Draft Compact
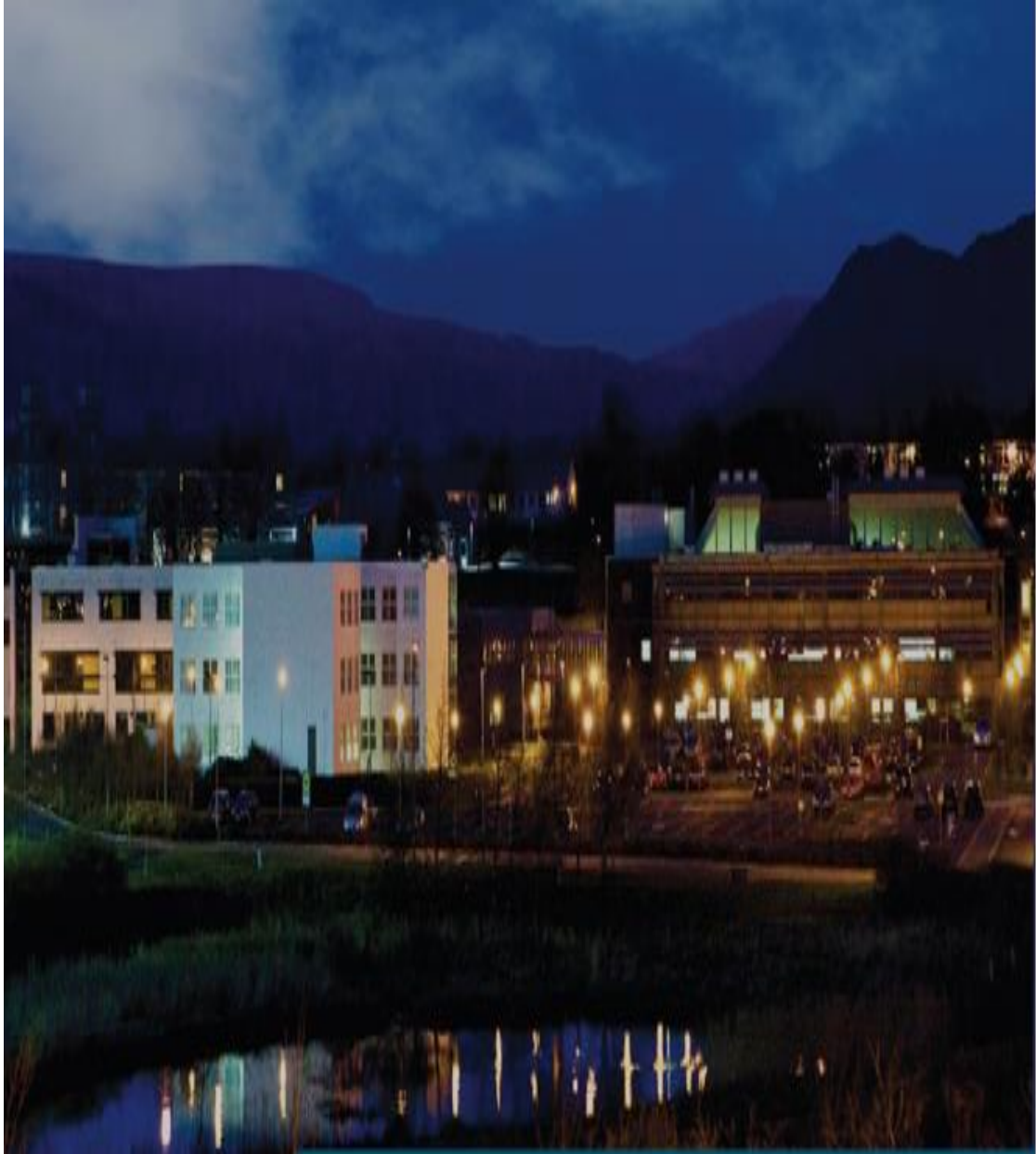
IT Sligo – HEA

12th February 2019

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Towards an IT Sligo-HEA Compact – Phase 2

Context

In January 2018, the HEA launched the 3 year Higher Education System Performance Framework for 2018-2020. This sets out what is expected from higher education in order to deliver to the various national policies and strategies related to education, economic, social and cultural developments over the next 3 years[1].

Within the context of the overall System Performance Framework, six objectives have been set out, each with a set of high-level targets. In Q2-Q3 2018, the HEA is working with each of HEI to develop an agreed 3 year Compact. It is intended that the Compacts will be agreed for implementation by end of Q3, 2018.

Process

The HEA requested:

(i)   that Institutions detail a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six System Performance Framework Objective areas;

(ii)   that strategic priority are accompanied by a description of the strategic initiatives, currently being implemented, or to be implemented by the Institute; and

(iii)   that the strategic initiatives are described with reference to the high-level targets (HLT) as set out in the framework.

The process of developing a draft compact within IT Sligo is:

- Agree institutional strategic priorities for Objectives 1-6 (by Executive Committee) in consultation with the Academic Council and agree a format for presenting the compact document (April, 2018)
- Submit first phase draft to HEA, showing proposed strategic priorities and initiatives (24th April, 2018)
- Continue internal development of the first draft (by AC, EC for approval of Governing Body)
- Feedback from the HEA internal review (19th June, 2018)
- Agree second phase with indicative metrics (by EC, GB, in absence of AC)
- Submit Phase 2 draft to HEA for review by external panel (9th July, 2018)
- Review by, and feedback from International Panel (October, 2018)
- Sign-off on final draft Compact Agreement (12th February 2019)

Compact

Following discussions and agreement of Academic Council and Governing Body and taking feedback from meetings with HEA and the international review panel, this document sets out a final draft compact agreement from IT Sligo. The Compact Objectives for IT Sligo derive from the approved IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-1022. The relationship between the compact objectives and each Higher Education System Performance Framework Objective is set out in the document. This draft Compact is hereby presented to the HEA for adoption.

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[1] https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/higher-education-system-performance-framework-2018-2020.pdf

About IT Sligo

IT Sligo is a Higher Education Institution with in excess of 4,900 full-time equivalent (FTE) students located on 72 acres in Sligo[2]. This student cohort comprises 3,537 full time, 1,245 (FTE) part time (mostly online/blended learning) and 127 trade apprentices. The Institute delivers programmes of education from Level 5 (trade apprenticeships) to Level 10 (PhD), with the concentration of enrolments at Levels 6 to 8 on the national qualifications framework. The Institute is recognised as a national leader in the provision of programmes delivered through online/blended learning mode; of the total enrolments 2,400 are learning in this mode. The high proportion of STEM related provision has led to global attraction of IT Sligo online programmes. There are 307 academic and 163 professional services and support employees. The Institute has a strong commitment to regional development and works closely with state agencies and entrepreneurs to bring new employment opportunities to the region and to attract inward investment. The Institute has been working in collaboration with GMIT and LYIT as part of the Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA), with the objective of achieving re-designation as a technological university. The CUA is currently working towards making a submission for re-designation in the 2019/20 academic year.

In June 2017, IT Sligo approved a 5 year strategic Plan for 2017-2022[3]. This was subsequently presented and agreed by both the Minister for Education and Skills and the Minister of State for Higher Education. This strategic plan has 12 key performance indicators (KPIs) and six overarching objectives, each with a set of actions and performance indicators. The following is a summary of the plan.

Clarification about the terminology used in this document is provided in Appendix A.

Vision

Your education & innovation partner for life.

Mission

Advancing economic, social and environmental sustainability through education, innovation, and engagement, producing graduates who are innovative, confident and capable of leading the development of the region and beyond.

