



lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta  
Leitir Ceanainn  
Letterkenny Institute  
of Technology

# PROGRESS AGAINST PERFORMANCE COMPACT TARGETS FOR 2016







Progress against Performance Compact Targets for 2016

Target achieved or exceeded	17
Substantial progress made, targets not met in full and reasons identified	2
Target not met for identified reasons	0
Total	19



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# Overview of Institutional Progress

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## Overarching Statement

In October 2013, when LYIT completed its Mission-based Performance Compact, much of the work had been completed on the successor to LYIT's Strategic Plan 2007-2013. Given the timing it was possible to shape this new plan to achieve close coordination with the roll-out of the Mission-based Performance Compacts and the Strategic Dialogue process.

LYIT's *Strategic Plan 2014-17 Our Commitment to the North West Gateway Learning Region*, was approved in 2014 with revised Mission and Vision statements.

### Mission:

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will confirm its significant national profile for excellence in higher education through the pursuit of an ambitious development agenda informed by public policy, strong regional engagement, and a fundamental commitment to a student-centred ethos.

- Nationally Significant
- Regionally Engaged
- Student Centred

### Vision:

- To be widely recognised as a leading higher education institute for the quality of our graduates and our employment-focused education programmes.
- To retain the excellent relationship that we enjoy with our student body and be an exemplar for student services and campus facilities.
- To play a key role in driving the development of the North West region through research, innovation and enterprise initiatives and our well established partnerships with education and industry bodies.
- To support the implementation of public policy and particularly the national higher education strategy, exploiting LYIT's particular strength and track record on cross-border engagement.

As promised in LYIT's Compact, Strategic Plan 2014-17 was shaped to achieve close coordination with the roll-out of the Mission-based Performance Compacts and the Strategic Dialogue process. Strategic Plan 2014-17 includes five strategic domains: Learning and Teaching; Student Experience; Research, Innovation, and Enterprise; Collaboration and Regional Engagement; and Sustainability and Resource Utilisation. Specifically, under Sustainability and Resource Utilisation the Institute's commitment to the strategic dialogue process was referenced in one of the five objectives within this:

*Engage in an open and transparent way with the HEA through the strategic dialogue process and the transition to performance funding, build Institute capacity in terms of data capture, identify appropriate key performance indicators, align targets for individual functional areas with the agreed compact, and measure performance against these targets.*

It was recognised that the Guidelines for Completion of Mission-based Performance Compacts (July 2013) provided a very useful framework for monitoring achievement of individual objectives. In terms of LYIT's annual functional area plans, these elements of good practice from the performance compact have been adopted and to further bolster operational planning; additional elements covering Component Actions, Ownership, Progress, and Comments were included in the functional area plan template.

Reflections in this the final self-evaluation for this agreed Compact have been informed by the initial completion of the Compact, lessons learned in conducting and drafting the annual self-evaluations, written feedback provided by the HEA in the form of the annual reflection on performance documents, and the minutes from the bilateral strategic dialogue meetings.

LYIT is now entering a new phase of strategic planning to ensure that a replacement for Strategic Plan 2014-17 is in place early in 2018 – learning captured through this phase of the strategic dialogue process will be an important element in shaping our successor strategic plan.



# 1. Regional Clusters





## Overarching Statement

LYIT pledged through the 2013 Mission-based Performance Compact to work closely with our partner institutions (NUIG, IT Sligo, and GMIT) in the West/North-West to ensure that the objectives of regional clusters as detailed in the HEA's *Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape (2013)* are achieved. Delivering on this commitment envisaged leveraging the existing strong working relationship in place between the three IoTs of the Connacht–Ulster Alliance (CUA). The CUA's focus on delivering wider educational opportunities in addition to enhancing the economic and social development of the Connacht-Ulster region is a good fit with the five objectives of regional clusters.

An important priority for regional clusters is a coordinated approach to engagement with business and community and to support SMEs and this role will have to interface more efficiently with the emergence of the new Regional Skills Fora. A further complicating factor is that funding for HEIs is provided in the main on the basis of student numbers and does not address the significant demands that regional engagement places on individual colleges. The regional cluster and CUA have made good progress but have been hampered by ongoing funding difficulties of participant institutions and changes at President level; opportunities now exist for a further development

of relationships between the partners with the new senior management in place.

