT's education and research initiatives.
3. Promote the recruitment of international students (all categories) and international staff to DIT/TU Dublin.
4. With the introduction of a 'languages for all' approach, it is intended that DIT will be able to offer optional language modules to all students on all programmes.
5. To stimulate economic development in the Dublin region by commercialising research from across DIT and its collaborating institutions under the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium (DRIC).
6. Deliver a minimum of 21 commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) over the lifetime of the compact.
7. 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.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- To increase the level of responsiveness to industry with particular reference to lifelong learning and course provision. Continue to ensure learners are work-ready through enhanced engagement with employers.
- To widen learner experience and global awareness by sustained efforts in international markets.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Corporate Employer Partnership Programme will offer an organised framework for DKIT and industry/community to develop mutually beneficial relationships with high profile organisations within the region.
2. By providing an informal yet structured approach and by carefully managing the interaction rather than relying on an ad hoc process, opportunities will be optimised to facilitate mutually beneficial interactions in all areas of activity – including, inter alia, new programme development, student placements, targeted CPD programmes, professional postgraduate programmes, research, sponsorship, recruitment, staff placement, student/staff mentoring and advisory boards. Establishing this coordinated and managed programme will provide for a sustainable approach to partnership which has the capacity to evolve and grow in a planned manner.
3. In the School of Business and Humanities, industry involvement for the Honours Bachelor in Accounting and Finance Degree has resulted in an Annual Accounting Lecture which is attended by hundreds of local industry participants and leads to the awarding of accounting firm sponsored prizes for students of the programme.
4. Enhancement of the Institute's internationalisation agenda is multifaceted, encompassing:
 - a. Recruitment of international students
 - b. Promotion of international European mobility for students and staff through the Erasmus+ programme
 - c. Building Global Awareness, international Diversity and Integration on campus for all stakeholders.
5. It is also planned to grow the Institute's scope of taught- and research-based master's-level programmes in line with international demand.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has one stated priority:

- GMIT made a strategic decision in early 2016 to evaluate the role of International engagement across the Institute. This review considered the resources available to support and develop a sustainable, long term vision for International Engagement while recognising past experiences, potential opportunities and future ambitions.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Develop and implement an Internationalisation plan to support the Institute's strategic plan.
2. Increase study abroad and training mobility opportunities for students, staff and researchers focusing on the potential fallout of Brexit and development of new partnerships.
3. Connecting our schools and faculty with European and global partners to enhance employment opportunities.
4. Internationalise the curricula.

5. Establish long-term global partnerships as part of the overall Institute Strategic Plan – for example, with partners in the US and Malaysia.
6. Develop a Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) International Strategy.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- Increase IADT's international profile to include increases in international student numbers, joint projects and partnerships.
- Increase the output value of internationalisation per annum by 2020.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Development and implementation of a Strategic Partnership Development Plan with key identified partners in key identified territories.
2. Explore opportunities for joint programme development and delivery with other education partners and private learning companies, both national and international.
3. Development and implementation of a Student Recruitment Business Plan to increase student numbers in target territories.
4. Creation of an International Office to assist in the widening of international activities.
5. Increase representation of students from the island of Ireland, EU and international.
6. Identify a priority list of international high-ranking institutional partners/collaborators on priority programmes, mobility and RDIE opportunities in priority regions.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Engage visibly and effectively with our key stakeholders, both nationally and internationally, including promotion of culture of collaboration with our communities.
- Enhance the internationalisation of the Institute.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Ensure procedures are in place for the development of programmes that respond to the needs of the Institute's stakeholders, showing evidence of engagement with industry in programme design and delivery.
2. Undertake a socioeconomic impact study of a potential Technological University in the Greater Dublin Region, while maintaining the regional remit of the Institute.
3. Processes and mechanisms are developed to capture industry and community feedback, while engaging with civic, social and community partners and alumni in the region and beyond.
4. Participation in the Carnegie community engagement first-time classification framework.
5. Alignment of professional development with consideration to policies of the National Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
6. Maintain current number of registered international students.
7. Increase number of outgoing students by 10% year-on-year.

8. Collaborate with institutions that provide higher education outside the State, including joint research projects.
9. Develop a strategy for incorporation of internationalisation into all academic programmes.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- Institute of Technology Carlow will develop and implement an effective internationalisation strategy informed by *Irish Educated Globally Connected, an International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016-2020*. This strategy will enhance institutional collaboration, student recruitment and international mobility activities focusing on strategically identified key markets.
- Institute of Technology Carlow will increase the output of economically relevant knowledge, know-how and patents through strengthening institutional outputs delivered through our technology transfer and enterprise support activities and among researchers.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We work closely with State agencies and other stakeholders to try to ensure the quality of decision-making is maintained and enhanced. We are likely to be carrying out our future range of international academic activity in a global political environment that continues to be very uncertain – e.g., Brexit, changing US immigration policies, Chinese transnational education policy.
2. Graduate placement opportunities under Erasmus + are over-subscribed with insufficient places being made available to the Institute. In the present year 30 places will be allocated. In addition all 10 allocated places for study mobility will be used. The Institute has spent a lot of time developing student mobility opportunities and these efforts are now seeing growth to a stage where available opportunities are over-subscribed.
3. We want to develop further our relationships with enterprise support agencies, the best international universities, and research funders across this spectrum of activity. Enhancing our international reputation should build further and bigger opportunities for national and international partnerships enhancing our ability to shape and secure increased levels of innovation funding; attracting the best minds to work with us (whether to learn, research or develop commercial opportunities); increasing our ability to secure sustainable income flows through offering increased opportunities to international students to study here; and offering all of our students increased international experience and understanding that will support them in building a future in an increasingly interdependent world.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Through the curriculum, improve the engagement of students, and increase the level of formal engagement by the Institute with community organisations.
- Increase the number of students on international activities and international students on our programmes, including inter-cultural training and supporting integration, and increasing staff international mobility exchanges.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Students receiving recognition for volunteering.
2. Establish an Industrial Liaison Group and sector groups.
3. Develop an effective CRM system.
4. Proportion of international full-time students in the system.
5. Increase the number of cross-border partnerships with other HEIs and FE colleges.
6. Develop an international policy to develop international staff collaborations.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Continue to implement a range of initiatives to internationalise the curriculum, integrate into global education networks, and create a multicultural society that respects difference and promotes diversity.
- To make engagement with industry and community a central tenet of ITTD's research activities, academic programmes and civic engagement initiatives.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increase the number of international EU and non-EU students as a percentage of full-time enrolments in line with the scale and mission of the Institute.
2. Increase the number of outward visits by students, providing opportunities and encouraging them to study or undertake a work placement or research project in another country.
3. Increase the number of R&D contracts, collaborative projects, Innovation Vouchers, innovation partnerships and licence agreements. This will be achieved through the strategic engagement activities of the newly launched (June 2018) Office for Business and Industry.
4. Support the promotion of entrepreneurship at undergraduate and postgraduate levels through active engagement by multidisciplinary teams in enterprise competitions.
5. Promote participation in the New Frontiers Entrepreneurship Development Programmes and the success of new start-ups, including spin-outs, working in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland and the Dublin Region Innovation Consortium.
6. Support civic engagement/volunteering activities by staff and students through the launch of the Institute Volunteering+ initiative in May 2018.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has two stated priorities:

- Sustainability and growth – ensure a strong vibrant and innovative organisation which will deliver on its mission and goals for all of its stakeholders on a collaborative basis through sound financial planning which is predicated on targets identified through comprehensive market analysis.
- Research and innovation – enhance our reputation as a research-engaged institution and continue to improve standards in our delivery of research excellence that will translate into economic growth and societal development in the region we serve.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Growth of student numbers by the development of a demand-led programme portfolio for delivery across multiple platforms. Attracting students through a wider range of pathways; traditional school leaver; mature students; access students; students with disabilities and international students.
2. Develop non-Exchequer funded revenue streams with a particular focus on recruiting full fee-paying international students.
3. Research excellence: internationally benchmarked and externally evaluated
4. Research impact through innovation.
5. Enhanced research linkages and collaborative research activities.
6. High quality research degree provision to Level 10.
7. Enabling and supporting research activity across the Institute.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Establish and implement an internationalisation plan that will lead to a significant increase in international students at the Institute working towards the high-level targets.
- Enhance enterprise engagement activities in line with the high-level targets.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Conduct a baseline analysis of matters that influence the current profile of international students at the Institute including countries of origin, programmes of study involved, typical length of study, international agreements, and fee-paying status.
2. Identify targets for enhanced activity that address Erasmus students, non-EU fee paying, and non-EU domicile students in a Brexit context.
3. Conduct a baseline study of existing levels of enterprise engagement and existing capacity available through the Institute's incubation centre CoLab.
4. Identify targets for enhanced activity that address enterprise engagement.
5. Through Cyclical Review 2018 the Institute has committed to further leveraging the close links with employers and the engagements with industry in the region.
6. Examine the Institute's capacity on its own and via the various collaborations and university partnerships to deliver significant innovation for industry, such as intellectual property licence agreements for commercially relevant technologies.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Enriching the student learning experience through internationalisation and attracting additional non-Exchequer income from international students.
- Further development within the Institute of enterprise activities which foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Committed in increasing participation in Erasmus+ and aim to achieve growth of at least 40% in this space by 2022 in line with the high-level target set for the HE sector.
2. Establish a course development competitive fund to facilitate development of new programmes suitable to the international market or which contribute to the internationalisation of the Institute.
3. In the process of developing commercialisation and entrepreneurship training opportunities for all staff and students and expanded enterprise boot camp activities for second and third level students.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- Build on the College's success and reputation in the Erasmus+ programme and as a recognised provider of a high-value international student experience.
- Broaden MIC's engagement with industry towards the building of common platforms for regional, social, cultural and economic development, as well as the creation of an environment that enables MIC's graduates to be highly-skilled, career-ready and connected to high quality employment opportunities.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Raising MIC's incoming international student participation levels to 6% by 2021 and targeting high-value strategic academic partnerships with overseas institutions, particularly those engaged in teacher education.
2. Develop a new cohesive and integrated internationalisation strategy for 2019-2024.
3. Explore and create opportunities for high-value academic partnerships with international higher education institutions that share MIC's academic mission and institutional ethos.
4. Engage with HEIs and civil society organisations in overseas locations to enable mutual learning about the impact of partnership approaches to educational interventions in areas that feature low rates of educational attainment.
5. Develop and lead education initiatives under the Regional Skills Forum, the Chamber of Commerce network, Local Enterprise Offices, Local Authority development strategies and other regional initiatives.
6. As part of MIC's ADVANCE (Assisted Development of Vision for New Career Entry) and CPD-21 strategies, increase the range of industries open to students to carry out career-relevant work placements and gain professional/transferable skill sets that will complement and add value to their academic qualifications.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- We will take a comprehensive and ethical approach to internationalisation, strengthening our international research and education partnerships to significantly enhance the opportunities for international mobility of students to and from Maynooth University.
- We will deepen our engagement with local and regional communities, civil society, public service organisations and enterprises to better meet the needs of those partners, provide additional experiential learning opportunities, and expand engaged and enterprise-facing research and innovation.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will build on our success to date to create wider opportunities for international students to study at Maynooth University, including short programmes, study abroad, Erasmus and full-degree enrolments, increasing the international student population to 12% of the total student body.
2. We will extend our range of student exchange partnerships with leading international universities to support balanced outward and inward student mobility, and will increase our participation in the Erasmus programme through the development of a targeted portfolio of Erasmus and exchange partnerships.
3. We will enhance our supports for outward student mobility and will increase by 50% the number of students who spend a period of time overseas as a formal part of their studies.
4. We will create a new senior leadership role with a clear remit to develop activities and partnerships in support of engaged research and teaching, supported by a new MU Engage office, the current successful MU Knowledge Transfer and Commercialisation office and MaynoothWorks business incubator.
5. We will increase support for engaged research and enterprise-facing research and innovation, building effective and sustainable research and innovation partnerships.
6. We will enrich the student experience and create value for external partners by developing new experiential learning opportunities with those partners, focusing on student entrepreneurship, work placement and service learning.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has three stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 1b: In addition to the Studio+/Visual Culture+ initiative enabling NCAD to contribute to the HEA's high-level target of all students having the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their course (4.1.4), it will also contribute to targets such as 20% of those graduating undertaking a study or training period abroad (4.2.3), increasing the number of Innovation Voucher project agreements with industry (4.2.4), and increasing participation in work placements abroad through Erasmus+.
- Strategic Initiative 1c: An important element of the Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus initiative outlined under Strategic Objective 1b is the option to undertake an Erasmus placement for either a full year or one semester and be eligible for the award of a BA International. As Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus is made available and the offer extended across Fine Art and Visual Culture, we anticipate that student take up of Erasmus opportunities will continue to recover fully and increase.

- Strategic Initiative 2c: NCAD has an experienced and effective Erasmus Office, and has created a structure that is extending participation in Erasmus Study across the College. NCAD's ambition to contribute to the HEA target of 20% of those who graduate in 2020 having undertaken a study or training period abroad is described above.

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The piloting of Studio Plus in Design during 2017/18 enabled greater take up of Erasmus mobilities for design students; whereas 38 students participated in Erasmus in 2016/17, 47 participated in 2017/18 (to date), with that growth enabled through Studio Plus.
2. Erasmus Trainee Scheme opportunities will be a strong focus in 2019/20, with the objective of increasing take up of such opportunities among Year 1 students, and non-Studio Plus/ Visual Culture Plus Education, Fine Art and Visual Culture students and graduating students. With a target of reporting 15 traineeships for non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus students.
3. Engaging with students to understand barriers to the level of participation in Erasmus among postgraduate students.
4. Review NCAD's master's-level programmes to explore how their capacity to support and encourage Erasmus engagement may be enhanced.
5. Erasmus Trainee Scheme opportunities will continue to be a focus in 2019/20, with the objective of increasing take up of such opportunities among non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus students to 20.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Increase the global spread of our student population so that at least 25% of our full-time on-shore students come from outside of Ireland by end of AY 2020/21 and offer all students international engagement opportunities.
- Innovation impact – maximise the involvement of all academic staff, researchers and students in activities that generate useful new ideas and inventions.

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The introduction of a budget devolution project to provide significant and clear budgetary incentives to colleges and schools to grow non-EU student numbers and income – in progress.
2. Outbound mobility targets will be achieved through a shift from 3-year degrees to 4-year degrees with a year of international exchange (and work placement) included, in Arts, Business and Law.
3. The appointment of a Vice President: International, as a member of the University Management Team, to lead the International Strategy – currently at recruitment stage.
4. 16 commercial technology agreements to be signed for 2018/19 by the Director of Technology Transfer.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- Committed to working with NUIG to expand and increase international student enrolment and adapt curricula that facilitate the integration of international students seamlessly on to its programmes.
- Provide students and staff members with initiatives and incubation space to further develop their life and employment skills.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Develop an International Strategy with NUIG by 2020.
2. Re-orientate existing Level 9 programmes to allow international students join existing full-time and part-time postgraduate programmes by 2020.
3. Increasing the number of international students on the M.Ed. Home Economics online programme, by 10% in 2019, 2020 and 2021.
4. Promote online standalone modules and accredited postgraduate programmes through European and International Network.
5. Following incorporation with NUIG, contribute to the enrolment of an additional 20% full-time non-EU students by end of AY 2020/21 across both campuses.
6. STAC's Food Technology Centre is a recognised innovation centre and aims to expand its research capacity with Home Economics and other key NUIG centres to increase the footprint of this key enterprise growth area across the region and beyond.
7. Capitalise on the Food Technology Centre's Sensory Science Capabilities via enhanced commercial and R&D projects.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Create rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhance the learning environment.
- Deliver a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community.