Our Culture and Aims

- ➢ *Educate* students to reach their full potential
- ➢ *Believe* that publicly funded higher education should be accessible to all
- ➢ *Champion* respect, equality, inclusion and diversity
- ➢ *Value* students, staff, business, community and the environment
- ➢ *Lead* by being ambitious, innovative and accountable
- ➢ *Respond* proactively to economic and societal challenges
- ➢ *Promote* ethical and responsible behaviour
- ➢ *Collaborate* for the enhancement of our economy, society and environment

In the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-2022 there are 12 overarching Key Performance Indicators (KPIs - see Figure 1), 6 Objective Areas (explained in more detail below), 26 sub-objectives and 117 actions, to be achieved in 5 years. The most ambitious KPI is the student recruitment targets - which is to grow from some 6,000 in 2017 to 10,000 by 2022. While enrolments did grow in the academic year 2017/18, a strong marketing and recruitment plan is being developed to drive this ambitious target. Obviously an important part of the plan is, in the first instance, the marketing of programmes and the recruitment of students – i.e. to ensure that students who elect to come here are making informed decision and are the students most likely to succeed. As a first step, the Institute has engaged a full time marketing manager. Over recent years, the enrolment of students from the region onto full time It Sligo programmes has not increased. In fact, some 45% of students from the region attend an HEI outside of the region (2018 CAO feeder schools data). Therefore, notwithstanding increased

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[2] www.itsligo.ie
[3] https://www.itsligo.ie/files/2012/07/IT-Sligo-Strategic-Plan-2017-2022-Full-Version.pdf

marketing efforts, the Institute has projected a target growth of full-time on-campus enrolments from a 2017 base of 3,600 to 4,000 by 2022. Meanwhile, there are substantial opportunities for growth in online/blended learning and part-time enrolments. The Institute has projected a target growth of part-time and online/blended (off-campus) enrolments from a 2017 base of 2,200 to 6,000 by 2022. To support this, it is worth noting that, as of November 2018 the Institute has enrolled 2,950 online/blended learning students.

The second overarching KPI is to achieve TU status. As already stated, IT Sligo is currently in a TU consortium with GMIT and LYIT with the ambition to become a TU for the West-North-West. The Government has strongly endorsed the development of Technological Universities in its National Development Plan Project Ireland 2040[4]. The Plan notes (p. 64) that 'Technological Universities [will] deepen the talent pool for distinctive regional sectoral clusters and drive applied research and innovation'. The Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD, specifically mentioned the importance of the CUA and the TU for the West/North West in his speech to launch the Plan at IT Sligo on 16 February, 2018.

The Strategic Plan 2017-2022 is treated as a work in progress. The plan is reviewed on a 6-monthly basis, the progress by the Institute in delivering on the actions is considered and the capacity of the Institute to achieve future targeted actions is also evaluated.

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[4] http://npf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Ireland-2040-Our-Plan-Draft-NPF.pdf

Student Numbers `1`

2017 › 6,000
2022 › 10,000

Graduates (Per Annum) `2`

2017 › 1,546
2022 › 3,000

TU Status `3`

2017 › Stage 2 in Progress
2022 › Full re-designation as a TU

Full time to Online Student Ratio `4`

2017 › 62:38
2022 › 42:58

Work Placements `5`

2017 › On Some Level 8 Programmes
2022 › On All New Level 8 Programmes

Student Retention `6`

2017 › 77%
2022 › 82%

Online Enabled & Trained Staff `7`

2017 › 70%
2022 › 90%

Management Gender Balance `8`

2017 › 27% Female 73% Male
2022 › Minimum of 40% of both genders

Equality & Diversity `9`

2017 › Adopting Athena Swan Charter
2022 › Athena Swan Bronze Award

Research Enrolments `10`

2017 › 73
2022 › 200

Support for Start-Up Companies `11`

2017 › 40
2022 › 125

Alumni Network `12`

2017 › 320 on database
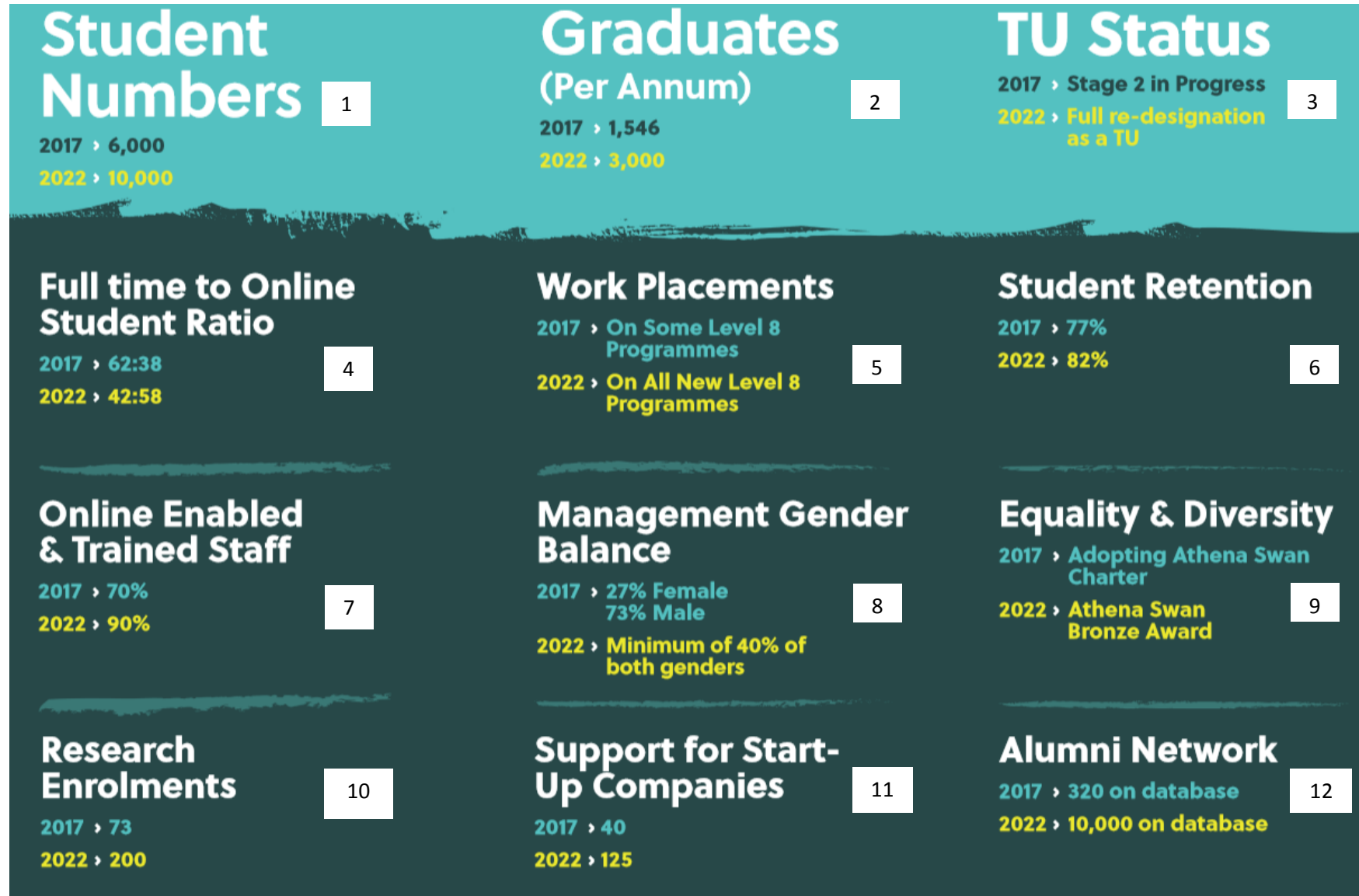2022 › 10,000 on database

Figure 1: KPIs of IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-2022, numbered for references to the Compact Strategic Priorities below.

IT Sligo Strategic Plan (2017-2022) Objectives

The objective described below are underpinned by a very details action plan which there is not included here, and can be accessed at https://www.itsligo.ie/files/2012/07/IT-Sligo-Strategic-Plan-2017-2022-Full-Version.pdf.

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 1:

Our Students: Develop the ability to navigate their futures in a complex world.

The focus is on attracting students to IT Sligo for a quality learning environment and because they are supported to be successful in their learning. The increase in the number of on-campus and off-campus students will offer a socially and culturally diverse place of learning. The Institute intends to develop the ability of students to navigate their futures in a complex world and with learning and delivery models and effective career guidance that develop self-efficacy. Specific objectives are to:

a) Develop ability of students to navigate their futures in a complex world
b) Foster inclusion and participation for all students
c) Support students to achieve their full potential
d) Be part of a larger, more diverse student population

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 2:

Learning & Teaching: Support the continuous professional development of all staff. Maintain and strengthen leadership in technology enhanced learning.

Maintaining a well-qualified and professional body of academic and professional services staff is essential. We will support continuous professional development of staff to ensure the quality of our teaching and learning across multiple delivery modes. Our programmes will be fully accredited, relevant to the requirements of employers and will be regularly reviewed and updated. Infrastructure will be maintained at the highest level to provide the standard of education expected of the modern learner. Specific objectives are to:

a) Support the continuous professional development of all staff
b) Maintain & strengthen leadership in technology-enhanced learning
c) Continue to develop a strategic approach to academic planning
d) Create an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment
e) Achieve awarding body status by maintaining Delegated Authority

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 3:

Research Development & Innovation: Enable more students and staff to conduct research. Gain international recognition in key research areas.