Strong collaborative relationships with regional HEI partners has long been important to LYIT and, reflecting our unique location, LYIT has played a leading role in cross-border collaboration with both FE and HE providers in Northern Ireland. LYIT is particularly well placed with our partners in Northern Ireland to help realise objectives for cross-border collaboration detailed in the HE strategies both North and South. Significant progress has also been achieved on the emerging cross-border cluster of FE and HE providers (LYIT, Ulster University, North West Regional College and Donegal ETB) where seed funding may be secured via resources committed by both Governments through the *"Fresh Start Agreement."* Significant recent success in securing research funding via Interreg points to the ongoing potential of this collaboration. The cross-border cluster can be the vehicle for transfer and progression opportunities as evidenced by initial success with NWRC; LYIT is also engaged with these partners on the challenges posed by Brexit. Development of the National Planning Framework will also impact future cluster arrangements and further define LYIT's role in respect to cross-border activity.

1. Institution Objectives	Establish a regional Cluster in the HEIs in the West/North West Region with appropriate Governance Arrangements  It is also envisaged that a liaison will be established with the Mid-West Cluster
Performance Indicators	The establishment of a functioning Cluster.
Baseline	Current formal collaborations in the region of the individual institutions:  'Ignite West' Technology Transfer Consortium; Medical Academy Castlebar (NUI Galway /GMIT); Medical Academy Letterkenny (NUI Galway/LYIT); and New Frontiers (LYIT/ ITS).
Final Target, end 2016	Review of Cluster objectives and performance.  Achievement of medium term Cluster objectives.



<p>Interim target, end 2016, commentary and data source</p>	<p>All targets for 2014, 2015 and 2016 achieved.</p> <p>The West North West Higher Education Cluster was established under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority (HEA), in the context of reforms of Ireland's higher education landscape and while the Cluster builds upon some of the existing collaborations, such as Ignite West and New Frontiers, it is important to note that this particular collaboration is comparatively new.</p> <p>The Cluster has clear and effective governance structures in place. The Steering group, Operations Group, Heads of Research Groups and Heads of Discipline groups all met regularly. The work of the Cluster is supported by two Programme Managers and the Cluster works within an agreed regional Academic Planning Process.</p> <p>The institutions have committed significant time and expertise of senior personnel since the establishment of the Cluster.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 Meetings of Steering Group and Operations Group (2014-2016)</li> <li>• 18 Meetings of Heads of Discipline across all discipline areas and Heads of Research (2014-2016)</li> </ul> <p>Cluster engagement has extended across our region to include engagement with relevant stakeholders such as the Regional Skills Fora, the Further Education sector, the Education and Training Boards, Western Development Commission and Fáilte Ireland. The Cluster collaborates and co-ordinates activities with our relevant Regional Skills Fora: Regional Skills North and Regional Skills West. Both Programme Managers continue to be members of the Regional Skills Fora steering groups and the Regional Skills Forum Managers now attend Cluster Operations Group meetings twice a year.</p> <p>Collaboration under the Cluster has deepened over the three year period, with particular synergies and cooperation between our institutions in the area of teaching and learning. Invitation to staff development seminars and are shared across the institutions, most recently through the National Forum's All Aboard digital road map week. Joint Cluster proposals to the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning have been particularly successful with funding awarded to six projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and Learning Champions (LYIT, St Angela's [NUI Galway], IT Sligo, GMIT)</li> <li>• Digital Badge on Mentoring for Leadership in Teaching and Learning (LYIT, NUI Galway)</li> <li>• Street Law (LYIT and NUI Galway)</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning (LYIT, GMIT, IT Sligo)</li> <li>• MOOC on the transition from second to third level (IT Sligo, GMIT, NUI Galway, LYIT)</li> <li>• Tourism Hospitality Educators Group (LYIT, GMIT, NUI Galway).</li> </ul> <p>The Cluster held a joint meeting with the mid-west Cluster on 7 December 2015. The view from both Clusters was that there was no need to formally extend engagement between the Clusters at that point.</p>
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Targets achieved</p>