Trinity College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Entering into several international partnerships to increase the number of full-time international students. These include partnerships with Columbia University and Beijing Foreign Studies University.
2. Working with 247 partners under the Erasmus+ programme to increase the number of students availing of exchanges outside the EU.
3. Continue to engage with LERU (League of European Research Universities) partners to increase research placements and internship.

4. As part of GRS3 (Global Relations Strategy), TCD would like to continue this model and further embed internationalisation by appointing global directors in each school with delegated responsibility for the development of academic external relations.
5. The campus Trinity @ Grand Canal Quay will facilitate the establishment of an innovation district that will be transformational for Dublin and Ireland. It will bring together world-class research, enterprise, programming public space and cultural connector.

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has two stated priorities:

- Embed internationalisation more deeply and sustainably into the university's identity.
- Drive the commercialisation of research and technology transfer, and supporting external start-up companies.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Promote the engagement of all students and staff with entrepreneurial thinking.
2. Support communities in their own engagement with local and global issues by making knowledge widely available, and by encouraging purposeful enquiry and debate.
3. Develop new and stronger relationships with employers, professional bodies, industry and the community in framing responses to local and global issues through the academic portfolio, educational outreach, social, cultural and community projects.
4. Enhance cultural participation and interaction nationally and within the region and community to raise the profile of the visual, performing and creative arts and cultural heritage.
5. Increase the number of students studying abroad in the EU Erasmus+ programme and with exchange partners outside the EU by 10% each year to 2021.
6. Take advantage of the potential of digital technologies to engage with existing and new communities locally and internationally and promote the university's educational, social and cultural capital.
7. Develop the university's research and knowledge-creation capital infrastructure to enable greater engagement with enterprise.
8. Lead a national consortium of strategic partners in the Bridge Network Consortium (together with CIT, IT Tralee and Teagasc) to deliver excellence in knowledge transfer.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has three stated priorities:

- 'Attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff' (UCD Strategy 2015-2020, Objective 5), as measured in part by the following university-level KPIs:
 - KPI 10.2 Non-EU student FTEs (non-EU fee-paying student equivalent full-time load)
 - KPI 5.3 International students based on nationality (proportion of Irish to non-Irish students)
- 'Provide students with opportunities to develop interpersonal, intercultural and life skills within and outside the classroom' (UCD Education Strategy 2015-2020, Priority 2);
- 'Develop a distinctive global culture which will encompass all aspects of university life' (UCD Global Engagement Strategy 2016-2020, Objective 1)

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Establish a new UCD Global Centre in Dubai to expand the university's footprint in the Middle East and to actively engage with sponsorship and scholarship bodies across the region in support of increased student recruitment.
2. Undertake research, in collaboration with Enterprise Ireland, to identify potential new student markets for UCD and prioritise resources to their exploration.
3. Continue to expand UCD's presence in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America as emerging student markets for Ireland and for UCD.
4. Leverage UCD's enrolment planning process to mitigate risk in relation to those programmes of study which have a particularly high proportion of international students or high proportions from particular nationalities.
5. Review internal systems and processes to ensure maximum conversion at all stages of the international student recruitment cycle, in particular from offer to acceptance, and from acceptance to registration.
6. Redesign and relaunch UCD's international website, incorporating new avenues for social media integration in line with market expectations.
7. Continue to expand outreach to government scholarship agencies in mature and emerging markets, in order to secure funding agreements in support of student recruitment and broader institutional profile for UCD.
8. Work proactively with the Irish Government to ensure that Ireland's student visa and registration policies are market-sensitive, agile and scalable, in line with the ambitions expressed in *Irish Educated, Globally Connected: International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016-2020*.
9. Implement the UCD Outbound Mobility Action Plan.
10. Reinforce the links between outbound mobility and graduate employability.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Internationalisation is a key objective of the university, which has to date lagged behind nationally and with regards to its own targets. Internationalisation will enhance the student experience, both by diversifying the student body and providing students with experience overseas.
- Building partnerships with industry. We will continue to grow our collaborations with industry regionally, nationally and internationally. These collaborations are facilitated through our SFI- and EI-funded research centres and also through UL's research institutes, but more broadly involves our faculty and programmes.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. International – our target is to double international student numbers in the years 2015-2020.
2. Our Study Aboard Programme – the growth has been in line with Broadening Horizons targets, with a more rapid growth predicted in the coming years, from a current headcount of 413 (220 FTE) to a headcount of 1,000 by 2024.
3. Erasmus+ and non-EU exchange – our target is to grow the programme by 40% over the period 2015-2020 with the ultimate goal of 50% of students engaged on the programme as part of the European University initiative.

4. We will continue to grow our collaborations with industry regionally, nationally and internationally.
5. We are developing new models for industry engagement building on the success of Limerick for Engineering and Limerick for IT as well as the co-location of industry on the UL campus.
6. We will expand our engagement with SMEs on the development of a Centre for Entrepreneurship to create a stream of entrepreneurship in the UL curriculum.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has three stated priorities:

- Increasing the diversity of the student population by increasing the number of incoming EU and non-EU students.
- Increase knowledge transfer activity, measured in invention disclosures, patents, licences, and spin-outs – in line with national targets.
- Continue to expand SME and industry collaborations regionally and nationally.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Currently engaged in a review and a restructuring of its international function in support of its ambitions regarding student recruitment.
2. A more systematic and school-specific manner of setting non-EU enrolment targets will be deployed over the course of the Plan.
3. Knowledge transfer and commercialisation effort will focus primarily on increasing the activity of two centres, SEAM [South East Applied Materials Research Centre] (Advanced Manufacturing, based in the School of Engineering) and PMBRC [Pharmaceutical and Molecular Biotechnology Research Centre] (Life Sciences, based in the School of Science).
4. Funded by Enterprise Ireland, a significant expansion of the Institute's ArCLabs research and innovation centre and incubation hub is currently taking place with building works complete by 2019.

3. Research, development and innovation

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 for research, development and innovation

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 2 (national and international engagement) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- Increase of 500 new postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (baseline 2,235 in 2014/15).
- Increase by 30% the number of funded postdoctoral positions in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (Innovation 2020 target).
- Double overall Higher Education research income derived from industry to €48m (Innovation 2020 target – €24m in 2014).
- Increase research projects between enterprise and the public research system by 20% by 2020 (2014 Baseline is 878).
- Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020 (over €200m secured by end of 2016).
- Increase applied research in the Institutes of technology.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for research, development and innovation, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Continue to expand support for staff time release and funding initiatives, which have significantly contributed to the current institutional profile and associated TU agenda.
- Link core research expertise with industry needs via market informed collaborative applied R&D, while in parallel, aiming to diversify our R&D funding sources towards increased EU funding.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Continue to build further capability to deliver relevant solutions to our industrial partners through increased, focused, collaboration with State-funded research centres such as SFI-funded centres (CONFIRM, AMBER) and technology centres such as IMR and ICOMP.
2. Build on Athlone Institute of Technology's very successful research institutes and technology gateways to increase applied research with enterprise and increase income derived from industry.

3. Grow the number of industrial projects through our technology gateways, COMAND and APT, increasing research revenue.
4. Develop a more agile metric-driven time-release programme that supports all stages of researchers' development by building supervision, examination, and disciplined research competencies.
5. Support research development by developing a continuous professional development (CPD) framework to include research capacity building
6. By balancing targeted seed funding and external funding, increase postgraduate student numbers and funded postdoctoral positions in areas aligned with current and evolving areas of expertise, while addressing national priority areas.
7. Develop a strategy to increase the number of high-value projects between enterprise and Athlone Institute of Technology.
8. Build on EU funding success to increase funding through international research collaborations.
9. Develop an operational plan to integrate research excellence with teaching and learning that encompasses dual participation by research institutes and faculties.
10. Demonstrate the impact and contribution of applied research to the campus, industry, and global competitiveness.
11. Expand initiatives to incentivise research, including inter alia promoting researcher 'champions' and time release from teaching.
12. Support targeted research exchange programmes and inter-institutional research agendas, including mobility, supervision, examination and grant writing.
13. Establish a graduate school to further support integration of research with teaching and develop articulated pathways to structured MSc and PhD programmes.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Continue to build on its established research and innovation ecosystem to maximise impact regionally and nationally.
- Continue to grow research activity and postgraduate student enrolments in line with CIT research strategy and national priorities.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Focus on multidisciplinary, translational research that addresses real-world problems and which facilitates collaboration and commercialisation.
2. Continue to implement the researcher career framework such that CIT can attract and retain high quality researchers.
3. Grow the number of research projects delivered with industry with significant support from the CIT STEM Academy.
4. Provide targeted studentship/scholarship initiatives to build critical mass in existing disciplines as well as providing support for emerging research areas.
5. Ensure a high-quality student experience for postgraduate students through the provision of postgraduate-specific services and supports.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To advance the research excellence and impact of the University.
- To advance the Innovation profile and impact of the University.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. To complete the appointment of faculty-aligned research development officers (RDOs) to coordinate and drive increases in the number and quality of grant submissions.
2. To implement the Research Career Framework, to enhance career planning and development for early career stage researchers by 2019/20.
3. Launch a pilot research impact initiative to disburse research support funds to academic schools based on their Scopus outputs with the objective of improving the indicators for research excellence.
4. Complete and launch the DCU Innovation Plan to deliver an integrated approach to innovation across the University.
5. Establish and open a Student Innovation Hub within the new Student Centre to act as an innovation space for student innovation and social and cultural entrepreneurship.
6. DCU to develop and launch the Insights in Innovation seminar series, promoting student innovation, hackathons and students' competitions.
7. DCU will Introduce an Easy Access IP commercialisation model to drive new consultancy, contract research activity and facilities access by 2019/20.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has one key priority:

- Build capacity in Environment, Energy & Health; Information Communications & Media Technologies; New Materials & Devices; and Society, Culture & Enterprise through growth in and enhancement.

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Continue to implement DIT's updated Research Action Plan, Building Sustainable Research in DIT carrying out support initiatives under the following three themes: towards sustainable funding; capacity building for long term sustainability; and support for excellence.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- To continue to focus and drive research excellence in prioritised research areas which are internationally competitive and have societal and economic impact.
- To engage and support all researchers in an enabling environment.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. DkIT is committed to the further development of its PhD research programmes through the DkIT-DCU Graduate School aimed at increasing student numbers and meeting the needs of students in the region. The research programmes align with the academic department and school structure and are supported by the DkIT-DCU Graduate School.
2. DkIT continues to build its research supervision capacity through staff development to PhD qualification level with over 70 formally trained research supervisors. In 2017/2018, the proportion of all academic staff with doctorate qualifications stands at 34% (42% to include professional qualifications).
3. The Institute strives to actively support its research community in their endeavours, both established and early career researchers. This strategic objective will be achieved through:
 - a. Establishing a specific annual training programme for early career researchers
 - b. Fostering a culture of responsible conduct of research among the research community.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has two stated priorities:

- GMIT will establish a new function for graduate and professional development to innovatively and strategically lead the development, delivery and quality assurance of the Institute's postgraduate and accredited professional development (PD) programmes. A newly appointed Director for Graduate and Professional Development will direct postgraduate programme development Institute-wide.
- GMIT's primary structure for research collaboration with enterprise is via its Medical and Engineering Technologies (MET) Technology Gateway, co-funded by Enterprise Ireland. The MET Technology Gateway's interdisciplinary supports provide cutting edge, industry-focused solutions for the MedTech and general manufacturing sectors. By actively engaging with clinical and industry partners, the MET Technology Gateway produces both scientific knowledge and technology outputs across a range of sectoral specialisations.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Appointment of the Director for Graduate and Professional Development.
2. Implementation of a strategic plan for postgraduate programme development.
3. Development of existing, new and transdisciplinary postgraduate programmes.
4. Establishment of a successful Department of Graduate Studies and Professional Development.
5. Appointment of additional externally-funded business development staff to the MET Gateway.
6. Appointment to the MET Industry Steering Group of new members representing other segments of the life sciences sector.
7. Commencement of construction of the iHub building extension.

8. Delivery of events for other segments of the life sciences sector showcasing the expanded capabilities of the MET Gateway and iHub.
9. Completion and opening of the iHub building extension.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- Grow our research activity, including applied research from 2018-2021 as measured by increased research student numbers and increased research income.
- Grow our enterprise and innovation partnerships to include increased Innovation Vouchers, industry and community partnerships and projects.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Support and enhance the status and reputation of IADT's research capacity, both scholarly and applied/practice-based in key areas, as defined in the Research Strategy and Academic Plan.
2. Further develop the connectivity between our research activity and our programmes.
3. Develop further our research outputs in key identified areas through active sourcing of research funding to provide funding opportunities and incentives for staff.
4. Build capacity for research (inputs and outputs) and innovation activity through collaboration and the creation of additional funding sources, and new sources of postgraduate research funding for Level 9 scholarships, in order to increase current numbers of postgraduate research students.
5. Publication and implementation of staff research policy, processes and procedures to include digitisation of processes.
6. Plan for growing sustainable funding for RDIE activity in place.
7. Increase external national and international funding to support staff engaged in formal professional research activity at IADT.
8. Maximise utilisation of our business incubation centre to develop spin-in and spin-out businesses.
9. Plan of Media Cube facilities upgrade produced.
10. Establish Media Cube Advisory Board and mentor panel.
11. Liaise directly with start-up enterprises in identified priority disciplines/sectors with a view to securing and increasing Innovation Vouchers.
12. Develop a plan to increase applied research in liaison with industry and the CCI sectors.
13. Develop further our industry and community-based projects through our curriculum offering.
14. Expand the range of partnerships and collaboration opportunities with the creative industry sub-sectors of television, film, and animation, art and design, leveraging key opportunities provided by Enterprise Ireland and through Horizon 2020.
15. Five start-up enterprise support initiatives for staff, students and external clients through communications and promotion about the initiatives and closing dates.
16. Extend current external stakeholder partnerships by 10% annually.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Develop the research culture to foster and support research, innovation and enterprise initiative, and deepen the integration of research and scholarship into our academic programmes.
- Broaden research, enterprise and innovation capacity, build capability and enhance performance.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Enhance participation in structured doctorate programmes, in association with ITB's Graduate Research School with Technological University alliance partners.
2. All full-time academic staff engaged in the supervision of students registered on a doctoral degree level programme will have a record of continued research.
3. Achieve a 30% increase in the number of research partnerships, including broader participation of those under-represented in research.
4. At least 80% of the full-time academic staff, who are engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level and conduct research, hold a doctoral degree themselves.
5. Innovation and research have a demonstrably positive social and economic effect on business, enterprise, the professions and other related stakeholders in the region.
6. Improved visibility of research activities of staff.
7. Achieve 10% increase year-on-year, in social and community-based research initiatives.
8. Adopt a research action plan in TU Dublin to support 7% of the number of students registered on a programme leading to at least honours bachelor degree level, as research students within 10 years; increase areas of doctoral research to at least five fields of education within five years.
9. Generate a 10% increase year-on year in research income.
10. Expand enterprise activity and develop two research centres.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- Institute of Technology Carlow will continue to increase postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs in line with Technological University criteria and informed by the goals of Innovation 2020.
- Institute of Technology Carlow will develop and implement its engagement strategies with industry to provide opportunities for knowledge transfer and to achieve increased industry funding of applied research at the Institute.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Building research capacity and research culture: we will continue to develop an enquiry-based, research-informed learning environment that will produce more research opportunities and outputs and positively contribute to the teaching and learning culture within the Institute.