This Objective Area is concerned with research, development and innovation. The Institute has made significant strides in developing a strong research base. There is a growing body of staff actively engaging in research across many fields. To meet the ambitious objective of becoming a technological university, we must continue to support such activities. We must increase our research and development support for industry and become even more actively engaged with employers and sectoral bodies. Fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in students is vital for the next generation of new businesses. Specifically, the Institute wants to:

a) Enable more students and staff to conduct research
b) Gain international recognition in key research areas
c) Apply creative talent to develop innovative design solutions and increase contract and applied RDI
d) Promote Institute RDI to stakeholders and market Institute achievements.

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 4:

Partnership & External Engagement: Build stronger partnerships with second level schools/ETBs, employers and community.

This Objective Area focuses on the main stakeholders for external engagement, who are second level/further education colleges, educators, employers, community and alumni. The Institute is building on its existing relationships with these stakeholders to be widely recognised as an active and engaged entity in the region, supporting sustained education, employment and communities. Specifically, the Institute wants to:

a) Build strong partnerships with Schools/Education
b) Build stronger partnerships with Employers
c) Build stronger partnerships with Community
d) Build stronger partnerships with Alumni

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 5:

Shaping & Influencing Economic, Social & Cultural Development: Raise the education-qualification profile of the regional population. Support social entrepreneurship, business start-ups and development in the region.

The aim of this Objective Area is to influence the economic and social growth of the northern and western regions, and that the Institute becomes more active in national debates and policy development. Achieving the Institute's ambition to become a TU is dependent on active collaboration with other higher education institutions. Specifically, the Institute wants to:

a) Contribute to national & regional stakeholder policies
b) Support and promote social entrepreneurship, business start-ups and development in the region
c) Enable greater engagement between agencies and public sector bodies.

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 6:

Organisation & Governance: Continue to provide robust governance, accountability and appropriate processes.

It is important that the Institute maintains good standing with the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Education and Skills, particularly as it has an ambitious plan for both growth in student enrolments and in becoming a technological university. The Institute will continue to provide the resources that meet the needs of staff and students. A fundamental requirement in doing this is to ensure that students, staff members, and external stakeholders are aware of these ambitions and are kept informed of developments. Specifically, the Institute wants to:

a) Deliver the actions of the (strategic) plan
b) Develop a green campus, providing an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment
c) Promote equality, diversity and inclusion and provide for staff well-being and work-life balance
d) Continue to provide robust governance, accountability and appropriate processes
e) Improve evidence-based information systems to inform decision-making
f) Improve communication processes within the institute

Alignment of Key System Objectives to the Objectives of the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22, with the proposed Compact Priorities for IT Sligo

For the list of high level targets (HLTs) provided for each of the System Performance Framework Objectives, those that have been chosen by IT Sligo to be incorporated as priorities for this Compact are identified in bold (and yellow highlight). The objectives of the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 that relate to the chose HLTs are also identified and an explanation as to why these are important is provided. An outline of how these prioritized HLTs will be monitored and measured is also provided. A further link to the related national policy is also made in the section.

Finally, two Compact Priorities for each System Performance Framework Objective are proposed, together with two or three indicators for each priority and targets for each year of the compact. The indicators have been chosen from the extended list provided in Appendix 1 of the System Performance Framework document, while using the matching action statement from the IT Sligo Strategic Plan for the wording of the indicator. It should be appreciated that the targets provided are indicative, to allow for changes that inevitably occur from year to year and may impact on the achievement of a specific target.

System Performance Framework: Objective 1

Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability

High Level targets

- Increase to 10% the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in **lifelong learning[5]** 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

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 1: Students (Compact Priorities 1A and 1B):

(i) Undertake a comprehensive marketing analysis to understand potential applicants (full time & online), to guide how we develop programmes of interest for them and to inform how we market these programmes/Work placements/professional practice and transferrable competencies to be introduced into programmes;
(ii) Implement the student retention plan

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objectives 3-5: Research Development & Innovation; Partnership and External Engagement; Shaping & Influencing Economic, Social & Cultural Development (Compact Priorities 1B):

(i) Resource the promotion of industrial and external RDI engagement to external stakeholders
(ii) Industrial Liaison Groups
(iii) Increasing the support for start-up companies
(iv) Provide pro-bono training for community groups in areas such as governance, ethics, etc. to build capacity in the community and social entrepreneur sectors
(v) Establish the Institute as an ideas hub / exchange, through our programme of engagement activities

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[5] The high level targets of the System Performance Framework that are being selected as Compact Priorities for IT Sligo are highlighted in bold (and yellow) for each of the System Performance Objectives in this document.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 1

The first Compact Priority related to Framework Objective 1 is intended to ensure that students receive an education that will enable them to navigate their futures in an increasingly complex world and that have a good learning experience. The Institute facilitates people who want to take specific programmes (i.e. by not setting unnecessarily high entry requirements), acknowledging that some students come to the realisation that a programme is not for them, or that it too challenging.

One of the current retention initiatives used by the Institute is a 6-week mentoring programme for 1st year students (in 2017/18: 55 programmes, 700+ 1st years, 140+ mentors). This has been successful in engendering a higher level of engagement and retention on programmes. It is less clear if this has impacted positively on the success rate on 1st year exams. To improve retention, the Institute is developing a retention plan and is exploring the development of a common first year to facilitate the movement between disciplines.

A key role of a regional IoT is to be a driver of economic, social and cultural development across the region, and this is the second Compact Priority selected for Framework Objective 1. The Institute provides graduates that meet the needs of employers and professional regulators and also supports entrepreneurs, acts as a soft landing place for incoming companies and provides on-going training in business practices for companies and entrepreneurs. Through the New Frontiers programme, the Institute provides support to new start-ups, existing companies and to entrepreneurs, and builds relationships with employers that facilitate student work-based learning. The Institute also works closely with companies, sector representative organisations[6] and State Agencies[7] in the development of bespoke online/blended learning programmes[8], such as, for example, BA in Insurance Practice, MEng in Autonomous Vehicles, BEng in Data Centre Facilities Management. The Institute is part of the North-West Regional Skills Forum, working closely with other HEIs, Education and Training Boards, IDA, EI, Local Enterprise Offices and industry to identify and provide emerging industry training needs.

The high level targets include other objective areas for engagement with industry, such as developing commercially relevant technologies and spin outs. IT Sligo has had successes in these area, particularly in commercialising new inventions and in encouraging new spin-outs from student projects. While the Institute will continue to drive such initiatives, they are not being prioritised as a Compact objective at this time.

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

To enhance the student experience, the metrics are focussed on increasing work based experiences and of increasing attainment and retention. Given the success of the Institute with the new apprenticeship scheme, there is also a focus on growing the number of programmes delivered using such work-based models.

To demonstrate an increase of the supports for companies, the indicators will be measured as floor area available for companies across the region and the number of companies being supported. A second indicator will show the level of engagement with Springboard which has been a significant area of online/blended learning delivery for the Institute on its own programmes, and has helped to build the working relationship

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[6] Such as, for example, the Irish Business Employers Confederation (https://www.ibec.ie); Insurance Institute of Ireland (https://www.iii.ie), National Institute for bioprocessing Research and Training (https://www.nibrt.ie/)

[7] Such as, for example, Industrial Development Authority (https://www.idaireland.com/); Enterprise Ireland (https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/); Local Enterprise offices (https://www.localenterprise.ie/), Northern and Western Regional Assembly (https://www.nwra.ie/), Local Authorities (https://www.housing.gov.ie/local-government/administration/local-authorities/local-authorities)

[8] For the purposes of this paper, online/blended learning refers to programmes that are substantially delivered online (i.e. taken off-campus), with some on-campus elements such as induction, workshops and laboratories. Typically, students on these programmes are not attending on a full-time basis (i.e. are undertaking less than 60 credits per year); these students are sometimes referred to as 'part-time'. By contrast, 'full-time' students are those who undertake 60 credits per year of learning on-campus.

with NIBRT through joint Springboard programmes. The target of organising innovation events to support industrial development and collaboration will be measured in terms of the foot-fall at the events organised. This activity will require the involvement of employers and the Institute is already experienced in this through, for example, the organisation of the annual Engineering Expo event (see: https://www.itsligo.ie/engineeringexpo/). The intention here is to identify other sectors (e.g. the creative industries or business sector) to organise similar annual events.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 1