2. Achieving research impact: members of our research community will be supported in increasing research productivity and performance through the publishing and dissemination of research, nationally and internationally. Through this plan we will further encourage and support the pursuit of research excellence and seek to maximise our impact through academic pathways and commercialisation and knowledge transfer routes.
3. Developing future research themes and research policy: we have made significant progress in building and developing research themes and research impact. *Our Strategic Plan for Research 2016-2020* will further enhance this culture and deliver benefits for our economic, social and cultural stakeholders. Our postgraduate attributes will ensure that researchers have the enterprise development and innovation skills necessary to contribute to the development of the economy and society.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Support an increase in the number of PG students and publications.
- Increase related funding and industry partnerships.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Develop infrastructure and capital resources to support target postgraduate numbers.
2. Develop a time allocation procedure and a budget to allow supervisors to prepare and submit publications (with their students) and grant applications, supervise postdoctoral researchers.
3. Develop structured research master's and PhD programmes (in collaboration with CUA partners).
4. Increase number of Innovation Vouchers, innovation partnerships and commercialisation fund grants (including STEM and social science partners/NGOs).
5. Support new business start-ups from across the region, particularly SMEs.
6. Develop mechanisms to apply the creative talent of staff and students to develop innovative solutions for the creative sector.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Grow and consolidate the activities of the existing research centres and groups through collaboration with ITTD's TU partners and other organisations.
- Provide alternative avenues for people in work to access Level 9 and Level 10 qualifications.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increase the number of research students at master's and PhD level, as well as postdoctoral positions, with a renewed focus on applied research and collaboration within the TU context.
2. Increase external sources of funding for research, from both the public research system and from private industry.

3. Increase the number of employment-based research degree programmes with direct social and economic impacts.
4. Increase the number of staff who are research-active and increase research outputs.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has two stated priorities:

- Sustainability and Growth – ensure a strong vibrant and innovative organisation which will deliver on its mission and goals for all of its stakeholders on a collaborative basis through sound financial planning which is predicted on targets identified through comprehensive market analysis.
- Research and Innovation – enhance our reputation as a research engaged Institution and continue to improve standards in our delivery of research excellence that will translate into economic growth and societal development in the region we serve.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Growth of student numbers (including postgraduates) by the development of a demand-led programme portfolio for delivery across multiple platforms. Attracting students through a wider range of pathways: traditional school leavers, mature students, access students; and students with disabilities.
2. Research excellence: internationally benchmarked and externally evaluated.
3. Research impact through innovation.
4. Enhanced research linkages and collaborative research activities.
5. High quality research degree provision to Level 10.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- To make further strengthening of research a central theme, building on LYIT's recent successes.
- Further strengthening of collaborative arrangements with partner universities and institutes of technology.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. A comprehensive research plan will detail a set of KPIs to be achieved. These KPIs will address national skills needs, capturing additional research funding and new funding sources, greater industry research collaboration, and build on our strengths in applied research.
2. This plan will also address improving QA processes to support an increased number of research postgraduate students studying at the Institute.
3. Partner colleges will be central to the Institute's provision of Level 10 programmes which will strengthen the Institute's plans for achieving delegated authority in targeted areas.
4. Recent success achieved in respect of Interreg VA funding will form a basis for increased capacity of research supervisors and other research supports that will be further translated into increased research activity.
5. Existing collaborations will form the basis of further ambitious research funding applications including the further targeting of Horizon 2020 funding.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Promote a research culture across the Institute.
- Grow the quantity, quality and impact of its RDI activities from competitively won RDI funds.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Engagement with external stakeholders to identify further collaborative opportunities.
2. National partnering with organisations who can provide fees and stipends for postgraduate students and co-locating postgraduate researchers in partners/stakeholder facilities.
3. International partnering with selected universities and organisations as sources of postgraduate students and funding.
4. Identification and facilitation of advocates and champions of research within faculties and departments.
5. Utilisation of the Graduate Research Office (GRO) bursaries in selected areas to grow research activities in key strategically important areas.
6. Appropriate incentivisation of support staff to engage in research and research supervision.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- Enhance and extend MIC's contribution to the scope, reach and quality of professional teacher education in Ireland.
- Develop approaches for attracting, recruiting and retaining postgraduate students with reference to social, cultural and economic needs, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Focus on practically-grounded research that informs the academic framework, pedagogy and professional development.
2. Launch and implement the next phase of strategic development of the National Institute for Studies in Education (NISE), establishing NISE as a significant influence on research-informed practice in teacher education nationally and internationally.
3. Develop a clearly-defined and well-integrated Knowledge Transfer Strategy (KiTS) for teachers and education policy-makers.
4. Develop staff and student mobility exchanges with partner universities.
5. Optimise student recruitment in new and established subject areas by attracting fellowships and scholarships from sources such as the Irish Research Council (IRC) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.
6. Increase doctoral enrolments while improving completion times and rates.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- We will contribute to the development of an excellent research and innovation system by investing in focused areas of strength to address major societal challenges to build research capacity and a research culture of international quality and outlook which is aligned to national and EU priorities and connected to major national research centres.
- We will increase by 30% our research income from EU, enterprise and non-governmental sources.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will strengthen our university research institutes and centres, to provide dedicated space, time and infrastructure for research, to support major research programmes and grants, to foster interdisciplinarity, to stimulate and nurture the development of research groups of varying scale, and to provide a platform for major interdisciplinary research programmes addressing significant societal challenges.
2. We will prioritise participation in SFI centres which align with our areas of strength and will invest in research capacity which enables such participation.
3. We will add unique value to the national research landscape through a specific initiative at the intersection of technology and society, which will facilitate deeper consideration of the diffusion and impact of new and emerging technologies.
4. We will implement a refreshed strategy for EU funding to include targeted recruitment and specific supports for ERC and large EU project and consortium grant applications.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has two stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 2a: Over the lifetime of the compact, NCAD will expand postgraduate provision at master's level and increase research enrolments by 10%.
- Strategic Initiative 2b: Over the lifetime of the compact, NCAD will build on the research expertise within the College to develop two significant research projects in collaboration with national and international industry partners. In so doing it will contribute directly to the HEA's high-level target in relation to increasing research projects between enterprise and the public research system (4.3.4), as well as working towards increasing HE research income derived from industry (4.3.3) and contributing to securing Horizon 2020 funding.

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Invest in consulting with stakeholders (internal and external) and building a communication and recruitment strategy in respect of existing and 'in development' programmes.
2. Engage with postgraduate students and alumni to deepen our understanding of the transition from master's to doctoral level study, from a student perspective and in relation to the programmes on offer within the College.
3. Invest in and develop a select number of key research directions that harness and project the research and innovation expertise of staff, and support the recruitment and development of doctoral level researchers;
4. Develop opportunities for potential doctoral candidates to access support in developing doctoral research proposals.
5. Explore the feasibility of extending current postgraduate scholarship offer within the College to encompass doctoral researchers.

6. Developing priorities against which further funding can be sought, in collaboration with industry.
7. Identifying appropriate industry and academic partners.
8. Applying for Enterprise Ireland Funding to establish feasibility and support the development of a funding application.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Produce research that is recognised as being excellent, transformative and relevant to societal and economic needs, while training the next generation of researchers.
- Increase the quality, impact and international awareness of our research outputs.

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Maximise the involvement of academic staff in research and focus on recruiting, retaining and incentivising excellent academic staff who have a proven research track record.
2. Comprehensive review of NUI Galway's priority research themes to inform the development of the University's next strategic plan, ensuring their continued relevance and aligning with the national and international policy landscape.
3. Maintain the contribution to the University's research income from non-Exchequer sources at or above 30%.
4. Recruit second tranche of research leadership positions funded by philanthropy.
5. Increase applications for high profile appointments (e.g. SFI Research Professors and Future Leaders, IRC Laureate Awards) via targeted recruitment campaigns – ongoing with some success to date.
6. A review of existing research support schemes to assess effectiveness in facilitating NUIG's strategic objectives for research and innovation is currently in progress.
7. A plan to enhance the discoverability of our research through the active promotion of open access research data through training and information sessions.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- To strengthen the growing research culture, identify joint research themes with NUIG and align research policies and systems.
- To increase its regular intake to postgraduate programmes by research at Masters and Doctoral levels.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. In association with NUIG, expand the number of research enrolments in disciplines allied to Public Service, Education and Health registered on PhD programmes to three students in 2021 (baseline currently: one student).
2. Identify how research conducted by students undertaking the B.App.Sc. in Nutrition, Food and Business Management can benefit and inform the food industry.
3. Increase staff access to appropriate PhD supervision training, including 10 ECTS programme.

4. Increase active participation in Graduate Research Committees (GRCs) for doctoral candidates at NUIG and STAC.
5. Plan changes to staffing structure to facilitate opportunities for full-time postgraduate research students.
6. Undertake a review of workload allocation model with NUIG, looking to maximise the involvement of academic staff in research and focus on recruiting, retaining and incentivising academic staff who have a proven research track record.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Increase research projects between enterprise and the public research system by 20% by 2020.
- Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020.

Trinity College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Initiate a targeted research diversification strategy for Horizon 2020 which provides training, proposal bootcamps, and teaching buyout.
2. Continue to renew and increase engagement by industry with the SFI centres to improve research and development investment.
3. With funding from Knowledge Transfer Ireland, establish a pilot project to conduct market evaluation and determine the scale of supply and demand for a consultancy unit representing the full range of TCD's expertise.

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has two stated priorities:

- Position UCC as the location of choice to attract and retain the most talented researchers at all career stages, and provide research and infrastructural supports that nurture the next generation of research leaders.
- Increase UCC's capacity to deliver impact in society, the economy and the community, and meet national economic, societal and cultural development needs through the coherent delivery of innovation and co-creation initiatives.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implement career progression structures that attract and retain high performing researchers including steps to address gender inequalities in research careers.
2. Introduce interventions and appropriate incentivisation to recognise high impact publication and research excellence across all disciplines.
3. Increase the number of postdoctoral positions from 222 (May 2018) to 310 in 2021 based on research funding opportunities including SFI programmes, the IRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme, and the Marie Curie IF and COFUND programmes.
4. Improve the international profile of UCC as a centre of excellence for researcher training.
5. Progress UCC-led SFI research centres to Phase 2 funding to maximise the opportunity for enhancing industry engagement with the university.

6. Implement measures to ensure that the University's Horizon 2020 funding success rate continues to perform above the EU average.
7. Undertake a qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the impact of collaborative projects with industry and their conversion to licensing outcomes.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation.
- Diversify our funding base in support of our key research priorities

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The impact programme is a multi-annual programme of work that seeks to develop tools and support strategies to maximise the impact of UCD's research. It ensures that impact is a key consideration from the planning of a research project, to its execution and outputs. The programme recognises that impact planning is a relatively new competence in research planning and aims to build the capacity of our academic staff to define, capture and communicate the impacts of their work.
2. Our strategy requires all research and innovation supported within UCD to be excellent, and unambiguously identifiable as such by the measures applied within the relevant sphere internationally. The excellence framework project aims to define excellence by area and to assist our academic staff to maximise the academic impact of their publications and enhance UCD's reputation.
3. UCD is already renowned for its programmes in entrepreneurship and innovation. This project seeks to advance this position further by increasing both the number and successes of our spin-outs and spin-ins and increasing depth and levels of UCD's engagement with industry.
4. The EU represents the largest funding source available for research and innovation activities internationally. Its structure focusing on individual excellence and larger scale collaborative programmes aligns well with UCD's strategy. We aim to increase our success in attracting EU funding to UCD and its partners for the remainder of Horizon 2020 and position UCD for success in its successor programme FP9.
5. Industry funding and co-funding is increasingly becoming a key eligibility criteria and success factor is securing agency-led funding. Industry partners also provide a clear pathway to impact for university research. In seeking to diversify our funding base it is critical that UCD increases its funding from industry sources.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Developing new areas of research. UL is focused on building on our strengths in priority research areas as well as identifying new areas that support the broadening of the research base and address national research priorities.
- Diversifying the research-funding base. UL has developed an EU Research Office to develop its EU partnerships and funding, with a focus on promoting applications and in particular on Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, the ERC awards and Health. Two additional staff have been recruited to support the existing two staff. In addition, we are building our existing EU partnerships and promoting networking opportunities for our research community. The initial impact has been positive, with two EU COFUND training awards made in the current year.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will develop an Academic Medical Centre in partnership with the University Limerick Hospital Group and the Community Health Organisation in the region.
2. We will develop research programmes that bring together academics, healthcare providers and industry to accelerate the translation of medical sciences, novel technologies and processes to healthcare settings.
3. We will expand our research programmes in biomedical sciences in particular by leveraging the expertise in the physical sciences (data analytics, imaging, gene sequencing, bioengineering and biotechnology) in UL.
4. The second area of research that UL will develop is Digital Sciences. We will establish a Digital Strategy at UL to explore the development and application of digital technologies and technology-enhanced intelligence. The Digital Strategy will support education and research programmes focused on digital transformation across a range of sectors including health, advanced manufacturing, financial services, energy and agriculture.
5. We will grow our EU funding and will further enhance the recognition and reputation of the university through the established UL EU Research Office with the aim of developing our EU partnerships and funding.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Increase the numbers of research-active staff and of research postgraduate students by 25% and provide them with a range of training and professional development opportunities.
- Proposes to develop and/or maintain international standard research centres/institutes across five prioritised discipline areas.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Institute will run the next iteration of the WIT President's PhD scholarship programme, with emphasis on funding of new PhD research supervisors to build capacity.
2. Will run the next iteration of the WIT PhD Co-fund scholarship programme twice per year, placing emphasis on the co-funding of positions by enterprise and other non-governmental partners.
3. Continue to provide significant support for research funding applications in areas of strategic importance that will lead to the recruitment of research postgraduate students.

4. Actively promote the development of inter-disciplinary research postgraduate programmes between WIT schools and use the experience gained to prepare WIT researchers for successful applications for Horizon Europe FP9.
5. Facilitate staff engagement with research including continued support for researchers through the implementation of our HRS4R action plan and the development of a workload allocation model that is fit for purpose, as well as through the creation of a research council.
6. The creation of the designation of Research Institute to enhance structures and governance in larger research centres and to facilitate continued growth.
7. Support for the development of our three technology gateways and enhanced engagement with SFI centres.