1A) Improve student experience with the intention of increase participation and retention in all categories/levels

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action[9]	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target[10]	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Work placements/professional practice and transferrable competencies to be introduced into (Level 8) programmes	1.1.1	The knowledge and capabilities of graduates to meet the changing needs of organisations in the private, public and social sectors[11, Channel 3]; to cover the broad range of skills needed for the economy[12, Action 17]	60%	70%	80%	100%
b) Implement the student retention plan to improve retention[13]	1.3.1	A high quality student experience based on excellent teaching, research and scholarship[11, Channel 1]	77%	78%	79%	80%
c) Through marketing and promotion, grow to an overall enrolments of new apprenticeship (recorded as numbers per prog.)	KPI 1 & 4	Develop the new apprenticeship system and work-based learning models[12, Action 20]	3 127 (BA IP) 15 BEng (GMIT) 14 BSc (AIT)	4 190 (BA IP) 15 BEng (GMIT) 15 BSc (AIT)	5 200 (BA IP) 15 BEng (GMIT) 15 BSc (AIT) 15 new	6 200 (BA IP) 15 BEng (GMIT) 15 BSc (AIT) 30 new

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[9] The link to the IT Sligo Strategic Plan is referenced to the Objective area/s and the specific action/s for each sub-objective (e.g. Supporting companies links to a KPI and to action 3.4.3 (page 40) of the Strategic Plan

[10] All targets should be understood to be indicative as they are dependent on changing circumstances occurring from year to year

[11] Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding HE: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Investing-in-National-Ambition-A-Strategy-for-Funding-HigherEducation.pdf

[12] Enterprise 2025: https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Publication-files/Enterprise-2025-Summary-Report.pdf

[13] This is linked to the introduction of UDL – see Indicative action under Objective 4B.

1B) Increase support for new business start-ups and for growth of existing businesses

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Number of companies being supported (both internally and externally located)	KPI 11; 3.4.3 ; 3.4.4; 4.2.1; 5.2.1; 5.3.1	Increase no. of enterprise collaborations by a third between enterprise and HEIs[12, Action 34 (metric)]	3,000 m^2; 20 companies	3,500 m^2; 25 companies	3,500 m^2; 30 companies	3,500 m^2; 35 companies
b) Through marketing and promotion, grow to an overall enrolments of both IT Sligo and collaborative Springboard. (recorded as places, enrolments and prog).	KPI 1	investment and participation in workplace learning[12, Actions 17, 21]; focused labour market activation programmes…such as Springboard[12, Action 25]	375;384; 9 progs	653; *550est*; 13 progs	500[14]; BBB; 10 progs	500; CCC; 10 progs
c) Organize sector specific innovation events in collaboration with industry	3.4.4; 4.2.3	provide for continuous learning and upskilling for workers [12, Actions 17, 21]; supporting technology transfer into commercialisation[15]	Engineering Expo	+ 1 new event for specific industry sector	+ 1 new event for specific industry sector	+ 1 new event for specific industry sector

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[14] While the Institute wants to continue to be actively engaged with Springboard, the projected downward trend from the previous year is a conservative estimate given the lack of clarity of the future focus of Springboard initiatives following from the recent upturn in employment and the uncertainty of future employment trends.

[15] Entrepreneurship in Ireland 2014; see section on Innovation: https://www.localenterprise.ie/Documents-and-Publications/Entrepreneurship-in-Ireland-2014.pdf

System Performance Framework: 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 commu**nity

High Level targets

- 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 fulltime 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.

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 1: Students (Compact Priorities 2A and 2B)

- (i) Provide volunteering module as an elective for all students
- (ii) Develop an international policy to develop international staff and student collaborations.

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 4: Partnership and External Engagement (Compact Priorities 2A and 2B):

- (i) Students receiving recognition for volunteering
- (ii) Encourage and acknowledge staff contributing to engagement in the community
- (iii) Establish an External Engagement Centre for employers and communities
- (iv) Develop an effective CRM system
- (v) Increase the number of cross-border partnerships with other HEIs, FE colleges

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 5: Shaping and influencing economic, social & cultural development (Compact Priorities 2A and 2B):

- (i) Develop a strategy for campus engagement to increase interaction with local communities.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 2

Students are often so engaged with their class-work and with life in and around the campus that they do not engage much with the local community. Yet, many students are very involved with their home communities, be it through sports or community projects and activities. The first Compact Priority for this Framework Objective is intended to enhance the learning experience of <u>students</u> by encouraging engagement with community organisations. The <u>Institute</u> already engages with local communities through collaborative projects and by making facilities accessible to communities. This can be more formally enhanced through MOUs and other agreed channels of engagement. This is of direct benefit to the Institute in providing learning opportunities for students and also in building the capacity of the Institute to develop new programmes in partnership with community groups. Building relationships with employers and sectors is also part of this Compact Priority.

It is challenging to capture staff and students engagement with external organisations, companies and communities. The development of an effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system in needed to better manage and monitor this activity. Reporting on external engagement is an important for a technological university. A CRM system will be developed as part of the Compact to track and improve student engagement and to monitor and increase structured engagement with industry and community groups by the Institute.

There is a growing recognition that international students play an important part of the learning environment on Irish campuses. Internationalisation of the curriculum and the campus brings cultural diversity into every day experiences and allows Irish students and staff to experience different cultures within an inclusive environment. It also helps to build international relationships at the Institutional and at the personal level. This is recognised in the TU Act (2018)[16] that identifies the importance of internationalisation in the objectives of new TUs; which includes a strong emphasis on internationalisation of staff.

The second Compact Priority under this Framework Objective is to provide the opportunity for Irish students and staff to partake in international exchanges and to build more enduring international collaborative exchanges at an institutional level. Of particular relevance for IT Sligo as part of the Connacht-Ulster Alliance is the development of cross-border collaborations (i.e. with Northern Ireland). This has grown in importance with the onset of Brexit. The high level targets also identify a need for HEIs to address studying a foreign language. This is not being addressed as a compact priority by IT Sligo as the Institute is of the view that building collaborations with international HEIs is of a higher priority at this time.

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

Recognising student engagement with the community has two facets – one of formal course work and a second of recognising wider engagement. These are both captured in the targets for this indicator.

The indicator of setting up working industrial liaison groups will be measured as the outputs of new educational and collaboration directions identified by the groups that the Institute have pursued. This requires involvement of external stakeholders it is difficult to be specific about outcomes, however the terms of reference will act as a benchmark and will indicate what we are doing well and what we could do better.

A specification for the CRM system is currently being developed and the procurement process will take a period of time. The real test for how effective this is will be in terms of the extent to which staff input their contacts and details of engagement and how this is used by others to develop a wider picture of the level of engagement with other organisations and people. This will require a programme of staff training on the new CRM system and how they will effectively engage with this. In the first instance, it is proposed to introduce a pilot CRM in order to test its effectiveness for enhancing the operations of IT Sligo.

IT Sligo has had some successes in developing partnerships with international HEIs and other countries to attract students to study in Sligo – most notably with Universities Ontario, Oman and, in the past, with Brazil.

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[16] Technological Universities Act, 2018: http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/3/enacted/en/html

Given the variances in the international student market (e.g. as evidence by the rise and fall of students from Brazil), caution needs to be exercised with setting too ambitious targets for intake of international students. In the first instance, it is considered important that international collaborative relationships are developed by staff. Building international collaborations takes time and will be driven not only by the number of, but also by the quality of the collaborations and how sustainable they will become. The same pertains to institutional cross-border collaborations and staff exchanges.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 2

2A) Through the curriculum, improve the engagement of <u>students,</u> and increase the level of formal engagement by the <u>Institute</u> with community organisations

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Students receiving recognition for volunteering	1.3.2; 4.3.3	Increasing access and participation in higher education as a part of the social contract[11]; Celebrate and reward successful entrepreneurs[15]; promoting alternative pathways and recognition of prior learning and experience[12,Action 17]	Module validated and added to transcripts, activities linked to employability; outreach activities and widening participation	5 students	10 students	20 students
b) Establish an Industrial Liaison Group and Sector Groups	3.4.4; 4.2.3	Establish a regional skills fora to facilitate engagement with employers to enable local delivery of skills needs identified in the regional context[12, Actions 18 and 31].	Member of Regional Skills Forum.	Institute-wide Industrial Liaison group	2 sector groups	4 sector groups
c) Develop an effective CRM system	4.2.2	strength of relationships and transfer of knowledge between employers, education and training providers[17]; to manage in uncertain and more complex working environments[12, Action 16]	Scoping exercise underway	Implement pilot CRM process	Review effectiveness of the pilot	Implement institute-wide CRM

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[17] National Skills Strategy 2025, Vision:
https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf

2B) 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.