4. Diversity and equality of opportunity

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 4

Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

High-level targets for diversity and equality of opportunity

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 4 (diversity and equality of opportunity) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- All HEIs will have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 which will embed whole-of-HEI approaches to institutional access strategies.
- Implement new data initiatives and indicators to support the development and implementation of evidenced based National Plans for Equity of Access by 2019.
- 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.
- Sustain the expansion from under-represented groups with 2,000 additional enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and 1,000 from Further education access programmes.
- Increase in enrolments from DEIS schools by ensuring that every such school will be participating in a HEI-led access programme.
- Completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts will be specifically targeted for Improvement.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for diversity and equality of opportunity, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Athlone Institute of Technology is committed to supporting access and fostering an environment of diversity, inclusion and social integration to all people and communities regardless of their gender, nationality or social status.
- Ensuring the success of all students is a priority for Athlone Institute of Technology. The Institute will continue to evolve institutional policies, procedures, and activities in light of stakeholder input, contemporary data and international best practice.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Build on the success of the MEND PATH 2 and PATH 3 funding to develop strategic knowledge, partners, and policies to support sustained access to Athlone Institute of Technology by under-represented groups.

2. Promote articulation agreements with further education providers and demonstrate pathways from further education to higher education, aligned in areas defined by regional and national skills needs.
3. Continue the Institute of Sanctuary bursary scheme to support refugee access.
4. Develop a student success strategy which incorporates increased access via HEAR, DARE and other under-represented groupings that access AIT while also continuing our commitment to working with DEIS schools.
5. Build on the success of the PASS, AIT Inspire, Student Success Advisors and Academic Tutors initiatives to enhance success rates, experience and retention specifically targeting vulnerable groups.
6. Continue the strong partnerships between all stakeholders (Quality Office, Students Union, academic and support staff) so as to continue to strategically utilise ISSE feedback to enhance the student experience.
7. Use student data to understand student profiles, programme pathways, and HE perceptions, with a view to informed decision-making with respect to programme viability, opportunity, and factors that may influence success.
8. Continue to systematically review provision and explore in particular cross-faculty opportunities.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- CIT is committed to the principle of inclusive access to higher education.
- CIT aims to provide opportunities for all motivated individuals to pursue personal, intellectual and professional development.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Support and encourage increased numbers of students from under-represented groups to access higher education through PATH funding.
2. Increase the opportunities for mature, work-based, lifelong, part-time and flexible learners.
3. Support the academic and social needs of students with disabilities and diverse needs. Currently operating the DARE (Disability Access Route to Education) scheme and will also commit to the HEAR programme in 2019.
4. Develop initiatives to increase international student intake.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To develop and implement a comprehensive Widening Participation Strategy that will build on and extend DCU's existing wide-ranging outreach and access initiatives targeted at under-represented groups in society.
- Broadening of DCU's commitment to inclusion via the establishment and roll-out of specific actions underpinning the institution's designation as the world's first autism-friendly university.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Bring to completion a new Widening Participation Strategy, led by a cross-institutional Steering Group.
2. As part of autism-friendly university initiatives, DCU will execute a range of specific commitments, including the installation of sensory pods on each of the DCU teaching campuses and providing a range of professional development opportunities for staff on supporting students with autism.
3. To host staff workshops on universal design principles in module and programme delivery to facilitate the support of under-represented groups at DCU.
4. Will increase the proportion of non-traditional entrants (DCU access, mature, disability) to 21% of undergraduate entrants (2016/17 baseline= 19%) by 2019/20.
5. Will increase numbers of FETAC entrants to DCU by 30% (based on 2016/17 baseline) by 2020/21.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has a key stated priority:

- 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 lifelong learning.

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. DIT, with its TU Dublin partners, is committed to participating in the Programme for Access to Third Level (PATH) Fund, and will deliver on commitments identified under the relevant strands.
2. Provide higher education community engagement programmes in the Grangegorman area.
3. Provide community-based research and learning also known as Students Learning with Communities.
4. Provide access entry routes – including for those with a disability and those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- Continued commitment to strategic alliances with DCU, MEND Cluster, FET2HE and NEFHEA.
- Widen participation from targeted under-represented groups.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Academic planning: MEND has prepared a shared enrolment analysis. This was a useful exercise in demonstrating shared awareness of enrolment and projected enrolment. The main task going forward is the updating of the enrolment data in each institution in a common format.
2. Responding to national and regional skills needs is one of the key objectives for HEIs. Although in four different Regional Skills fora, there is an opportunity for the cluster to engage collectively with the Regional Skills coordinators.

3. Collaboration in doctoral education and research. DkIT and DCU have effective working arrangements in place. Similar arrangements with MU and AIT will be explored as part of MEND Cluster development.
4. DkIT operates an internal Institute Northern Ireland Working Group with the specific aim of identifying and facilitating access and progression routes for all students in Northern Ireland in second level and further education. The recent addition of the Southern Regional College in Northern Ireland strategically aims to enhance the access and participation agenda on a cross border basis.
5. Four hundred additional students from disadvantaged groups across the region will enter MEND HEIs over the course of the programme. These students will be systematically tracked through their engagement with the programme, entry into HE, their student experience and academic and employment outcomes. College Connect will facilitate the development of regional relationships, fora, strategies, structures and processes involving target group stakeholders who will take ownership of, and lead on sustainability beyond the funding period.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has two stated priorities:

- GMIT continues to review, revise and improve our access initiatives in order to achieve the specific strategic priority of widening participation. Facilitating access through alternative entry routes is a core part of this work. It is our intention to align our proposed new strategies with the principles outlined by AHEAD.
- Supporting the student experience
 - Literacy and numeracy initiative
 - HEAR and DARE schemes
 - Access and Disability Support Unit.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Completion of MOUs and mapping of advanced progression opportunities with all three ETBS – Galway Roscommon, Mayo Sligo Leitrim and Limerick Clare.
2. GMIT will participate in the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH II & III) as part of the regional cluster.
3. GMIT will launch a new joint access programme with NUIG.
4. A number of support initiatives in literacy and numeracy will be delivered linked to the teacher education programme.
5. MSc student enrolled on a literacy and numeracy research initiative.
6. Benchmarking of Access and Disability Support Unit complete and plan developed based on the findings.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- Increase participation of under-represented groups in IADT through the development of engagement and outreach programmes to include: community groups, junior and senior cycles, and further and adult educational programmes.
- Ensure an enriched student experience in a diverse community through the provision of opportunity. Empower students during their time in IADT so that they have the graduate attributes to support a fulfilling and successful career.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increase the numbers of primary and secondary schools we are engaging with;
2. Further develop pre-entry supports delivered on IADT campus during and after school hours to cover the academic, personal and professional needs of targeted student groups.
3. Continue to collaborate with UCD and Southside Traveller Action Group (STAG) to strengthen links with the Traveller community. Extend this programme to primary level students.
4. Strengthen links with Dún Laoghaire Rathdown (DLR) Refugee Project.
5. Build on the HEA PATH initiatives in collaboration with partner HEIs in the Leinster Pillar to develop joint outreach activities (Creative Summer Schools, Mentoring Programmes, Open Learning, and to promote Dublin as a learning City).
6. Develop a specialist accredited foundation and transitional programme of study for future learners.
7. Respond to Springboard+ call for expressions of interest.
8. Review and explore opportunities to develop a higher apprenticeship programme for the cultural industries.
9. Increased involvement with the corporate sector, alumni, educators, community, voluntary and public sector.
10. Plan of action produced to enhance student sporting facilities.
11. Increase our DEIS School participation by 10%.
12. Establish IADT as a formal College of Sanctuary.
13. Development of campus physical environment in order to develop accessible signage throughout the campus, and to develop efficient access routes for those with access requirements.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Increase student numbers while fostering student diversity through developing innovative programme models.
- Forge deeper collaborations with DIT and IT Tallaght in developing structures and systems to achieve designation as a technological university.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Achieve a year-on-year increase in student numbers, to reach in excess of 4,500 by the year 2020, meeting regional demand, while maintaining a balance of students studying at NFQ Levels 6-10.
2. Facilitate and support ITB students who enter through access routes, while maintaining a proportion of access students, in line with demographic needs of the region and student demand.
3. Improve retention rates by increasing the progression of students from first year into second year to 75% (approximate increase by 10%).
4. Actively engage with evolving policy alignment proposals for the Technological University regarding adjustments to operating policies and procedures that may impact on the Institute.
5. Actively engage with partners in HEA regional clusters, HEA Dublin/Leinster Pillar II.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- Institute of Technology Carlow will maintain its *National Access Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education* new entrant numbers by further developing, implementing and maintaining non-standard entry routes aimed at the six target groups, lone parents and first-generation learners.
- Institute of Technology Carlow will develop and implement its formal Learner Engagement Framework to further embed an Institute-wide approach to access strategies for those from the six target groups, lone parents and first-generation learners.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Institute of Technology Carlow is committed to lifelong learning, equity of access, transfer and progression. We continue to strengthen and sustain our equitable access, transfer and progression opportunities for all learners.
2. The Institute has played a lead role in developing PATH 2 and PATH 3 applications from the southern cluster and has begun the rollout of these key projects. In so doing, we will also assess the impact of access initiatives and will develop access data.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Increase access and completion rates from disadvantaged cohorts.
- Develop and implement a Student Success Strategy (across all categories of students) which embeds approaches to institutional access strategies.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Use available data to identify student engagement and attendance to help identify students who need early interventions and to support improved participation rates (see also 4Bb).
2. Implement national access admissions programme (HEAR) for students of low socio-economic backgrounds, disadvantaged, mature, disabled (DARE).

3. Strengthen the support/advisory service for applicants who are exploring a '2nd chance' opportunity to obtain a higher education award.
4. Identify (both full-time and online/blended) learners who require additional support earlier in their academic life and ensure adequate supports are provided.
5. Embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across programmes, with appropriate training and supports.
6. Develop MOUs with 2nd level/ETBs with a focus on pathways into IT Sligo and to providing greater access to our facilities by 2nd level educators.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Provide opportunities for increased participation by entrants from socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education.
- Continue to support participation by increasing the number of entrants from further education (FE) colleges, Education and Training Boards (ETBs) and other entrants with FETAC awards.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Support participation by full-time mature student new entrants (currently 11.4%) through the provision of focused supports.
2. Support participation by students with disabilities (currently at 10%).
3. Sustain participation of under-represented groups (currently 34.4%) through existing and new access initiatives, including participation in the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) scheme from 2019 and in the HEA-funded Programmes for Access to Third Level (PATH) schemes.
4. Support CAO entry by students with FETAC awards (11.3% of new entrants in 2016/17) through strong engagement with FE colleges and Education and Training Boards (ETBs).
5. Increase the number of advanced entry students from Further Education (FE) colleges and other HEIs, focusing on progression opportunities for Level 6 graduates.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has one stated priority:

- Teaching, learning and graduate readiness: enable our students to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of society via the provision of a student-centred educational environment which is underpinned by excellence in teaching and learning. Our graduates will be distinctive by virtue of their educational experience and will possess essential skills and attributes relevant to both the workplace and civic society.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Integrating the goal and objective of the national access plan into institutional activities.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- LYIT will sustain improvements in participation and success rates for students from under-represented groups.
- LYIT will draft a Student Success Strategy encompassing commitments to equity of access that further builds on Institute strengths in relation to the participation of under-represented groups.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Institute will continue to build relationships with the schools in LYIT's catchment area, particularly the DEIS schools, to ensure more of these disadvantaged cohorts of learners make a successful transition to higher education.
2. The strategy will be informed by the *National Plan for Equality of Access* and international best practice and will further target the Programme for Access to Third Level (PATH) Fund to help deliver these initiatives.
3. LYIT is determined to continue to play a leading role in relation to equity of access at a national level.
4. The Student Success Strategy will involve the selection of a comprehensive set of metrics to ensure that the participation of the various under-represented groups is accurately tracked.
5. The Student Success Strategy will set targets for various sub-groups of students and identify the most appropriate manner to attract these learners, accurately profile specific supports that will be required, and ensure these supports are in place for these learners from the outset.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Maintaining and enhancing appropriate pathways and necessary supports to enable students continued progression through their educational journey.
- Using all available data resources to identify students from under-represented learner groups who are most in need of our support.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. PATH 2 to target the following groups for access provision: learners experiencing socio-economic disadvantage; learners with disability and/or specific learning difficulty; mature learners; travellers and ethnic minorities; lone parents.
2. Development of a Student Success Strategy by 2020 to further develop this access agenda, with plans to design an integrated App to support this strategy on an institute-wide basis.
3. Appointment of a dedicated retention officer to address student retention, along with targeted learning support, adoption of a student-centric approach to timetabling and peer mentoring.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- To increase participation rates by people of all stages along the life-cycle, with special focus on those most distanced from access to higher education opportunities.
- Student retention rates will be constant and among the top 5% of overall performance levels reported by institutions in the Irish higher education sector.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. A new wider participation strategy – WELCOME (Widening Entry to Lifelong Learning and Career Opportunities through MIC) – will be developed enabling a community-connected pre-entry targeting strategy linked to MIC's transition/retention support strategies.
2. MIC will lead a new initiative for access to teacher education under PATH I, leading to increased participation levels by people traditionally distanced from the profession of teaching.
3. A fully integrated Transition Management Programme (Tús Maith) will be introduced as a key element of MIC's overall Learner Engagement and Activation Plan (LEAP).
4. A new holistic and tightly coordinated Student Health and Well-Being Strategy will be developed, incorporating RAPHAEL (Rapid Response Protocol for Students at Risk of Harm or Emotional Vulnerability); a new protocol for management of student crisis events.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- We will build on our experience and achievements in supporting access, participation and success for students from diverse backgrounds, continuing our current programme and extending our work to address other groups that face barriers to participation and success in higher education.
- We will support our staff in making curricula, teaching and learning more inclusive, international and intercultural and will work to create an inclusive academic environment.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will intensify the efforts of the Maynooth Access Programme (MAP) for those groups it currently serves (socioeconomic disadvantage, disability, and mature students) and extend our work to address the needs of other groups who experience barriers to participation and success (including lone parents, migrants and refugees, prisoners and former offenders, Traveller and Roma). This will be done through a combination of outreach activities, entry supports and post-entry supports.
2. We will bring our experiences in ensuring student success across a very diverse student population and publish a Strategy for Student Success in the 2019/20 academic session. This strategy will include consideration of (i) entry routes and entry standards, (ii) pre-entry information, (iii) orientation and initial information, (iv) advisory services, (v) support services, (vi) pass rates and standards.
3. We will adopt a strategic approach to outreach and civic engagement activities which will include a greater focus on communities and groups who face the greatest barriers to participation in higher education. This will include establishing a network of community connectors (funded by the PATH programme) who will engage directly with under-represented groups, including Travellers, and make them aware of the opportunities and the supports available.