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Proportion of international full-time student in the system	KPI 1	international students to represent 15% of full-time students[18]	300 FTE (non-EU, Erasmus, EU)	310 FTE (non-EU, Erasmus, EU)	320 FTE (non-EU, Erasmus, EU)	330 FTE (non-EU, Erasmus, EU)
b) Increase the number of cross-border partnerships with other HEIs, FE colleges	4.1.6	Increasing access and participation in higher education as a part of the social contract[11]	1 (UU)	2	3	4
c) Develop an international policy to develop international staff collaborations.	1.4.4	Staff-mobility…professional development of teaching, technical, management and administrative personnel… internationalisation of curricula[18]	45 (Staff Mobility Visits / Staff Exchanges)	50 (Staff Mobility Visits / Staff Exchanges)	55 (Staff Mobility Visits / Staff Exchanges)	60 (Staff Mobility Visits / Staff Exchanges)

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[18] International Education Strategy For Ireland 2016-2020, Strategic Priorities for HEIs: http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/International-Education-Strategy-For-Ireland-2016-2020.pdf

System Performance Framework: 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

- 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

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 3: RDI (Compact Priorities 3A and 3B):

(i) Develop infrastructure and capital resources to support target PG numbers
(ii) Develop a time allocation procedure and a budget to allow staff members to prepare and submit publications, supervise postdoctoral researchers, and to submit grant applications
(iii) Allocate a conference budget to specific publication outputs
(iv) Increase number of innovation vouchers, EI partnerships and Commercialisation fund grants
(v) Support new business start-ups from across the region
(vi) Develop mechanisms to apply the creative talent of staff and students to develop innovative solutions for industry

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 3

The first Compact Priority for this Framework Objective is concerned with building research capacity, research activity and the Institute's engagement with industry on research projects. Underlying the indicators is the aim of meeting the TU research criteria which is one of the main KPIs in the Strategic Plan of the Institute. As well as the specific TU criteria of achieving 4% of the Level 8-10 student body engaged in L9-10 research, there are other enablers in this Compact Priority, including infrastructure, facilitating staff to engage in research and developing new modes of delivery for masters programmes that meet the TU criteria definition.

IT Sligo has a strong commitment to regional economic development, as evidenced by the companies in the Incubation Centre and those who are supported through the New Frontiers programme. The Institute works in close collaboration with IDA and EI to attracted new companies to the region (e.g. Overstock Ltd, Livetiles Ltd, Abtran Ltd, E3 Ltd). These companies have started their Sligo operation with specific training support provided by the institute and access to the Institute's innovation space. To further enhance the availability of innovation pace, the Institute has formed partnerships with Leitrim LEO (i.e. the HIVE in Carrick-on-Shannon) and with IDA and Sligo LEO (i.e. The Embankment building). This is the second Compact Priority select under Framework Objective 3. The indicators for collaboration with industry are aimed at increasing the number of collaborative projects with companies, in particular SMEs and new business start-ups. There is a particular indicator targeted at the creative industries as this is a relatively large sector across the North West[19].

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

The indicators and targets included in this Compact are enablers for achieving specific TU research criteria. The indicator for increased infrastructure will take some time to bring to full development. Over the next three years it is envisaged that an application for funding to the HEA will be approved and that Phase 1 (design) and Phase 2 (project commencement) will have begun, yielding additional spaces for research. A pilot procedure for allocating time to academic staff to engage in research has been approved for 2018/19. The effectiveness of this will be reviewed over the next 3 years.

To achieve the TU criteria, the CUA[20] needs to increase its cohort of Level 9 and 10 research students by 100. Under the TU legislation, a research student is defined as a person enrolled on a Level 9 or 10 programme where 60% or more of the credits are awarded for a thesis or theses. Students enrolled on structured masters programmes (SRM) that meet this condition are considered to meet the criteria. The CUA is developing SRM programmes across the three Institutes of Technology – based on a model of one overarching SRM having different pathways in different disciplines. This would potentially lead to a more rapid achievement of the criteria for research. Part of the success of this is the development of an effective marketing and recruitment plan for the new SRM programmes.

Achieving the indicators for partnership with industry will require more staff to engage in industry collaboration. This may be challenging as academic staff are typically involved in different forms of external engagement and may not have time to divert into specific industry projects as described here. Staff will be supported to engage through information sessions and facilitated sessions with SMEs.

The Innovation Centre already has a strong engagement with SMEs and new business start-ups. This will be expanded through partnership with external bodies such as the Regional Skills Forum, Local Enterprise Offices, Enterprise Ireland and IDA. In 2018/19, the Yeats Academy of Arts, Design and Architecture (YAADA)[21] will be established. The intention is to build engagement with the creative industries across the region. A large part of the SS creative practice staff are involved in community activities as are some of the marketing staff. These are also supportive of the objectives of the Institute to widen community engagement.

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[19] https://mycreativeedge.eu/app/uploads/2018/02/west-ireland-eia-report-web-final_rev-compressed.pdf

[20] CUA - Connacht Ulster Alliance comprises IT Sligo, GMIT and LYIT working together to become a TU.

[21] YAADA – Yeats Academy of Arts, Design and Architecture is the coming together of the suite of creative programmes across the institute, spanning Fine Art, Creative Design, Performing Arts, Creative Writing and Architecture.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 3

3A) Support an increase in the number of PG students and publications

	INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a)	Develop infrastructure and capital resources to support target PG numbers	3.1.2	The quality of the research environment underpins the development of Ireland's next generation of researchers [17]	960 m^2 (80 PG students)	Develop capital Plan for additional 80 PG students (1,600m^2)	Building commenced	Phase 1 available
b)	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	3.1.4	Increase capacity in the higher education sector[22, Section 2.2 (targets for HEIs)]	No allocation; General pilot allocation scheme approved	Evaluate effectiveness of pilot allocations (students, papers, grants etc)	Review and develop allocation	Agreed revised allocations
c)	Develop structured Research Masters and PhD programmes (in collaboration with CUA partners)	KPI 1; 3.1.6	Advance and ensure quality postgraduate research education provision[22 (Section 3.4, 3.9)]	Staff Research Training and Graduate Research Education Pgms in place, structure of SRM and SPhD agreed	50 staff/students on Research Training Programme/ Structured Research Masters; Graduate Education/ Staff Research Training Unit established	+50 staff/students on Research Training Pgms/ Structured Research Masters	+50 staff/students on Research Training Pgms/ Structured Research Masters

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[22] Innovation 2020: https://www.djei.ie/en/Publications/Innovation-2020.html

3B) Increase related funding and industry partnerships

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Increase number of innovation vouchers, Innovation partnerships and Commercialisation fund grants (including STEM and social science partners/NGOs)	3.3.1	Increase no. of enterprise collaborations by a third[12]; Increase the use of the EI Innovation Partnership Schemes[22, Section 2.12]	17 vouchers	22, 1 IP	37, +1 IP; 1 CF	42, +1 IP; +1 CF
b) Support new business start-ups from across the region, particularly SMEs	3.3.2	(a) promoting greater collaboration between enterprise and HEIs[12, Action 34]; (b) identify enterprise need for RTO support, particularly in the areas of Advanced Manufacturing and Services & Business Processes[22, 2.6d]; (c) location of choice for high quality international startups [15]	Engaging with 35 businesses	40	45	50
c) Develop mechanisms to apply the creative talent of staff and students to develop innovative solutions for the creative sector	3.3.3	Strengthen the role that HEIs will play within their regions[12, Section 31];	Anecdotal evidence of creative collaboration with industry	YAADA established	5 new evidenced collaborative projects	+5 new evidenced collaborative projects

System Performance Framework: Objective 4

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

High Level targets

- 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 underrepresented groups** with 2,000 additional enrolments from socio-economically 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

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 1: Students (Compact Priorities 4A and 4B):

i) Use available data to identify student engagement and attendance to help identify students who need early interventions and supports participation rates
ii) Implement national access admissions programme (HEAR) for students of low socio-economic backgrounds, disadvantaged, mature; disabled (also DARE)
iii) Identify learners who require additional support earlier in their academic life and ensure adequate supports are provided
iv) Embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across programmes, with appropriate training and supports

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 4: Partnership & External Engagement (Compact Priorities 4A and 4B):

i) Strengthen the support/advisory service for applicants who are exploring a '2nd chance' opportunity to obtain an higher education award
ii) Develop MOUs with 2nd level/ETBs with a focus on pathways into IT Sligo and to providing greater access to our facilities to 2nd level educators

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 4

Given the geographical location of IT Sligo, in a rural, mostly agricultural hinterland, a commitment to facilitating access to higher education (HE) in effective and imaginative ways has always been a priority. The Institute has some 65% of students in receipt of SUSI funding[23] and many of the students are first attenders at higher education in their immediate families. The challenge over the last 10 years is in attracting students to IT Sligo; the persistent trend has been that some 45% of the 2nd level cohort leave the region to attend HE elsewhere and the Institute struggles to maintain full time on-campus enrolments from year to year. In recent years there has also been a downturn in the number of mature students applying to enrol on programmes, attributed to the increase in employment opportunities. The Institute is making substantial efforts to target regional second-level, PLC schools and ETBs, to increase the enrolments from those from the region. A new marketing plan has been developed with specific actions for this pre-entry cohort. These are not included in the new initiatives below, as marketing is considered to be an existing core function of the institute.

The first Compact priority for Framework Objective 4 is aimed at assisting people to access higher education through existing mechanisms such as the HEAR and DARE[24] programmes, Path II projects[25] - 1916 bursaries[26] - and through providing career and educational advice, and supporting those who have made it into HE to achieve a successful outcome. Through these schemes, the Institute will facilitate greater access to HE programmes to those who otherwise are unable to progress in their education.

The second Compact Priority for this Framework Objective is focussed on increasing the likelihood of student success. IT Sligo is also recognised as the leading provider of online/blended learning in the country, thereby facilitating many people in the workforce to upskill, who otherwise could not access HE awards. In addition to supporting full time students, the Institute also wants to identify interventions to support online/blended leaning students.

A particular focus will be on applying the principles of Universal Design for Learning[27]. This will require a programme of staff training and then introducing ways to facilitate staff to apply the principles of UDL.

In order to assist students of Education and Training Boards (ETBs[28]) to access HE existing negotiations will be continued with ETBs to agree MOUs that facilitate such progression.

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

The first indicator will focus on student engagement with the learning process, applying a bespoke software platform developed to be used by students for self-monitoring. The Institute is also setting specific targets for student recruitment through the HEAR and DRAE and mature student entry routes. The PATH 3 scheme will be used to attract and mentor more socio-economic disadvantaged students into higher education.

As part of the second Compact Priority, a diagnostic tool will be used to monitor and evaluate student standards and performance.

The UDL initiative is focus primarily on retaining those who are attending the Institute.

Finally, the Institute will develop MOUs and ETBs for student progression at a programme level and will also build relationships with 2nd level providers by allowing access to Institute teaching facilities. The high level targets in the HEA gap analysis points to progression rates in STEM. As IT Sligo has a significant number of STEM programmes delivered through online/blended learning mode, attention will be given to promoting and supporting these programmes in such collaborations.

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[23] Student Universal Support Ireland: https://susi.ie

[24] http://www.qualifax.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=176&Itemid=202

[25] Part Strand 2 and 3: http://hea.ie/policy/national-access-plan/path-strand-2-3-call-for-proposals/

[26] Under Path Strand 2: http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/08/1916-Bursary-Fund-Guidelines-PATH-Strand-2-Final.pdf

[27] Universal Design for Learning: https://www.ahead.ie/udl

[28] Education and Training Boards: www.etbi.ie

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 4

4A) Increase access and completion rates from disadvantaged cohorts

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Use available data to identify student engagement and attendance to help identify students who need early interventions and that supports improved participation rates (see also 4Bb)	1.2.1	A high quality student experience based on excellent teaching, research and scholarship[11]	Student survey data available SEAts[29] pilot commenced	Student survey data reviewed and actions agreed	Actions implemented # students supported	Effectiveness of actions evaluated
b) Implement national access admissions programme (HEAR) for students of low socio-economic backgrounds, disadvantaged, mature; disabled (DARE)	1.2.3	To assess the impact of current initiatives to support equity of access to higher education[30 Goal 2]	HEAR # = none Disabled # = 110 Mature # = 97	HEAR # = X at Sept 2018 first intake Disabled # = 120 Mature # = 90[31]	HEAR # = X + 10 Disabled # = 130 Mature # = 85	Evaluate schemes Continue growth under each category
c) Strengthen the support/advisory service for applicants who are exploring a '2nd chance' opportunity to obtain a higher education award	4.1.5	Participation in higher education by 'first-time' mature students;… increasing access to higher education with a particular focus on mentoring[30, Goal 5]	Path 3 application submitted	Target of 90 students mentored	10 students enrolled; on-going mentoring	10 students enrolled; on-going mentoring

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[29] SEAts is a software platform designed to increase student success, see: https://www.seatssoftware.com/

[30] National plan for equity of access to higher education:
http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/national_plan_for_equity_of_access_to_higher_education_20152019_single_page_version_0.pdf

[31] These numbers refer to full-time enrolments and are projected to reduce annually due to the increase in employment levels. However, it is likely that number of mature employees seeking upskilling through online/blended learning programmes will increase.

4B) Develop and implement a Student Success Strategy (across all categories of students) which embeds approaches to institutional access strategies

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 S this Target	2020-21 Target
a) Identify (both full time and online/blended) learners who require additional support earlier in their academic life and ensure adequate supports are provided	1.2.4	Initiatives to support equity of access to higher education[30, Goal 2]	All FT 1st years to undergo students diagnostic analysis	Evaluate diagnostic process for student performance	All 1st years to undergo students diagnostic analysis	Programme evaluated
b) Embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across programmes, with appropriate training and supports	1.2.5	Increasing access and participation in higher education as a part of the social contract[11, Channel 4]	Introduce UDL to staff through workshops & UDL digital badges	25% staff will have a clear understanding of UDL 20 staff to have completed UDL digital Badge – each of these will have demonstrated at least one significant change to their module in compliance with UDL	50% staff will have understanding of UDL 30 staff to have completed UDL digital badge – each of these will have demonstrated at least one significant change to their module in compliance with UDL	75% staff will have understanding of UDL 40 staff to have completed UDL digital badge – each of these will have demonstrate at least one significant change to their module in compliance with UDL
c) 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	4.1.2	Build coherent pathways from FE and to foster other entry routes to HE [30, Goal 4]	1 MOU with ETB	2 programme MOUs per year 1 new 2nd level provider using IT Sligo teaching facilities	4 programme MOUs per year 2 new 2nd level provider using IT Sligo teaching facilities	6 programme MOUs per year 3 new 2nd level provider using IT Sligo teaching facilities

System Performance Framework: 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

- 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.

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 2: Students (Compact Priorities 5A and 5B):

i) Carry out an annual training needs analysis and implement training programmes
ii) Every member of staff to engage in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) annually
iii) Regular review of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)
iv) Carry out the ACODE Benchmarking for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)
v) Review best practice for Design/Delivery/Assessment strategy for online students

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 6: Organisation & Governance (Compact Priorities 5B):

i) Build a set of learning analytics – e.g. student engagement, progression, completion rates etc.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 5

IT Sligo has ambitious plan to increase its student body and to enhance its engagement with regional businesses, organisations and agencies. To achieve this, both the academic and the professional management and support staff need to be appropriately trained and prepared for the new developments that are required to achieve the ambition. In particular, there is a need training for staining of academic staff on emerging teaching techniques, and for staff in general to improve student services provision and on business process improvements. There is an annual call for staff training needs and the delivery of training is typically managed by the HR function and by the Centre for Learning and teaching (CELT). There is a need to carry out a more formal training needs analysis rather than relying on add-hoc requests from staff.   Of particular focus in recent years is encouraging academic staff to undertake PhD programmes in order to meet the TU metric for staff qualifications. The first Compact Priority under Framework Objective 5 is to develop and implement a staff development plan that is aligned to the strategic priorities of the Institute.

Every higher education institution recognises the challenges faced by students during their learning. Difficulties with literacy and numeracy are well documented. There are also wider challenges with different styles of learning and with balancing personal demands together with academic requirements. The second Compact Priority under Framework Objective 5 is to provide supports for student learning. This will be provided through CELT. The intention is that CELT will have staff trained in supporting particular learning needs of students and students may request support from CELT. Therefore, a significant role of CELT will be on staff development on academic matters, including new learning techniques.