4. Pre- and post-entry supports: We will continue to enhance our pre-entry supports. We will review and revise the Certificate in Science which is a pathway to degrees in science. We will also review our pre-entry orientation for under-represented students. We will continue to expand our post entry supports including; (i) the MAP ambassador programme, (ii) Student Plus, an introduction to university learning, (iii) the mathematics support centre, and (iv) the programme advisory office.
5. We will continue to show regional and national leadership in responding to and implementing the strands of the PATH programme.
6. Travellers: We will specifically welcome and support students from the Traveller community. This is a specific focus for the community connectors, who will liaise with Traveller groups as part of a systematic outreach to Travellers. Travellers who have completed their university education will be encouraged to act as supporting ambassadors, and specific post-entry support through one-to-one liaison will be provided for Traveller students.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has three stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 1a: This initiative will enable NCAD to contribute to the HEA's high-level target of increasing the numbers of HE entrants studying on a flexible basis (target 4.1.2), but it will also contribute to targets such as increasing the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning (4.1.1), increasing the tertiary attainment of 30-34 year olds (4.1.3), as well as working towards contributing to sustaining the expansion from under-represented groups within HE (4.4.4).
- Strategic Initiative 3a: In addition to meeting the HEA high-level target of ensuring that all HEIs have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 (4.4.1), this strategic initiative will contribute to other high-level targets such as: introducing employability statements for all NCAD programmes (4.1.5), enabling students to understand and avail of work-based learning opportunities (4.1.4), implementing National Plans for Access (4.4.2), improving completion rates for disadvantaged students (4.4.6), and improving problematic non-progression rates (4.5.3).
- Strategic Initiative 3b: In addition to contributing to the HEA's high-level target of implementing the strands of PATH to support the National Plan for Equity of Access 2015-2019 (4.4.3), this strategic initiative will also work contribute to further high-level targets, such as: sustaining expansion from under-represented groups in HE (4.4.4), increasing enrolments from DEIS Schools (4.4.5), and improving completion rates for disadvantaged students (4.4.6).

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implementing the pilot student success project for NCAD's first-year students is a key step in building a culture focused upon anticipating and enabling students to successfully overcome the challenges that face them.
2. Gathering feedback from staff, students and student mentors over the course of the pilot project in order to refine, enhance and expand the pilot for 2020/21.
3. Consulting with staff and students to explore understandings of:
 - a. What constitutes 'student success'
 - b. What are the barriers to 'belonging'
 - c. What if it's the wrong programme, wrong time?.

4. For the duration of the PATH programmes, the College will closely review the evaluation process built into each strand to identify key findings that will help NCAD better understand barriers to participation from under-represented groups that are particular to our field.
5. In September 2018 we will establish a Widening Participation Working Group with representation from both academic and student services departments across the College. A key objective for this Working Group during the first year of the compact will be to identify the resources and appropriate processes/models to initiate the research required to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers experienced and perceived by the participants who engage in the PATH programmes.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Build on NUIG's commitment to support a diverse student body and create a culture of inclusivity.
- Will improve completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts and implement new data initiatives and indicators to drive student success.

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Sustain the expansion from under-represented groups with enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and from further education access programmes – increase the number of places available to applicants from the FE sector from 62 in 2017/18 to 190 by the end of AY 2020/21.
2. Progress partnerships with other HEIs, ETBs and community providers in the West/North West Cluster to develop additional entry opportunities for students from groups under-represented e.g. lone parents, ethnic minorities. Minimum target of 30 students.
3. HEAR scheme – Higher Education Access Route for school-leavers who can benefit from and succeed in higher education and who come from socio-economic groups that are under-represented in third level education.
4. Outreach of access across the region – delivery of Foundation Courses targeting socioeconomically disadvantaged young adults/school leavers in Ballinasloe, Connemara and Sligo.
5. To have a Student Success Strategy in place by AY 2020/21 to support and enhance student transition, progression and achievement of non-traditional students.
6. To develop a data warehouse facility to support student success strategies that underpin improvements in learning, retention and progression rates for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- Commitment to grow the diversity of STAC's student population through equal access, inclusion and widening participation.
- Provide a tailored academic programme for adult learners with intellectual disabilities.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Engage with NUIG's Student Success Strategy in place by AY 2020/21 to support and enhance student transition, progression and achievement of non-traditional students.
2. Review existing services and supports for non-traditional groups and identify specific needs related to progression, retention and success.
3. Establish a Mature Students Society by 2019.
4. Academic departments to continue to explore means of reducing costs associated with the commencement of programmes and offer financial supports to disadvantaged groups.
5. In association with the Access office, offer additional entry pathways to individuals in direct provision.
6. Utilise data from the PATH (APT) project to design indicators to support the development and implementation of access routes into Initial Teacher Education in line with the *National Plan for Equity of Access*.
7. Through data gathering by the Access Office, contribute to NUIG's targets to sustain the expansion from under-represented groups with enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and from further education access programmes.
8. Progress data gathering within partnerships with other HEIs, ETBs and community providers in the West/North West Cluster to develop an additional entry pathway for students from under-represented groups in HE (e.g. lone parents, ethnic minorities).

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Improve the equality of opportunity through education and training.
- Recruit a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

Trinity College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Increase recruitment from non-traditional entrants and achieve a broader representation of students throughout Ireland.
2. Support and enhance the transition to university.
3. To renew outreach and admissions processes to attract priority groups.
4. To lead on a cross-institutional mentoring programme to integrate current undergraduate students who represent the six *National Access Plan* target groups in DEIS schools/communities across Leinster.
5. Committed to increasing the number of DARE and HEAR students.
6. Increase progression from the FET sector by focusing on the following: expanding the Liberal Arts progression numbers; making use of the Maths for TEM QQI award as a route for entry to STEM courses; increasing number of places available in Science and Nursing QQI progression; and establish new FET routes to the university.
7. To sustain philanthropic funding and support for the continued development of access programmes: CAW; TA21 and 21C SOD.
8. To maintain a tutorial service that will: (i) provide support and advice for individual undergraduate students; (ii) organise the Orientation Week for Freshers; (iii) run the College financial assistance programme; (iv) provide input into a number of College committees; and (v) coordinate related services and activities for College.

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has one key priority:

- Build on UCC's Access strengths to date by further widening participation and enhancing access for all students, fostering an inclusive environment that mainstreams diversity and equality.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Strengthen UCC's evidence base for widening participation through the development of a data strategy for access.
2. Develop a new UCC Student Records System that facilitates opportunities for improved data connectivity, assessment of performance and analytical capabilities across the entirety of the student life cycle.
3. Recruit a Director of Access in 2018/19.
4. Deliver PATH Strands 1, 2 and 3.
5. Increase the number of students progressing from DEIS Schools into Further Education and on to Higher Education through implementation of a new innovative support programme for students from DEIS Schools attending post-Leaving Certificate colleges in Cork City in collaboration with Cork ETB.
6. Achieve 25% student intake through access admission routes of UCC's total increased student intake by 2021.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Develop and implement a suite of responses to widen access and ensure participation by diverse student cohorts, including students with disabilities, mature students, part-time students, students from communities experiencing disadvantage, Irish Travellers/ethnic minorities, lone parents, refugees, asylum seekers and those given leave to remain.
- To support and enable the University to develop an institution-wide, universally designed and inclusive approach to access, participation and success, and 'integrate the principle of equity of access more fully into the everyday life of the HEIs so that it permeates all faculties and departments, and is not marginalised as the responsibility of the designated access office'.

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Further expand our activities to widen access and ensure participation by diverse student cohorts, including students with disabilities, mature students, part-time students, students from communities experiencing disadvantage, Irish Travellers/ethnic minorities, lone parents, refugees, asylum seekers and those given leave to remain. Expand the UCD Future You Community Outreach Programme, to include additional Family Fora, Further Education settings, disability organisations and community partnerships, in addition to the inclusion of DEIS primary schools (secondary DEIS schools currently participate).
2. Implement the HEA approved PATH 1, 2 and 3 proposals, whereby approximately €990,000 was awarded to a UCD-led consortium to increase access to higher education for under-represented student cohorts.

3. Institutional level admissions, progression and completion data for all equity student groups are currently available to all undergraduate Programme Boards (PBs). Programme level admissions data is now also available to all. Work is planned to develop programme level data for progression and completion between 2018 and 2020
4. Continue to implement the University for All initiative to mainstream access and widening participation. UCD was the first Irish university to develop a strategy for a whole-institution approach.
5. Distillation of existing student success associated initiatives and strategies, with particular reference to the UCD Student Education Strategy, Our Students' Education and Experience 2015-2020.
6. Completion of a UCD Student Experience Mapping project which will identify opportunities for improved integration of student services and supports and will also highlight gaps and areas for prioritisation in the overall student experience.
7. Evaluation of internal and external technological tools that allow the UCD student and staff community to reflect on attendance, engagement, retention and academic progress for all students in order to optimise approaches that harness data analytics for student success.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Access Limerick: the University focuses on the equality of opportunity through the strategic and coordinated work of three dedicated units: the Access Office to support the recruitment, progression and success of students from disadvantaged backgrounds; the Mature Students Office and the Disability Office.
- Progression and Retention: progression of undergraduate students has been a key challenge, with a 13% non-progression rate in Year 1 and an overall drop-out rate of 24% dating back to 2014. To tackle this issue, UL is developing a range of approaches under the guidance of the newly appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Engagement.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. UL in partnership with Limerick City Council and Limerick County Council will work to enhance outreach in DEIS schools to grow opportunities for those in communities marred by disadvantage and social exclusion.
2. Part of an enhanced outreach offer will be the establishment of DEIS summer camps at UL to provide first-hand experience of the university.
3. UL is also expanding its students volunteering programme to enhance DEIS engagement.
4. The Personal Advisory Support System (PASS) will be redeveloped and made compulsory from September 2019.
5. A data-driven Learning Analytics tool will be established to monitor and evaluate students' learning progress. Linking this tool to the revised PASS, it will support early intervention to foster student success (retention, progression, completion). It will also provide a meaningful instrument for the review and revision of existing programmes as well as the development of transformative learning approaches and methods

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Gather and report on data relating to access to identify under-represented groups in the profile of the Institute, and actively recruit from those groups to align with national targets.
- Focus particular attention on socio-economically disadvantaged (SED) groups in its access effort over the coming period.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. To deliver a comprehensive Institute-wide Widening Participation (WP) Data Framework complete with proposed implementation plan with matched timelines and identification of associated resource requirements.
2. Senior management within WIT will support and lead on an Institute WP Data Project. This project will operate on an Institute-wide basis and within a 12-month period.
3. WIT will set up and resource an access, participation and retention data implementation sub-group.
4. Gather and collate data on all access activities across Institute and map onto WIT Strategic Plan and National Access Plan to identify baseline data for activities with specific remit around under-represented target groups.
5. Identify appropriate priority areas and restructure associated activities to support academic integration into one academic school on a pilot basis.
6. Work in collaboration with the relevant national bodies to investigate a pilot restructuring of the current WIT undergraduate SED entry routes (Pathways/REACH) to facilitate additional entries from the target cohorts.

5. Quality teaching and learning

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 5

Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence.

High-level targets for quality teaching and learning

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 5 (quality teaching and learning) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff in all HEIs.
- All HEIs to engage in International benchmarking by 2020.
- Improve problematic non-progression rates by 10% (overall baseline of 15% for 2014/15).
- Improve non-progression rates in STEM disciplines by 10% (differing discipline baselines).
- All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019.
- The HEA will develop guidelines to steer the process of total quality management, in line with best international practice.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for quality teaching and learning, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Develop a Total Quality Management Strategy and subscribe to becoming a data-driven organisation to enhance decision-making capacity. AIT commits to rolling reviews of the academic position to include: level, discipline, architecture, and delivery method for all programmes. This is to ensure that offerings are contemporary, relevant, and fit for purpose.
- Building on the success of the Sunday Times Higher Education Ranking and ISSE benchmarking, Athlone Institute of Technology aspires to become an internationally-ranked (U-Multirank) institution.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Support the professional development of staff as critical decision-makers both with respect to academic excellence and quality assurance/enhancement.
2. Develop a dashboard of critical data, compliant with a schedule of reporting that is accessible to relevant faculties and units with a focus on access, progression and retention.
3. Using QS metrics, internally model faculties and subject areas to determine priority area for comparison and ranking.
4. Develop a strategy and action plan to improve performance relevant to QS metrics.

5. Incorporate universal design principles in new curricula design.
6. Further develop the online distance learning strategy to respond to learner needs and emerging opportunities.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- To pioneer and implement innovative approaches aimed at improving the student experience, progression and success.
- Enable staff to pursue their career goals and contribute to the success of the Institute in a workplace environment which is inclusive, respectful and supportive.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Improve and customise our student support services.
2. Review and improve prospective student engagement processes.
3. Work in partnership with CIT's students to ensure the continued inclusion of the student voice at decision-making level.
4. Develop CIT's policy, strategy and infrastructure for digital teaching and learning.
5. Expand and increase opportunities for student participation in work placement, study opportunities abroad and to gain an international experience.
6. Develop graduates with the skills, attitudes and capabilities to use knowledge which enables them to succeed and progress in their careers.
7. Creation of a Faculty Dashboard System to provide visibility to student success trends.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To establish a professional development framework for teaching and learning and to enhance significantly the learning experience of our students.
- To renew and advance our Digital Teaching and Learning Strategy and to significantly increase our online provision.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Develop and establish a framework for teaching and learning to include an accredited award in higher education.
2. Develop a revised scheme for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, including a review of the QuEST module-level student surveys on teaching quality.
3. Pilot the roll-out of a teaching effectiveness scheme, including the implementation of a new model for student feedback on teaching quality and have the full roll-out by 2020/21.
4. Introduce a teaching fellowship scheme with a strong emphasis on blended and online learning.
5. Launch significant postgraduate programme elements on online platform(s) allowing new models of programme delivery that support upskilling and international education targets.
6. Implement online curriculum elements in the undergraduate curriculum, exposing all on-campus students to online learning experiences.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Delivery of specific elements of the consolidated campus at Grangegorman.
- Development of the Digital Campus to provide a modern and responsive academic and service experience for all students, supporting appropriate transformation of learning.

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The consolidated campus at Grangegorman will:
 - a. Provide students with significant top-class facilities that underpin the Institute's education philosophy and framework for an integrated curriculum.
 - b. Provide 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.
 - c. Promote an enhanced experience for staff members, bringing colleagues together and assisting in promoting greater collegiality.
 - d. Assist in addressing the traditional fragmentation of DIT and assist in building an integrated Institute as DIT moves to a TU Dublin.
2. Evolution of the curriculum to reflect the opportunities afforded by 'digital' and the blend with more traditional modes of teaching and learning.
3. The development of an e-portfolio for every student capturing their progress through their academic programme and enhancing their employability prospects.
4. An enhanced offering for part-time and flexible students supporting growth in these learner cohorts and the quality of their experience.
5. Review of programme development and quality assurance frameworks to ensure that opportunities to develop digital learning materials are fully supported by these frameworks.
6. Development and implementation of a workload model for academic staff that supports digital teaching and learning.
7. Review of processes and policies associated with every phase of the student management lifecycle to ensure that they are digitally 'fit for purpose'.
8. Identification of digital skills inventory necessary to underpin coaching programme.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- To provide effective learner centred supports.
- To enhance learner retention rates and completion rates.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. DKIT has shown leadership in the area of digital citizenship, which is essential in developing a positive digital culture that promotes learning. This is also linked to the Social Networking Policy. All student ambassadors are trained to deliver the Digital Citizenship programme.

2. They deliver this to all first-years as part of induction. DkIT is part of the National Forum's DESSI (Data Enhanced Student Success Initiative) and will be working this year to develop policies and practices to provide a framework to use data, including learning analytics, to support learning and achievement.
3. DkIT continues to develop new pedagogical approaches, assessment and delivery methods and continues to support its students through the Student Learning and Development Centre. The Institute has observed that the need for this service has expanded and intensified with demand being driven by 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students requiring support in such areas as academic writing and maths. Progression figures are monitored at programme and Institute level.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has two stated priorities:

- For most institutions of higher education, the desire to learn from each other and to share aspects of good practice is almost as old as the university concept. The development of benchmarking in higher education, arising as it does from other initiatives concerns both the assurance and enhancement of quality and the drive to increase the effectiveness of management.
- As a student-centred institution, GMIT aims to provide an optimal learning environment providing our students with a transformative university experience. Students and their success is core to our mission. Our institutional culture provides an open and supportive student environment, and our teaching is focused on meeting the intellectual, personal and social needs of students.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. European University Association (EUA) benchmarking project identified.
2. Using the U-Multirank tool to benchmark the institution with other participating HEIs within Ireland. Identify three European/international universities with a similar profile to GMIT; conduct a benchmarking exercise, and identify collaborative opportunities.
3. Use ISSE data to benchmark GMIT student engagement with the IoT sector.
4. New LTA strategy approved. Implementation plan developed and resourced.
5. Facilitating all new staff to pursue elements of the master's in Learning and Teaching.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- IADT will review and assess the quality of its academic provision and systems of academic quality enhancement through a systematic process of benchmarking key disciplines against international best practice.
- IADT will undertake a systematic review of the quality of the learning environment and implement specific and measurable improvements tailored to meet the needs of our key disciplines; seeking to provide students with both industry standard and academically excellent spaces and resources.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Develop, implement and monitor a defined system of national and international benchmarking.
2. Develop a coordinated system of academic staff acting as external examiners both nationally and internationally.
3. Develop further the training opportunities for administrative and academic staff through Erasmus+.
4. Seek out new professional and educational memberships of organisations in order to network and observe best practice.
5. Develop and publish an updated ICT strategy for the Institute.
6. Develop policies and procedures on space provision and physical infrastructure appropriate to each of the disciplines.
7. Develop policies and procedures in relation to the provision of VLEs that allow for online and distance learning.
8. 2017 Campus Masterplan reviewed reprioritising projects as a result of mapping against programme expansion/development.
9. Review space utilisation and review and implement transparent criteria for space utilisation that prioritises study spaces and student centres.
10. Plan for investment in technology platforms and equipment drafted.
11. Implement a fully integrated digital CRM system for student registration; administration; assessment and academic records – through to graduation and continuing alumni engagement.
12. Opportunities for the development of on-campus student accommodation identified and explored.
13. Campus external spaces upgraded.
14. New Digital Media Building opened.
15. Additional space for City Centre Programmes sourced.
16. Opportunities for additional campus space in Dún Laoghaire explored and developed.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Enable individuals and teams to grow professionally and personally through a transformational learning environment.
- Support the evolving change and development needs of our people.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. At least 90% of the full-time academic staff, engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level, hold a master's degree or doctoral degree.
2. Encourage staff development such that within 10 years, the Institute will increase the proportion of its full-time academic staff holding a doctoral degree from at least 45% to at least 65%.

3. Use creative and agile thinking in ITB's approach to transformational work.
4. Enhance opportunities for dialogue, team participation and experimentation with how ITB conducts business.
5. Deliver a digital campus for TU Dublin.
6. Participation in and evaluation of U-Multirank as an effective means of benchmarking with other higher education institutions internationally.
7. Provide training opportunities to enhance skills and offer career and leadership development programmes, including support for lecturers using online learning platforms.
8. Support change management initiatives by offering coaching and mentoring programmes to support autonomy in developing new work practices.
9. Participation in USI, QQI, HEA and the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.
10. Professional development and excellence in teaching is recognised and reinforced by engaging with learning teaching and technology centres.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- Institute of Technology Carlow will continue to prioritise the Continuous Professional Development of all staff.
- Building on our ICT infrastructure and virtual learning environment, we will implement strategic pilot projects within existing programmes and cross-campus and develop an integrated institutional strategic plan for blended, flexible and distributed learning.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Institute is committed to providing its academic staff with the necessary advice and support to allow them to professionally develop their knowledge and skills. This has been demonstrated in the increase in the number academic staff with doctoral qualifications and in the number currently undergoing such studies. Specifically, the Institute introduced a new staff development policy in October 2012 aimed at increasing the numbers of academic staff with doctoral qualifications.
2. Through its adoption of the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy in 2015, the mid-term review (2016) of Strategic Plan 2014-2018, and Strategic Plan 2019-2023, the Institute has committed to increasing its digital capacity through the design and implementation of digital teaching and learning. Currently, it is finalising its framework for the adoption of blended learning approaches to its programmes. This framework takes into account current national and international thinking on digital learning.
3. The Institute is conscious of the need to continuously monitor and implement innovative methods in order to enhance students' learning and thus improve progression rates. This applies to STEM and other programmes. Currently this is implemented through drop-in centres, peer assisted learning and tutorials.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Develop and implement a staff development plan.
- Develop the Centre of Learning and Teaching (CELT) along with enhanced supports for student learning, including benchmarking.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Carry out an annual training needs analysis and implement training programmes.
2. 80% member of staff to engage in CPD annually.
3. Regular review of virtual learning environment (VLE) and carry out ACODE benchmarking for technology enhanced learning (TEL).
4. Review best practice for design/delivery/assessment strategy for online students (see also 4Bb).
5. Build a set of learning analytics – e.g. student engagement, progression, completion rates, etc.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Provide staff training and development opportunities to support the evolving change and development needs of staff.
- Enhance the first-year experience and support student success and retention through a series of designated actions implemented across all disciplines.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implement a Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff, with a focus on the development of digital teaching and learning skills.
2. Support the education and training needs of professional services staff, including in the context of TU designation.
3. Improve non-progression rates through the introduction of a Critical Skills Development module on all first-year programmes and the development and implementation of a Student Success Strategy across all departments.
4. Support the student experience through a series of initiatives, including provision of seminars on fitness, nutrition and health and participation in clubs and societies.
5. Enhance the student experience using appropriate benchmarking through the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) data and uMultirank.
6. Invest in maintenance and renewal of equipment and teaching facilities subject to available resources.
7. Complete the design, planning and tender process for a Sports Science, Health and Recreation building with a grass playing pitch and complete the project by Q1 2021.
8. Engage with the NFDA, HEA and DES to further the development of a new Culinary Arts, Hospitality & Tourism Building through a PPP process for completion in Q3 2021.
9. Promote a Green Campus and obtain Green Flag Award.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has two stated priorities:

- Teaching, learning and graduate readiness: enable our students to achieve their full potential and contribute to the development of society via the provision of a student-centred educational environment which is underpinned by excellence in teaching and learning. Our graduates will be distinctive by virtue of their educational experience and will possess essential skills and attributes relevant to both the workplace and civic society.
- Fellowship and inclusivity: foster a high-quality staff and student experience where an atmosphere of mutual respect and support permeates all activities. Our staff and students will be valued, empowered and encouraged to actively engage in the wider community and we will promote a culture of active citizenship.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Development and implementation of a rolling five-year retention strategy focusing on the first-year cohort.
2. Working with and empowering staff to create a better work environment.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- A comprehensive development in Institute quality assurance is planned, which will contribute to International benchmarking and address non-progression rates in STEM disciplines.
- Continuous professional development for all staff categories with an emphasis on academic staff and the adoption of new technologies in the delivery of programmes.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The need for Institute restructuring to ensure that the necessary resources are in place to effectively support Institute reporting, quality monitoring, and important decision-making bodies.
2. Through the Cyclical Review 2018 the Institute is committed to framing a guideline on induction/first year experience that will build on existing Institute initiatives and innovations (i.e. peer mentoring, transition to college life, and motivating students for future employment opportunities.)
3. Development of a strategy to encompass all aspects of technology enhanced learning, working collaboratively with partner institutions and via industry collaborations.
4. Commitment to empowering staff personal and professional development.
5. Development of an LYIT Strategy for Digital Enhancement of Teaching and Learning to promote digital skills for staff and students and building digital capacity.
6. Existing supports in respect of teaching, learning and assessment will be further developed and supporting academic staff in relation to their own discipline areas will also be prioritised.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- To attract, develop and retain a high performing, talented, diverse and flexible workforce to deliver quality teaching, learning, research, services and support.
- Development of a policy on Blended and Online Learning by 2019.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implementation of the Continuous Professional Development Framework from 2018 will support staff to plan for their professional development needs, with teaching and learning and digital learning as integral components.
2. Supporting staff to develop their skills in designing active learning across all areas of the curriculum.
3. Development of a CPD pathway in teaching, learning and assessment for all staff.
4. Further development of the international dimension and the potential for increasing the number of outward study trips for staff.
5. Investment in appropriate infrastructure and platforms to facilitate the use of technology enhanced learning (TEL).
6. Training and support to academic staff and students to enable development of digital literacy skills.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- MIC will renew its emphasis on continuous quality assurance.
- MIC to be recognised both nationally and internationally as having a benchmark of quality that is informed by innovation and research.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Design and adopt a new MIC Quality Assurance Framework that will enable relevant personnel to drive processes that enhance the learning environment.
2. Development of a new, multi-dimensional Strategy for Teaching and Learning (face-to-face and digital) governing integrated academic provision and professional service support by 2020.
3. Coordinated integration of the Centre for Teaching and Learning with the academic programme approval process.
4. Creation of new opportunities for professional development and accreditation in teaching and learning practice in accordance with national strategy as well as MIC's broader international strategy which supports staff to avail of an Erasmus+ international credit mobility for teaching, research or training/CPD.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- We will further enhance our supports for teaching development and learning innovation.
- We will enhance our quality assurance and quality enhancement processes, and strengthen the link between quality enhancement and strategic planning.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will strengthen our capacity to support a culture of reflection and continuous improvement in teaching and learning practice and the adoption of innovative methodologies, through a seminar and masterclass series and a formal professional development programme.
2. We will establish a Teaching Innovation Fund and extend the current Teaching Fellowship programme to sponsor novel approaches to teaching and learning that have the potential for wider application and transformative impact and to support pedagogical research.
3. We will fund the development and launch of three blended e-learning programmes in the 2019-2021 period, and will use our experience of these to develop a Maynooth University Strategy and Action Plan for blended and e-learning.
4. We will use the forthcoming CINNTE independent review of our quality assurance/quality enhancement processes to further develop a culture of continuous quality enhancement and to formalise the links between quality assurance and strategic planning at institutional, faculty and departmental levels.
5. We will implement a faculty-level strategic planning process, to support the planned growth of the university, foster interdepartmental collaboration, promote quality enhancement, and link quality assurance/quality improvement processes to formal strategic planning.
6. We will establish annual quality enhancement themes derived from those recommendations within quality reviews that are best delivered at faculty or university level.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has two stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 3c: Close attention is being paid to non-progression rates across all undergraduate years, on the part of both student services and heads of department. Our assumption has been that the significant curricular change and the governance difficulties being experienced by NCAD were key factors in these changes.
- Strategic Initiative 4b: There has been little formal support for staff undertaking CPD since 2011, and no clear prioritisation in respect of the development of academic and non-academic staff. This was identified as a pressing issue for staff through the institutional review process undertaken by NCAD across 2016 and 2017, and reflected as an issue to be addressed in the Peer Review Report. Acknowledging that the College is starting from a low base, the College will work to establish and implement a Continuous Professional Development Framework from September 2021.

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Utilise ISSE and NCAD's Annual End-of-Year Survey to review student feedback between 2012 and 2017 to assess changing patterns in response.
2. Expand the Annual End-of-Year Student Survey to elicit more specific information in respect of factors influencing non-progression rates.

3. During the first year of implementation (and in subsequent years), student feedback in respect of the measures take will be gathered through bi-annual Programme Review Forums, the Annual End-of-Year Survey, and the ISSE,
4. Structured interview with students requesting time-out (undertaken by head of department or a nominee from among the academic staff of the department).
5. Evaluation of progress against KPIs for first year of implementation.
6. Specify targets and KPIs for second year of implementation.
7. Driving the development of a CPD Framework for the College will require the appointment of a HR Manager, and the stabilisation of the HR Department of the College.
8. Having established the resources needed in order to implement a Continuous Professional Development Plan that meets the learning and teaching and wider development needs of the College, the final stage will be building an implementation plan that identifies how the necessary resources will be secured and how competing priorities and needs will be addressed over time.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Ensure that staff who teach and design our programmes are provided with professional training and development opportunities.
- Review, revise and develop new curricula to ensure that our portfolio of programmes is innovative, responsive to local, national and international demands, attractive to students and relevant to the needs of the modern learner.

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Align existing professional development and training programmes for academic staff with the National Professional Development Framework.
2. Roll out of a new professorial promotion route for scholarship.
3. Ongoing work on the development of an agreed new Senior Lecturer Promotion Scheme, with a strand to recognise excellence in teaching and learning.
4. Develop Student Engagement policy for involving students in governance and programme design and review, as part of NSTEP (National Student Engagement Project).
5. Begin procurement of supporting technology to develop a toolkit of resources to colleges for the systematic management of student feedback on modules and programmes.
6. Ongoing implementation of Continuous Professional Development Framework for academic staff.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- To offer staff the opportunities for professional development, leadership support, management, teaching and learning education.
- Enhance the digital competencies of staff.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implement the Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff from AY 2018/19 on STAC's campus, with the development of an additional entry route for early career staff by the end of AY 2020/21.

2. Extend the recognition of and reward the scholarship of teaching and learning through the introduction of a new professorial promotion route for scholarship.
3. Assist NUIG to ensure that employers, professionals, community partners are involved in at least 75% of programme and/or advisory boards by 2020/21 across both campuses.
4. Develop Digital Student Engagement Policy and processes for involving and engaging students as active partners.
5. Develop and implement innovative digital strategies for teaching and learning in Initial Teacher Education, Nurse Education, Food and Nutrition, and other cognate and relevant academic disciplines.
6. Develop policy for digital teaching and learning by 2019.
7. Introduce an Annual Student Feedback policy with supporting technology and robust implementation that monitors and evaluates curriculum at modular level.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has one main stated priority:

- Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff.

Trinity College Dublin will enable this priority through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Support the continuing development of a distinctive research-inspired education with ongoing research and training programmes in academic practice.
2. Introduction of a tenure track path as the primary mechanism for recruiting early career academic staff.
3. A development programme has been designed to support new academic staff in the early period, including a mentor to support their academic and personal development.
4. Availability of a blended learning course to enable professional skills for research leaders.
5. The Momentum Programme is in place to support established academics, who would benefit from support in new leadership responsibilities or who are looking towards the next stage of their careers.
6. The Centre for Academic Practice and eLearning (CAPSL) Teaching and Learning programme offers a 15 ECTS Special Purpose Certificate in Academic Practice that focuses on academic development in teaching, learning and digital teaching and learning that is non-accredited. Aim to increase the number of graduates from the Special Purpose Certificate (SP Cert) by 20% by 2020/21. (baseline 15 in 2017/18).