IT Sligo has been a strong partner in many of the Teaching and Learning Forum projects. This has brought new learning to the Institute in relation to digital learning methodologies and has provide the opportunity to engage in projects that require the skills and expertise of more than one HEI. Given the high level of involvement in online/blended learning at IT Sligo, it is also considered important that the priority includes benchmarking of the virtual learning environment (VLE) and of delivery modes for online students. This will allow comparison with international standards and improve the quality management of online delivery.

Analysing the data on student performance is important to the understanding of the effectiveness of our teaching methodologies and student support structures. In fact, the need for good data analytics is relevant to most of the Compact Objectives as without this it is difficult to evaluate performance of many of the indicators. For example, recently, the Institute has engaged in the UMultirank project which allows for meaningful comparisons with other HEIs across Europe. Together with the business excellence function, CELT will be involved in starting by building a database reporting on trends in student engagement, progression, and completion rates etc.

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

The starting point for staff development will be to conduct a training needs analysis. This will establish what is needed, based on feedback from staff and also management. The training will then be rolled out and the initial effectiveness of this evaluated. An essential part of this will be the extent to which all staff engage in training, or CPD, in a way the supports the achievement of the Strategic Ambition of the Institute.

The identified benchmarking processes will be applied to the VLE and Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) systems, and the findings of the review will be applied and their effectiveness further evaluated. A similar approach will be taken for the delivery mode for online learning. Finally, the institute will build up a database of the key performance indicators for students that can be interrogated and analysed to identify new interventions to increase student recruitment and improve student success levels.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 5

5A) Develop and implement a staff development plan

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Carry out an annual training needs analysis and implement training programmes	2.1.1	A nation of people armed with relevant knowledge, entrepreneurial agility and analytical skills[17]	Training budget of €250K allocated to approved training activities (emphasis on PhDs)	Training needs analysis survey agreed, competed and programme of training agreed	Training programme implemented Number of staff trained on research supervision	Review of success of the on-going training programme
b) 80% member of staff to engage in CPD annually	2.1.3	Providing for continuous learning/upskilling for workers[12, Action 21]	Some staff members engaging in CPD 10% staff trained in research supervision	Audit of numbers and range of training	50% staff engaged in CPD 30% staff trained in research supervision	80% staff engaged in CPD; audit of this 50% staff trained in research supervision

5B) Develop the Centre of Learning and Teaching (CELT) along with enhanced supports for student learning, including benchmarking

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Regular review of Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and carry out ACODE Benchmarking for Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL)	2.2.1	Developing alternative modes of delivery including online offerings[12, Action 16]	Benchmarking systems identified	VLE and TEL reviewed; Benchmarking applied and reviewed with findings	Apply findings of the review	VLE and TEL reviewed; Benchmarking applied and reviewed with findings
b) Review best practice for Design/Delivery/Assessment strategy for online students (see also 4Bb)	2.2.5	As above	Range of strategies applied, as appropriate to each pgm.	Review strategies; report on a more structured approach	Apply findings of the review	Review strategies; refined the structure
c) Build a set of learning analytics – e.g. student engagement, progression, completion rates etc.	6.5.2	Student experience based on excellent teaching, research and scholarship[11]	New BPI officer recruited	Agree set of analytics and first pass at data (progression etc)	Analysis of data informs actions	Effectiveness of actions reviewed

System Performance Framework: Objective 6

Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

High Level targets

- 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.

Alignment with IT Sligo Strategic Objectives

The specific sub-objectives in the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-22 used as a basis for proposing the Compact Priorities of the 3-year Compact Agreement are:

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 3: Research Development & Innovation (Compact Priorities 6A):

(i) Consider the establishment of additional Strategic Research Centres that meet published criteria and that deliver the TU metrics

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 4: Partnership & External Engagement (Compact Priorities 6A):

(i) Develop collaborative projects with our TU partners

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 5: Shaping & Influencing Economic, Social & Cultural Development (Compact Priorities 6A):

(i) Engage in regional and national discussions and collaborations to strengthen the likelihood of the Institute attaining TU status

IT Sligo Strategic Plan Objective 6: Students (Compact Priorities 6B):

(i) Agree institute-wide equality and diversity policies and an implementation plan
(ii) Working group to achieve gender equality standards (achievement of AS bronze award)
(iii) Develop an internal communication policy and implementation plan.
(iv) Develop a green campus providing an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment.
(v) Reconvene green campus committee; get feedback on initiatives and broaden remit.
(vi) Achieve green flag status
(vii) Create a social environment and communal areas for staff and students to meet

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 6

The National Development Plan[4] articulates the need for a TU in the North-West and identifies Sligo as a regional centre for development. The Governing Body recognises the pivotal role of a TU in retaining students and graduates in the region and in enhancing attractiveness of the region for inward investment and as an agent of economic, social and cultural growth across the region.

Achieving the TU criteria permeates across most of the Compact Priorities presented in this document, and many of the TU criteria are specifically identified for action. The first Compact Priority under Framework Objective 6 focusses on building research capacity, as one of the main TU criteria domains, and of building collaborations with our CUA partners, as well as participating in national discussions on the future of higher education. Achieving TU status will involve (arguably as the first step to integration) common processes across the CUA.

The Institute is in good standing with the HEA and Department of Education and Skills; the Governing Body has adopted the sector Code of Governance, and actively monitors the Risk Register, financial performance and academic developments. One area needing further development is building a culture of equality, diversity and gender balance. There is gender imbalance at management level, across all functions. The second Compact Priority under Framework Objective 6 is to create a culture that recognises and treats all genders equally.

Underpinning the success of the Compact and indeed the IT Sligo Strategic Plan process is ensuring effective internal and external communication. Therefore, one of the indicators for this priority is to develop good communication processes, particularly with staff and students.

IT Sligo has always been a leader in environmental sustainability policies and practices, since the launch of the first Environment science programmes in the 1970s. The Institute remains committed to the on-going development of the campus and this is included in the actions of the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-2022. This is also a focus for the second Compact Priority for Framework Objective 6.

Setting, Monitoring and Measuring Outcomes

The first indicator is concerned with evaluating the performance of the existing Strategic Research Centres (SRCs) and whether additional research centres are needed in order to better deliver the TU metric. An element of this process is around the relationship with other SRCs across the CUA and consideration of the potential for joined-up research centres.

Demonstrating evidence of collaboration across the TU partnership is important in making a submission for re-designation as a TU and the wider higher education landscape. The second indicator will explore other areas of collaboration across the TU partnership that will bring the CUA closer to achieving the TU metrics.

It is also important that IT Sligo and the CUA is fully aware and engaged with national developments in relation to TUs. The key stakeholders are the HEA, Department of Education and Skills and the staff representative bodies. It is important that the various stakeholders consult and communicate positions and concerns and reach agreement on the implementation of the TU Act. There are also negotiations at national level relating to, for example, sector funding, future learning paradigms and staff contracts.

The indicator for equality and diversity will be measured in terms of policies developed and effectiveness of the activities of working groups and the roll out of a programme of awareness training for all and support for women, in particular. The achievement of AS status is also a specific metric.

Finally, the need for clear communication plan is essential to underpin the objectives of the Compact and indeed of the Strategic Plan, and in particular the TU project. This will be measured by the development of a communication plan and the effectiveness of its implementation.

IT Sligo Compact Priorities for System Performance Framework Objective 6

6A) Achieve TU Status

INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a) Consider the establishment of additional Strategic Research Centres that meet published TU criteria and that deliver the TU metrics	3.2.1	Research addressing societal challenges, prosperity and human development[11]; Improve the quality of the research environment[11]	3 SRCs	Review of performance of existing SRCs and RRGs[32]	Issue a call and establish one or more new SRC/s across the CUA	Evaluate performance of SRCs
b) Develop collaborative projects with our TU partners	4.1.7	Be a location of choice for high quality international startups and a world class entrepreneurial hub[15]	Existing collaborations: new apprenticeships, RPL, library access	3 new collaborative projects	+5 new collaborative projects	TU status
c) Engage in regional and national discussions and collaborations to strengthen the likelihood of the Institute attaining TU status	5.1.1	Strengthen the role that HEIs will play within their regions[12, Action 31]	Participation on DES-TUI-THEA national negotiation forum IT Sligo internal consultation	Continue NNF participation Allocate time for union involvement	Make submission for re-designation	TU status

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[32] Recognised Research Groups