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has two stated priorities:

- Strengthen the Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff at UCC.
- Implement an improved and comprehensive quality enhancement approach at UCC.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Building on the University's introduction of a digital badging framework in 2017/18, enhance staff development by extending digital badging to include a badge in Universal Design for Learning.
2. Strengthen the alignment of CPD for staff with quality enhancement and quality culture, through the Office of the Vice President for Learning and Teaching engaging in a pilot of the new method of quality review in 2018/19.
3. Continue to strengthen the integration of research, teaching and learning through supporting staff research and scholarly output in relevant disciplinary journals.
4. Evaluate the alignment of existing programmes and module offerings in line with the learning taxonomy and ensure that new programme development is informed by the taxonomy.
5. Refine and pilot a revised academic quality review method in 2018/19 with increased emphasis on enhancement of student learning.
6. Pilot a revised model for professional/support services review in 2019/20, to be followed by the development of a revised research quality model arising from the outcomes of previous whole institution Research Quality Reviews (2009 and 2015).
7. Develop and implement an evaluation framework for effectiveness of all reviews 2020/2021.
8. From 2019/20 extend methodology to broaden benchmarking reference points, including relevant external disciplinary and service benchmarks.
9. Develop UCC's unique commitment to the active participation of students across the University's quality processes.
10. By 2019/20 implement a Student Quality portal to support enhanced student engagement in quality processes.
11. In 2020/21 evaluate student participation in quality, and update in light of international practices and outcomes achieved at UCC.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- o This focus on quality assurance will facilitate UCD's capacity to engage with High-level Target 6 (The HEA will develop guidelines to steer the process of total quality management, in line with best international practice) and more broadly with 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).
- o UCD is committed to digital teaching and learning. Under Priority 1 of the UCD Education Strategy, Action 1.3 states 'Work with programme teams to incorporate blended learning to create flexibility and anticipate the realities of future digital worlds'. This priority is aligned with High-level Target 5 (All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019).

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Engage fully with the QQI Institutional Review planned for 2019. This will provide an opportunity for UCD to demonstrate the effectiveness of its quality enhancement processes through the provisions of evidence of enhancements arising from unit reviews and the associated quality improvement plans and also from University-wide continuous improvement projects such as the Curriculum Review and Enhancement Programme.

2. Prioritise enhancement of feedback systems and closure of the student feedback loop based on an analysis of module feedback and data from the ISSE. A 'you said, we did' campaign will be implemented for the ISSE and other institution-wide surveys associated with the student experience.
3. Developing an Assessment Enhancement Implementation Framework Assessment is an integral part of programme design and a fundamental aspect of the student learning experience. The Curriculum Review & Enhancement (CRE) project highlighted a number of assessment challenges and concerns related to programme assessment and feedback approaches. Recent national-level projects highlighted the importance of programme approaches to assessment and feedback (National Forum, 2017)
4. Invest in a three-year project to enhance student counselling and wellbeing services (2018/19), incorporating a point of care assessment, which will be new to the service model.
5. In 2018/19 commission a virtual learning environment aligned to the current and future needs of the learners and staff. This project is due to be completed by the end 2019 but will need continued evaluation beyond this date.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Improving progression and completion: building on the work of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, targeted measures to support learners in areas with problematic non-progression rates will be developed and implemented through specific learner groups.
- Common entry into undergraduate programmes: UL has developed a number of common entry programmes, in Engineering, Arts and Computer Science. The most complex of the programmes is the joint BA with MIC. Launched in 2017, the common entry Bachelor of Arts offered in conjunction with MIC represents the largest jointly delivered Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences programme in Ireland.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Building on the work of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, targeted measures to support learners in areas with problematic non-progression rates will be developed and implemented through specific learner groups.
2. Programme/module review, the development of blended learning components as well as academic staff development in the area of transformative pedagogies shall be targeted at areas of problematic non-progression.
3. The development and implementation of learning analytics will provide additional intelligence and aid the generation of targeted measures to tackle non-progression.
4. A comprehensive Digital Learning Policy including lecture recording shall be implemented by 2019/20.
5. See Objective 1, Strategic Priority 1 re. Learning Innovation Centre.
6. Increase opportunities for interdisciplinary exchange and collaboration including opportunities for cross-fertilisation between STEM and arts-based subjects to foster creativity and interdisciplinary teamwork.
7. Expanding the number of transition modules offered to all students to promote academic success and inclusivity. Specifically, this will involve delivering targeted additional student support modules at crucial points in the programme (preparing for academic success; preparing for cooperative education and Erasmus+).

8. Revising the final year project, which all students undertake. Specifically, we will introduce a range of alternative multi-modal and individually tailored formats that will match better with student talent and enhancing employability.
9. Expanding choice on the programme by offering more vocational/professional skills; specifically, we will introduce Journalism as a subject on the BA programme offering (based on our existing BA in Journalism with New Media).

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Direct increased resources in support of student retention and progression, aligned with a published retention and progression strategy that plans for a 30% reduction in non-progression rates.
- Develop, publish and implement a digital learning strategy by increasing further training in teaching, learning and assessment for faculty and staff.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Institute's overarching strategy for interventions and activities relating to student retention and success is called STEPS: Student Transition, Engagement, Progression and Success.
2. To build on and expand existing activities that have been successfully established in targeting reduction in non-progression. These include: student orientation; P2P: peer mentoring programme; and BYTE: broadening your third level experience.
3. Activate the TEL (technology-enhanced learning) community of practice – a vehicle for the further development of the Institute's technology-enhanced learning capacity.
4. Utilise the increased training budget to continue to facilitate a range of staff events aimed at sharing good practice and encourage the development at least one online or blended programme in each department.

6. Governance, leadership and operational excellence

SYSTEM OBJECTIVE 6

Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

High-level targets for governance, leadership and operational excellence

The high-level targets set out for System Objective 6 (governance, leadership and operational excellence) in the *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020* are:

- Implementation of the 2018 *Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan* and the 2016 Expert Group recommendations.
- HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019 (TUs within 3 years of establishment).
- All HEIs to submit their annual Governance Statements to HEA on time.
- 100% compliance by HEIs with public procurement rules.
- Draft annual financial statements to be submitted by HEIs to C&AG within stipulated C&AG guidelines.
- Full transparency in HEI financial statements about accounting for Trusts and Foundations.
- 100% compliance by HEIs with public pay policy.
- 100% compliance by HEIs with public sector numbers controls.
- Implementation of recommendations from rolling governance reviews.
- HEA will develop individual compacts with the HEIs which reflect the overall ambitions of the *System Performance Framework* and local/regional opportunities.
- Institutional strategic compacts will be assessed by a panel of experts, including international participants, to assess their coherence and capacity for delivery.

In their mission-based performance compacts, the higher education institutions have set out the approach and contribution they are taking to meeting these high-level targets for governance, leadership and operational excellence, in accordance with their distinct strategies and mission. Summaries of each institution's performance compact for this system objective are set out on the following pages.

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Athlone Institute of Technology has made the following statement regarding Objective 6:

- Unlike System Objectives 1-5, the Institute considers System Objective 6 and its high-level targets as mandatory and not an area where we can prioritise some over others.
- The Institute has a record of accomplishment of compliance with governance issues. Athlone Institute of Technology works closely with external stakeholders such as HEA, the Comptroller and Auditor General and others to ensure that the Institute has not only proper policies and procedures in place, but also an ethos of and culture that promotes good governance. The Institute will continue to work in partnership with the HEA in continuing to develop a governance model, which will hold good ethics, integrity and best practice in high regard.

Athlone Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Achieve Athena Swan Bronze Status.
2. Implement recommendations outlined in the HEA's *National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutes*.
3. Embed the Athena Swan Committee as a permanent Institute committee with powers to drive the gender equality agenda.

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Cork Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- To implement rigorous financial practices and controls and strive for the highest standards of fiscal responsibility.
- To ensure that all staff can pursue their career goals and contribute to the success of the institute in a workplace environment which is inclusive, respectful and supportive.

Cork Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implement the *THEA Code of Governance for IoTs*, as well as leading the ongoing development of good governance practice within the sector.
2. Achieve enhanced institutional performance through the implementation of a strategic management framework which is based on analytics, performance data and best-practice research.
3. Implement leadership and management development programme.
4. Develop and support the Athena SWAN initiative to achieve and maintain Bronze institutional award by 2023, original work commenced in January 2017.
5. Continue full transparency in financial statements.
6. Ensure continued compliance with public pay policy and public sector numbers controls.

Dublin City University (DCU)

Dublin City University has two stated priorities:

- To value and develop our staff community and to create a positive working culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.
- Enhance the operational effectiveness of the University through initiatives to drive non-exchequer revenue, environmental sustainability and operational excellence in DCU's processes.

Dublin City University will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. To complete a cross-institutional staff survey on staff well-being and diversity.
2. Foster the development of a staff community ('One DCU') focusing on culture, identity and the lived experience, and have it launched by 2019/20.
3. Launch an annual staff awards scheme to recognise staff contributions and excellence at DCU.
4. Under Athena SWAN, DCU will complete application for Departmental Bronze award by two academic Schools by 2019/20.
5. Deliver a suite of initiatives and events as part of the Women in Leadership initiative.
6. To complete the development of a DCU Sustainability Plan, including establishment of ecological footprint metrics, and deliver on commitments to a plastic-free campus by 2020/21.
7. To establish a Business Development Team to support the pursuit of income generation opportunities and coordinate an annual competition soliciting income generation ideas.

Dublin Institute of Technology (now Technological University Dublin) (DIT)

Dublin Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Implement arrangements for TU designation.
- Attract, recruit, develop and retain the highest calibre of staff, to build a multidimensional diversified and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community.

Dublin Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The TU4Dublin Alliance is committed to building a new type of university to serve the future generations of Dublin and Ireland with the implementation of the next phase of its broad Programme Plan.
2. Engaged in an external review of DIT's recruitment, selection and promotion policies and procedures in 2018. Moving forth, recommendations from this review will be considered and implemented from end of 2018, to support best practice in recruitment for DIT/TU Dublin.
3. Implement the comprehensive Action Plan to address all relevant aspects to support greater gender equality including recruitment, career development, progression and promotion, supporting staff on leave, membership of committees.
4. Commitment to preparing a minimum of two departmental Athena SWAN applications within the two years of attaining the bronze institutional status.
5. To introduce and implement an Agile Working policy, with a view to optimising business efficiency and improving work/life balance for all staff.

6. To develop and roll out a series of Career Planning Workshops as DIT embarks on the next stage as a technological university.
7. 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.
8. Delivery of obligations under governance and to compliance standards as set out in the Financial Memo to HEA.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Dundalk IT has two stated priorities:

- To ensure the long-term sustainability of the Institute.
- To enhance the Institute's reputation as an Institute committed to ensure equality for all students and staff.

Dundalk IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. This is articulated through a series of governance and operational policies and procedures and reviewed by both internal and external audit teams. The Institute is currently in the process of reviewing its current financial and HR policies and procedures to amend and update these in line with the revised *THEA Code of Governance*.
2. The positive response received by the Institute in securing €18.5m funding for capital refurbishment for the North and South Building and additional STEM facilities;
3. Continued access to Landscape Funding as evidenced in the recent success in collaboration with Athlone Institute of Technology in respect of research capacity building;
4. Facilitate DkIT to compete on a level playing field through the provision of a borrowing framework. As discussed earlier, the Institute campus estate is valued at €300 million and the Institute has no capital debt. In order for the Institute to compete DkIT requires access to capital.
5. Openness to imaginative arrangements with Northern Ireland. DkIT is a major player and contributor to the development and sustainability of the North Leinster-South Ulster region. This region is now undergoing a demographic, socio-economic and cultural transformation. A number of key developments, at national level, have significant implications for both the future development of the Institute and hence the region as a whole.

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Galway-Mayo IT has two stated priorities:

- GMIT is committed to implementing and maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance which protects our core values. Our core values underpin the ethos of GMIT and they guide our thinking and actions.
- As 'Equality and Inclusion' is one of the core values of GMIT we commit ourselves to the implementation of the 2018 *Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan*.

Galway-Mayo IT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. GMIT is currently conducting a gap analysis between the current governance practices in the Institute and the requirements of the *THEA Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology*.

2. GMIT will also review and update all existing policies over the three years of the compact.
3. GMIT will implement a risk management framework that will embed risk awareness into the culture of the Institute and all of its activities.
4. The Appointment of a VP with responsibility for Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (potentially as the first joint appointment with a Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) partner).
5. Achievement of timeline targets for the implementation of the 21 recommendations of the *Report of the Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions*, June 2016.
6. We will have established a clear 'roadmap' and achieved the milestones for the attainment of an Athena SWAN bronze Institutional award for GMIT on its 50th Anniversary in 2022.

Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dun Laoghaire (IADT)

IADT has two stated priorities:

- IADT will enhance its current compliance record and will demonstrate leadership and an exemplar position in respect to institutional governance and compliance over the period of the compact.
- IADT will create a positive and diverse campus with a focus on equality of opportunity and diversity.

IADT will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Benchmark key operational services against national and international exemplars. These benchmarks will include efficiency metrics as well as improved performance metrics.
2. Action plans and follow-up systems to be developed in relation to internal audit reviews and rolling reviews.
3. Review all existing statutory policies and develop such new policies as are appropriate.
4. Provide Leadership training for staff.
5. Develop further our Risk Register system to identify early potential governance issues.
6. Devise an annual updating plan for staff around governance issues.
7. Register of processes and procedures in place in all areas.
8. Develop and publish a comprehensive EDI Policy for IADT.
9. Establish an EDI staff network(s).
10. Publish an annual suite of EDI Metrics to determine areas of development.
11. Achieve the attainment of Athena SWAN accreditation during the life of the compact.
12. Review HR policies and procedures to ensure they are gender equality supportive.
13. Find international best practice partners to benchmark against.
14. Review talent management and career planning strategies regarding diversity.
15. Develop and display positive role models across the Institute in our visual and printed materials.
16. A rolling programme of EDI Training for all staff developed.
17. Facility for short periods of paid absence for staff to pursue staff development, industry placement etc. to improve, update and broaden their skills implemented.
18. Flexible and family friendly working HR policies developed and implemented.
19. Accommodations to support employees with specific needs developed promoted and implemented to attract and retain staff.

20. Increase to 5% the number of staff declaring a disability.
21. 10% increase in staff from under-represented backgrounds.
22. Develop Aurora programmes to include additional staff annually.

Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown (now Technological University Dublin) (ITB)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown has two stated priorities:

- Operate in a sustainable, ethical governance way and in a financially responsible manner, including enhancement of range and effectiveness of professional services for TU.
- Forge deeper collaborations with DIT and IT Tallaght to achieve designation as a technological university, including the development of physical and digital capacity to expand reach and impact.

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Continue to engage with the HEA strategic dialogue process.
2. Continue to have integrated, coherent and effective governance structures in place, concerning academic, administrative and management matters.
3. Continue to improve procedures for quality assurance and quality enhancement.
4. Resource and construct two new buildings on campus, to accommodate projected increases in student numbers in a green and healthy environment.
5. Develop professional services while providing comprehensive student supports service, for all learners, including a visible focus for part-time learners.
6. Agree appropriate and effective governance structures concerning academic, administrative, management and student representational matters for the Technological University.
7. Communicate and engage with staff and representative bodies, regarding the vision and positioning for and process of achieving designation as a Technological University.
8. Actively engage with the evolving organisational design proposals for the Technological University, regarding adjustments to structures that may impact on the Institute.
9. Deliver a digital campus for TU Dublin alliance partners.

Institute of Technology, Carlow (ITC)

ITC has two stated priorities:

- We will develop and implement a strategy to support and develop members of our governing body, executive and management teams in fulfilling their roles to the highest standard.
- We will develop a strategy and plan for the implementation of the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force and the attainment of Athena Swan bronze institutional award by 2019.

ITC will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The Institute will continue to work towards achieving at least 40% women and 40% men on all its key decision-making bodies, and is the process of ensuring that this happens on a systematic basis. The Institute has also committed to ensuring that all interview panels consist of at least 40% women and at least 40% men and has rolled out unconscious bias, recruitment and selection training to all members of its management team.

2. The Institute of Technology Carlow has also put new structures in place to ensure it is best placed to implement the 2018 Task force Action Plan and achieve an Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional award. A high-level Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Committee, chaired by the President, has been established, along with a cross-institutional Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team.
3. The Institute has recently completed a robust self-assessment exercise to identify key actions for inclusion into an Institute of Technology Carlow Gender Equality Action Plan to be implemented across the Institute.

Institute of Technology, Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology, Sligo has two stated priorities:

- Achieve TU Status.
- Maintain good standing as a public sector body.

Institute of Technology, Sligo will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Consider the establishment of additional strategic research centres that meet published TU criteria and that deliver the TU metrics.
2. Develop collaborative projects with our TU partners.
3. Engage in regional and national discussions and collaborations to strengthen the likelihood of the Institute attaining TU status.
4. Agree institute-wide equality and diversity policies and an implementation plan and establish a working group to achieve gender equality standards (achievement of AS bronze award).
5. Develop an internal communication policy and implementation plan.
6. Develop a green campus providing an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment.

Institute of Technology, Tallaght (now Technological University Dublin) (ITTD)

Institute of Technology Tallaght has two stated priorities:

- Maintain high professional standards in the governance and management of the Institute and ensure compliance with relevant bodies, including the Department of Education and Skills (DES), the HEA and the C&AG.
- Maintain progress in implementing the projects and targets of the TU Alliance.

Institute of Technology Tallaght will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Ensure equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion is considered and incorporated into all decision making, processes and structures as part of a joint TU Athena Swan Application for a bronze award.
2. Monitor and ensure compliance with the *Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*, as well as DES, the HEA and the C&AG.

3. Implement the projects identified by the TU Alliance, as they relate to:
 - a. Programme 1 – Academic Development and the New University Graduate.
 - b. Programme 2 – Student Experience and Wellness
 - c. Programme 3 – Engaged International Institution
 - d. Programme 4 – A Force for Innovation
 - e. Programme 5 – 21st Century Workplace
 - f. Programme 6 – Efficient Use of Resources
 - g. Programme 7 – Digital Campus
4. The implementation of the above projects impact on and support the achievement of the priorities and strategic initiatives identified across all areas of the compact.

Institute of Technology, Tralee (ITTRA)

Institute of Technology, Tralee has two stated priorities:

- Sustainability and growth: ensure a strong vibrant and innovative organisation which will deliver on its mission and goals for all of its stakeholders on a collaborative basis through sound financial planning which is predicated on targets identified through comprehensive market analysis.
- Fellowship and inclusivity: foster a high-quality staff and student experience where an atmosphere of mutual respect and support permeates all activities. Our staff and students will be valued, empowered and encouraged to actively engage in the wider community and we will promote a culture of active citizenship.

Institute of Technology, Tralee will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Implementation of a fiscal strategy which is innovative, responsive and built on realistic yet ambitious targets.
2. Working with and empowering staff to create a better work environment.
3. Benchmark human resources supports to highlight good practice and to identify areas for additional focus. This will help ensure that our staff are valued and supported accordingly.
4. External stakeholders and our community: become the 'heartbeat of the community' by expanding and deepening our engagement with our stakeholders, and by utilising our physical infrastructure, staff expertise and student community.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- To put a series of measures in place to further support the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda.
- Ensure compliance with Government policy and support the HEA in exercising their responsibilities.

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The student body will be key partners in guiding Institute activity for equality and diversity.
2. Further develop LYIT's Gender Action Plan which traces progress against the recommendations from the Expert Group's report.

3. Adoption of an LYIT Strategic Goal involving three core elements: gender equality; equality, diversity and inclusion; diversity monitoring.
4. LYIT pledges to submit annual Governance Statements to the HEA in a timely fashion and to fully comply with public procurement rules.
5. LYIT pledges to submit annual financial statements to the C&AG within stipulated guidelines and observe full transparency in financial statements regarding accounting for Trusts and Foundations.
6. LYIT pledges to fully comply with public pay policy and with public sector numbers controls.
7. LYIT is also committed to the implementation of the THEA Code of Governance.

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Limerick Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Ensuring that it adheres to the highest standards in terms of the Governance in all aspects of its operations.
- Promotion of fairness, equal opportunity, respect and positive outcomes for all students and staff.

Limerick Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Compliance with relevant submission deadlines for the annual governance statement.
2. Compliance with public pay policy.
3. Continue to embed risk management practices and policies as part of an ongoing process to improve decision making through the enabling of an appropriate risk culture.
4. LIT to evaluate the possible implementation of a balanced scorecard type methodology to organisational performance management and review which will facilitate operational excellence.
5. Actively developing a submission for an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award in November 2019.

Mary Immaculate College (MIC)

Mary Immaculate College has two stated priorities:

- Engender equality of opportunity and outcome for Academic and Professional Services employees, enhancing professional and operational excellence through the fostering of an inclusive and diverse staff community.
- Ensure efficient, effective and transparent management and decision-making that is cohesive and connected.

Mary Immaculate College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Agree and adopt a new Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Awareness Logic Model (IDEAL) – enabling improved objective-setting and achievement of quality outcomes in recruitment and promotions practice, better decision-making, and staff management.
2. Development and implementation of an action plan aimed at achievement of the Athena Swan Bronze Star Award by November 2019.

3. Annual business plans in operation and coordinated across all levels of the institution that are based on the Strategic Plan (2018-2023), approved and monitored by appropriate bodies, with outputs and outcomes documented, tracked, reported and measured against agreed KPIs and which are fully articulated with parallel risk registers as well as recommendations emanating from internal audits and quality reviews.
4. Establish e-OLAS (Online Analytics System) – a real-time securely-segmented data visualisation resource available to the College Executive and department/function heads for informing planning, monitoring and intervention processes, as well as governance-level and external reporting.

Maynooth University (MU)

MU has two stated priorities:

- Maynooth University will take specific strategic initiatives to advance equality and diversity among staff, focusing in the first instance on gender equality.
- Maynooth University will, through its governance structures, demonstrate in a transparent manner our value and contribution to society and build public trust.

MU will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will implement the Athena Swan Gender Equality Action Plan for academic staff and develop and implement a comprehensive Gender Equality Action Plan for all staff, which will address the recommendations of the HEA's *National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* and the Task Force on Gender Equality in Higher Education. We will prepare the University to apply for an Athena Swan Silver award.
2. We will target recruitment and retention of excellent women researchers and academics, particularly in disciplines and at grades where women are under-represented.
3. We will develop an equality-in-employment monitoring system, undertake an equality-in-employment workforce profile and produce equality-in-employment data annually.
4. Maynooth University Governing Authority will carry out a review of its governance infrastructure to ensure it meets best practice standards, the provisions of the Code of Governance and relevant legislation, and takes into account the outcomes of rolling governance reviews.
5. We will ensure annual governance statements and annual financial statements continue to be comprehensive, transparent, account for trusts and foundations and are delivered to agreed deadlines.

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

NCAD has two stated priorities:

- Strategic Initiative 4a: A culture of effective governance – NCAD's An Bord and management team have invested considerable resources into developing and implementing an effective Governance Improvement Plan within the College. NCAD now has a Corporate Governance Framework in place and this will be reviewed and updated annually.
- Strategic Initiative 4b: The main high-level target addressed through this strategic initiative that concerning the implementation of a CPD framework for academics in all HEIs (4.5.1), although the initiative will also contribute to improving total quality management, in line with best international practice (4.5.6) and supporting the implementation of the *Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan* (4.6.1).

NCAD will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. The work of An Bord will be supported by an operational plan directing the work of the College Management Team during the year and again ensuring that the work to ensure timely return of financial and governance statements is resourced and supported.
2. The appointment of a new Head of HR and Staff Development in September 2018 will build on the remediation work of Forde HR to review the terms and conditions of all staff and to ensure compliance with public pay policy.

National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)

NUI Galway has two stated priorities:

- Ensure gender equality, as measured by our implementation of the 2018 *Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan* and the 2016 Expert Group Recommendations.
- Deliver consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence regarding institutional governance and compliance with financial reporting regulations.

NUI Galway will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. All working groups and decision-making committees to have minimum membership of 40% women and men, and 50% of the Chairs of all influential committees and working groups should be women by the end of 2018.
2. Unconscious bias and equality, diversity and inclusion training to be rolled out to all interview panels, setting a target to have all executive teams trained and a total of 1,000 staff trained by end of AY 2020/21.
3. By end of AY 2017/18 NUI Galway will have supported 57 women from across the institution on the Aurora Leadership programme. By the end of AY2020/21, we will have supported a total of 100 women to participate in this leadership development programme.
4. NUI Galway, initially through a Framework Services Agreement, and ultimately through the incorporation of St. Angela's College Sligo, will lead and deliver a sustainable campus and operational base in line with sector norms.

St Angela's College, Sligo (STAC)

St Angela's College has two stated priorities:

- Committed to ensuring that an environment of good corporate governance exists.
- Promote a just, participative, inclusive and non-discriminatory community environment for staff and students.

St Angela's College will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Schedule and complete a comprehensive roll-out of equality, diversity and unconscious bias training to interview panellists by June 2019, and deliver the training to all executive teams across STAC and NUIG.
2. By 2020, consult with existing and past male students of the College to identify strategies to increase the balance of male students undertaking full-time undergraduate programmes.
3. The annual governance statements must be submitted to the HEA within six months of the year-end.

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

Trinity College Dublin has two stated priorities:

- Implementation of the 2018 *Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan* and the 2016 Expert Group recommendations.
- HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019.

Trinity College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Keeping the governance structures of the university under review to ensure that they meet with best international practice.
2. Appointment of a Chief Risk Officer (CRO) to manage and maintain best practice risk management and operational planning across TCD.
3. Commitment in creating an inclusive, diverse and pluralist community and a positive environment where all are recognised fully for their contributions.
4. Will apply to renew TCD's 2015 Athena SWAN bronze award in November 2018 and encourage schools to apply for the award. Aim to bring TCD closer to its eligibility to apply for an Athena SWAN silver award.

University College Cork (UCC)

University College Cork has two stated priorities:

- Implement the recommendations of the HEA Gender Equality Review.
- Implement an improved effective, transparent and accountable governance model and culture within the University.

University College Cork will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Apply to renew the institutional Athena SWAN award in 2019 and submit three departmental applications for Athena SWAN annually.
2. Complete the pilot Public Sector Duty Assessment on behalf of HEIs for the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in 2018.
3. Implement a comprehensive equality data collection system for staff and students using voluntary identity data disclosure.
4. Work with the sector and the HEA to implement the recommendations as set out in the Public Accounts Committee Report on the Examination of the Financial Statements for the Third Level Sector.
5. Establish an action plan with allocation of responsibilities and timelines to deliver on all the recommendations by 2021.

University College Dublin (UCD)

University College Dublin has three stated priorities:

- The University has put in place procurement policies and procedures and all non-pay expenditure is required to be procured in accordance with these policies and procedures. These policies and procedures have been communicated to the faculty and staff of the University.
- A devolved budgetary system is in place with senior staff in the university charged with responsibility to operate within defined accountability limits and to account for significant budgetary variances to the Bursar, who in turn must account to the President.
- UCD is acting to mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion values and actions throughout the University and to remove barriers to equality.

University College Dublin will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Within Estate Services and with specific emphasis on larger Capital Projects, trained staff with an appropriate level of procurement experience are now in place. This has enabled UCD to:
 - a. partner with project teams managing externally funded capital projects to advise and monitor both funding-specific and general requirements at the earliest stages of procurement
 - b. develop dialogue across the Estate Services project managers around procurement requirements
 - c. establish a 'go to' list of audit-standard documents required (based on Article 13 checks) as the guideline for information retention perform 'spot-check' audits on smaller capital projects to verify procurement compliance
2. Regular external verification by the UCD Internal Audit Unit that the controls and procedures in place are operating satisfactorily.
3. To ensure that budgets are operating effectively, budgets for all university units are allocated on a phased basis across the 12 months of the financial year in a realistic manner to reflect the seasonal pattern of expenditures. Appropriate phasing of the budget allows for meaningful comparison between actual and planned activity.
4. Budgets must be aligned with the university's strategic objectives and all university units must demonstrate this alignment when submitting their budgets for approval.
5. The carry-forward of budget surpluses into the next financial year and the use of those budget surpluses will be permitted if there is a clear expenditure plan that will generate additional income.
6. In respect of gender, through implementation of Gender Equality Action Plan 2016-19 submitted as part of UCD's Bronze Athena Swan Accreditation, granted March 2017 and the completion of the next Gender Equality Action Plan.

University of Limerick (UL)

UL has two stated priorities:

- Equality and Diversity Strategy 2018-2021: the University of Limerick is committed to integrating equality and diversity into the structures, behaviours and culture of the University through ensuring that resources are committed, equality and diversity are mainstreamed and everyone (staff and students) take responsibility for equality and diversity.
- Implementation of Recommendations of Reviews 2016-2018: the University of Limerick has undergone a number of reviews of finance, governance, human resources and matters raised by individuals who are currently or formerly employees of the university, including those raised under the protective disclosure legislation. These reviews made a series of recommendations and a schedule of implementation has been agreed with the HEA. The reports on implementation are provided by the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar and are overseen by the GA Audit and Risk Committee.

UL will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. We will implement our UL Equality and Diversity Strategy 2018-2021.
2. The new Equality and Diversity Strategic Plan will strengthen and align existing and new projects around Athena SWAN, University of Sanctuary, UL Engage, Access Office, Disability Office, Social Inclusion, Mature Students Office and the campus community.
3. Implementation of the Recommendations of Reviews 2016-2018.

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Waterford Institute of Technology has two stated priorities:

- Secure the Athena Swan bronze award and post-accreditation identify two schools that will proceed for their own bronze accreditation.
- Ongoing engagement with the HEA Strategic Dialogue process.

Waterford Institute of Technology will enable these priorities through a number of specific actions from 2018-2021:

1. Submission of Athena SWAN Bronze Application completed in November 2018 following the initial commitment made in Feb 2017.
2. The Governing Body will receive monthly updates on performance against the targets set in the Institute's Strategic Plan. A dashboard of performance indicators will be developed to ensure clear and focused reporting on achievements to date. The Governing Body Audit and Risk Committee has also requested regular updates on the Institute's performance against strategic targets.
3. The institute plan to develop, collate and disseminate publicly data on institutional performance measured against national and international benchmarks.
4. The Data Analysis Unit's focus is on developing tools to offer succinct reports to heads of school and department across a range of performance measures at programme, department and school levels on the following: research metrics and institutional performance; graduate satisfaction and destinations; geo-profiling enrolment and progression data and reports associated with the access data plan.

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