6B) Maintain good standing as a public sector body

	INDICATORS	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment with National policies	2017-18 (base)	2018-19 Target	2019-20 Target	2020-21 Target
a)	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)	6.3.4	Support and recognise the embedding of gender equality across all aspects of the work of HEIs[33].	National taskforce stats compiled	Bring together AS WG to develop plan (sub-set of (a)	Implement work plan and apply for Bronze Award	AS Bronze award achieved
b)	Develop an internal communication policy and implementation plan	6.6.1		No formal policy; communication via monthly news-letter, staff conferences and emails.	Develop an internal communication policy and implementation plan. Develop a specific communication plan for TU	Implement the plan/s	Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan/s
c)	Develop a green campus providing an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment	6.2	A high quality student experience based on excellent teaching, research and scholarship[11, Channel 1;] collaborations with industry and other stakeholders through strategic clusters and centres of excellence for sustainable development[34]	No formal actions underway	Reconvene green campus committee; get feedback on initiatives and broaden remit. Establish an international Education with Sustainability consortium	Work towards agreed targets to achieve green campus flag. Participate in education and sustainability events	Progress agreed targets to achieve green campus flag. Participate in education and sustainability events

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[33](a) HEA Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education: http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/hea_review_of_gender_equality_in_irish_higher_education.pdf and
  (b) Gender Action Plan 2018-2020: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/gender-action-plan-2018-2020.pdf
[34] National-Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014-2020: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/National-Strategy-on-Education-for-SustainableDevelopment-in-Ireland-2014-2020.pdf

Compact Priorities: Managing Risk

The Institute has an active Risk Register (Appendix B). This is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Risk Management Committee and each of the functional areas report on risk changes that have occurred. The risk areas pf the Institute's Risk Register are:

1) Failure to achieve TU Status

2) Failure to Achieve Awarding Body Status

3) Inability to achieve student number targets to deliver strategic objectives

4) Attracting and retaining competent Staff in the right areas

5) Complying with the Code of Governance and HEA requirements

6) Failure of Physical and ICT infrastructure to meet the needs of staff and students

7) Loss of leadership position in online learning

8) Risk of not meeting research, development and innovation targets of the Strategic Plan

9) Failure to engage with stakeholders to grow and contribute to regional development

10) Failure to provide an excellent Student Experience

11) Failure to be prepared for the consequences of Brexit

12) Non-compliance with Health and Safety Requirements

Risks are scored for likelihood and impact and a traffic-light system is used to identify overall risk ratings. For each of these risks, a set of controls has been identified and a set of mitigating actions agreed at each meeting that are intended to reduce the impact or the likelihood of a particular risk.

To mitigate against the risk of not achieving the objectives and initiatives of the IT Sligo Strategic Plan, the Institute has already implement a process of reviewing the Plan on a 6-monthly basis and it is treated as a live document that is updated and modified appropriately following each review.

Achieving the Compact Priorities over the next three years will challenge the Institute. As presented above, each of the Compact Priorities align with Strategic Objectives of the Institute and are therefore captured in the Institute Risk Areas in one way or another. As part of the routine (monthly) risk management process, mitigating actions specifically targeted at achieving Compact Priorities will be identified and the Compact Agreement itself will be reviewing on a 6-monthly basis, in the same way that the IT Sligo Strategic Plan 2017-2022 is reviewed twice per year.
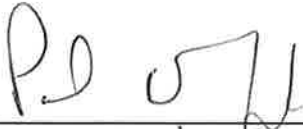
Conclusion

A draft Compact agreement between IT Sligo and the HEA has been proposed. The Institute has set out its priorities for the Compact, linking these to the Institutes Strategic Plan 20-17-22 and to the high level targets of the System Performance Framework for 2018-2020. A rationale of why each of these priority areas was selected by the Institute is provided. Specific indicators and targets have been specified and an outline provided as to how these will be enacted, monitored and measured.

This proposed agreement was reviewed by an international Panel and this document is the final draft agreement issued by the Institute for adoption by the HEA.

To be completed following the conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.

The HEA and Higher Education Institution agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as set out in the foregoing sections of this Compact, are consistent with the objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to the place of Higher Education Institution within the system.

Signed: _____

Date: _____26/2/19_____

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed: _____

Date: _13.02.19_____

President, Higher Education Institution

Signed: ___Niall O'Donnellan_____

Date: _13.02.19_____

Chair, Governing Body, Higher Education Institution

Appendix A: **Glossary of Terms**

For clarification, the terminology used in this document is explained below:

Vision: A statement of what the Institute wants to achieve over the foreseeable future

Mission: A description of the Institute's area of focus and a statement of why the Institute exists.

Culture and Aims: A set of the Institute's top core beliefs and values that pertain to both staff and students.

Performance indicator: a measurable value that demonstrates how effectively the Institute is achieving it's key objectives, that are used to evaluate our success at reaching targets

Strategic Plan Objective: to identify the Institute's goals and to indicate how best to use the resources of the Institute to achieve them.

Strategic Plan Actions: These are specific actions that identify how the institute will use its strategies to meet its objectives.

System Performance Framework: This refers to the Higher Education System Performance Framework, 2018-2020, developed by the HEA to set out the system objectives for higher education over the coming years. See: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/higher-education-system-performance-framework-2018-2020.pdf

Compact Priorities: These are priorities proposed by IT Sligo that deliver to a selection of the High Level Targets set out for each of the objectives of the System Performance Framework

Indicators: The specific action areas for each Compact Priority. Typically, three Indicators have been proposed for each Compact Priority.

Targets: These are the indicative achievements that are being proposed for each indicator for each Compact Priority in the proposed Compact agreement.

Appendix B: Sample Risk Register summary provided to the Audit and Risk Committee of Governing Body

IT SLIGO RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY SLIGO
PRINCIPAL RISKS

Index	Risk Title	Risk Category	Link to Strategic Pillar	Strategic Objective	Owner	Residual Risk Rating - Sept 17	Residual Risk Rating - Jan 18	Residual Risk Rating - May 18	Risk Trajectory for the Acad Year
1	Failure to achieve TU Status	TU Objective	All	E1	Brendan McCormack	H	H	H	→
2	Failure to Achieve and Maintain Awarding Body Status	Reputational and Compliance	Learning & Teaching	B5	Colin McLean	M	M	M	→
3	Inability to achieve student number targets to deliver strategic objectives	Compliance, Financial	Students, Learning & teaching	A4	Colin McLean	H	H	H	↑ ***
4	Attracting and retaining competent Staff in the right areas	Education and Student Experience; People and culture	Students, Learning & teaching	B1	Elizabeth McCabe	H	H	H	→
5	Complying with the Code of Governance , GDPR and HEA requirements	Education and Student Experience/Reputational Risk	Organisation and Governance	F4	Elizabeth McCabe	M	M	H	↑
6	Failure of Physical and ICT infrastructure to meet the needs of staff and students	Education and Student Experience; Major Change Activity; Reputation	Learning & Teaching	F2	Elizabeth McCabe	L	L	M	↑
7	Loss of leadership position in online learning	Education and Student Experience; Knowledge Exchange, Social Responsibility	Learning & Teaching	B2	Jerry Bird	M	H	H	↑
8	Risk of not meeting research, development and innovation targets of the Strategic Plan	Research, Knowledge Exchange	Research, Devt & Innovation	C	Chris O'Malley	M	M	M	→
9	Failure to engage with stakeholders to grow and contribute to regional development	Reputation, Environment and social engagement, Knowledge Exchange	Partnership & External Engagement	E	Chris O'Malley	M	M	M	→
10	Failure to provide an excellent Student Experience	Education and Student Experience	Student; Organisation and Governance	A1-A4	Michael Barrett	H	H	M	↓
11	Failure to be prepared for the consequences of Brexit	Financial, Reputation	Organisation and Governance	E1	Brendan McCormack	M	M	M	→

*** Still High but increased in Severity since last discussed.

Risk Assessment - Residual Rating Heat Map

HIGH — LIKELIHOOD — LOW

R4 →   R3 ↑   R7 ↑
R8 →   R11 →
R9 →   R10 ↓   R5 ↑   R1 →
        R6 ↑
                          R2 →

LOW   MEDIUM   HIGH
IMPACT

Title	Risk	Rating	Trajectory
TU Status	R1	H	→
Awarding Body	R2	M	→
Student Nos	R3	H	↑
Staff	R4	H	→
Code of Gov	R5	H	↑
Infrastructure	R6	M	↑
Online	R7	H	↑
RDI Targets	R8	M	→
Reg Devt	R9	M	→
Stud Experience	R10	M	↓
Brexit	R11	M	→

Risk Climate
↑ Increase
→ Unchanged
↓ Decrease

For ARC Meeting 30.05.18

22/05/2018   INDEX   RISK Register 17.05.18