2. Institution Objectives	Coordinated academic planning.
Performance Indicators	A coordinated academic plan.
Baseline	Individual portfolio of programmes for each HEI in Cluster.
Final Target, end 2016	Ensuring a diverse range of programmes across the region, responding to the needs of the region.
Interim target, end 2016, commentary and data source	<p>All targets for 2014-2016 achieved.</p> <p>The Cluster partners provide a diverse range of programmes across the region underpinned by a coordinated approach to academic planning, which respond to regional needs. Programmes are offered part-time, full-time, blended and on-line from levels 6 to 10. All partner institutions deliver programmes specifically designed to respond to regional needs identified in Springboard.</p> <p>The programme offering is informed by the detailed mapping and analysis of programmes across all discipline areas at undergraduate and postgraduate level undertaken by the Cluster.</p> <p>The joint academic process is in place since 2015 and has three elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sharing information on new programme development</li> <li>2. Sharing information on planned pausing of programmes</li> <li>3. Evidence based review and refreshing of programme offerings and student pathway</li> </ol> <p>The Cluster partners share programme development information under this process but note that the current competitive funding model based on student numbers presents challenges for regional academic planning.</p> <p>Mapping of civic engagement and research activity across all institutions was undertaken. This work has contributed to the development of an inter-institutional, multi-disciplinary research grouping, the Wild Atlantic Way Research Group, and to collaboration between the partners on research degrees at levels 9 and 10.</p> <p>The Cluster continues to develop closer collaboration on research under the strategies of the Heads of Research Group. Technology transfer for research within the Cluster is delivered on a collaborative basis for all partners through the Ignite Technology Transfer Office in NUI Galway. The Regional Research Centre on the Wild Atlantic way has been awarded seed funding from the Western Development Commission and the Cluster institutions.</p> <p>The pilot doctoral level staff development programme is making very strong progress with 10 IOT staff registered with NUI Galway for PhDs. NUI Galway, Dean of Graduate studies attends the Cluster Operation Group meetings regularly and is a member of the LYIT Post Graduate Research Advisory Board.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved





<b>3. Institution Objectives</b>	To develop regional learning pathways with partner institutes and FE institutions to provide clearly articulated progression opportunities among HEIs in the region
<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<p>Review access, transfer and progression policies and practices across cluster institutions.</p> <p>New entry routes for non- traditional students to full-time and part-time programmes developed.</p> <p>A joint policy among partner HEIs on the Recognition of Prior Learning for direct entry, module exemption and credit accumulation completed.</p>
<b>Baseline</b>	Institutional transfer policies and FETAC (now QQI FET) entry routes in place.
<b>Final Target, end 2016</b>	New entry routes in place.
<b>Interim target, end 2016, commentary and data source</b>	<p>All targets for 2014, 2015 achieved and targets for 2016 partially achieved.</p> <p>The Cluster has developed regional learning pathways amongst both the partner institutions and FE institutions to support clear progression opportunities for students within our region.</p> <p>Detailed analysis of student pathways in all discipline areas at undergraduate and post graduate areas was undertaken, with a scheme for progression and common access and transfer policies developed. The Cluster partners have a process for the systematic capture of student transfers within the region in place since 2015. A review of access from FE to Cluster institutions has also been undertaken.</p> <p><i>Widening Access in the West/North West Region</i></p> <p>The Cluster partners are committed to deepening collaboration on access and have made significant process in developing regional solutions to the objectives identified in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019. (HEA, 2015).</p> <p>All Cluster partners now share a common approach to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and support widening student access through RPL working with the myexperience.ie website. This provides new entry routes for all non-traditional students to full-time and part time programmes within the Cluster institutions.</p> <p>Cluster partners have agreement in principle for the mutual recognition of existing access programmes for the purpose of admission to programmes to all four institutions.</p> <p><i>Collaboration between the Cluster Partners and FE Institutions</i></p> <p>Programme mapping and collaborative structures are in place across the region to underpin progression opportunities to all four institutions. New pilot programmes have been developed to support widening access and progress from FE to HE.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cluster partners shared information on FE/ETB engagement and activities (2015-2016)</li> <li>• Memorandum of Understanding signed between LYIT and Donegal ETB (2015/16)</li> <li>• High level Regional HE-FE Planning Group (LYIT and Donegal ETB) (2015-2016)</li> <li>• IT Sligo pilot project on ETB engagement (2015-2016)</li> <li>• LYIT Access to Access Programme with Donegal ETB (2015 and 2016)</li> <li>• NUI GALWAY and GMIT engaging through Regional Skills Forum (Cluster Programme Manager as Chair) (2015-2016)</li> <li>• Coordination with North West and West Regional Skills For a (Programme managers sit on each steering group) (2015-2016)</li> <li>• GMIT- GR ETB Re-engagement Foundation Programme (2016)</li> </ul> <p><i>New Collaborative Programmes</i></p> <p>The Cluster partners now offer three jointly awarded/jointly delivered programmes at masters level with development of a fourth programme in rural affairs underway for 2017:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSc in Rural Development (NUI Galway and GMIT) (under development)</li> <li>• MSc in Regulatory Affairs (NUI GALWAY &amp; Sligo IT) (2015)</li> <li>• MA in Translation Studies (NUI GALWAY &amp; LYIT) (2015)</li> <li>• MA in Conference Interpreting (NUI GALWAY &amp; LYIT) (2015)</li> </ul> <p>There are currently 55 students registered on these new collaborative programmes.</p> <p><i>New and Sustainable Student Pathways</i></p> <p>The Cluster is at an advanced stage in the development of a framework to support collaboration in research degrees. Proposals have been developed by the Cluster Operations Group and are proceeding to formal adoption. The framework is underpinned by joint supervision across institutions, the mutual recognition of modules for the purposes of structured PhD and the creation of clear and effective student pathways from research masters at L9 to PhD at L10. The framework is consistent with the National Framework for Doctoral Education (HEA, 2015) and will develop new opportunities for students to progress from Research Masters degree to PhD within our region.</p> <p>Three Cluster partners (NUI Galway, LYIT and GMIT) have signed a formal Inter Institutional Articulation Agreement committing the institutions to ensuring the efficient and effective movement among partner institutions in enhancement of students' continuous advancement in learning.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved



4. Institute Objective	Continue engagement with cross-border education institutions to develop a cross-border higher education cluster
Performance Indicator	<p>Joint approaches with partner institutions in NI to delivery of cross-border elements of RoI and NI higher education strategies.</p> <p>Continued delivery of existing programmes and examination of further opportunities in line with outcomes of the NWGSA Scoping Study report.</p> <p>Collaboration in research and innovation activity.</p>
Baseline	<p>Joint programme with UU.</p> <p>Informal progression arrangements with FE sector in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Current student numbers from Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Current activities include: a maths initiative with North West Regional College (NWRC); North West Regional Science Park (NWRSP); North West Strategic Growth Partnership, emerging plan being developed by ICLRD</p>
Final target, end 2016	<p>Delivery of cross-border commitments in the HE strategies in RoI and NI.</p> <p>Increase number of advanced entry students from NI by 60 (from baseline).</p>
Commentary and data source	<p>Student pathways from North West Regional College (NWRC) to LYIT in areas which do not compete with established pathways from NWRC to Ulster University (UU) are being prioritised.</p> <p>A formal collaborative agreement was signed with NWRC in 2015/16 and has resulted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first pilot collaborative programme, BSc (Hons) Early Childhood Care, Health and Education, commenced September 2015</li> <li>• A second collaborative programme, BSc (Hons) in Sports coaching and Performance, commenced in September 2016</li> <li>• Further collaborative programmes including Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Science and Tourism programmes are scheduled to commence in September 2017</li> <li>• 55 full-time students registered in 2016/17.</li> </ul> <p>The 12th cohort of the joint MSc (Innovation Management in the Public Service) with UU and LYIT commenced in January 2016. There are currently 19 registered students on this programme (2016/17).</p> <p>It emerged from the parallel West/North-West regional cluster that no HEI in that cluster had data capture on source institution of advanced entry students. Formal mechanisms to capture the institution and country of origin for advanced entry students were established by LYIT for the first time in September 2015. This allows the establishment of a baseline and allows benchmarking against targets annually. Advanced Entry statistics are reviewed annually by Executive Board and Academic Council, with effect from academic year 2015/16.</p>

Advanced Entry Applicants usually have a minimum of one stage of a Higher Education qualification, from another college before entering an advanced year (post year 1) of full-time LYIT programmes. This new report profiles those previous HEI's that LYIT Advanced Entry Students have previously attended. The report exclusively covers Advanced Entry Students registered on full-time LYIT programmes at 31st October (HEA Census Date). This includes undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. This report is now produced annually in December.

Number of Advanced Entry Students from HEIs in LYIT's two interlocking regional clusters:

	<i>2013/14 Benchmark</i>	<i>2015/16</i>	<i>2016/17</i>
Cross-border Cluster	10	19	54
West/North West Cluster	15	11	12
Other	23	35	45
Total	48	65	111

LYIT's Mission-Based Performance Compact set a target of 60 student transfers within the clusters for 2016. This target has been exceeded.

LYIT has succeeded in increasing the total number of students from Northern Ireland by 81% over a three year period.

The increase in the full-time student numbers from NI is due in the main to two programmes (Childcare and Sports) being run in conjunction with North West Regional College.

Recruitment activity from NI schools and FE colleges has been augmented by a formal recruitment initiative with Education Recruitment and Marketing (recruitment company). A targeted Northern Ireland brochure has been developed. A targeted recruitment initiative involving Guidance Counsellors from Counties Derry and Tyrone took place in June 2016. Taster programmes were delivered by School of Science in March 2017 for a number of secondary schools in NI.

Recruitment initiatives have begun to pay dividends as evidenced in the table below:

<i>NI Students in LYIT</i>	<i>Full-Time</i>	<i>Part-Time</i>
2013/14	18	52
2014/15	32	46
2015/16	45	49
2016/17	92	35

(Source: HEA Census Returns, March annually)





	<p>LYIT is the RoI partner in three successful Interreg VA projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Advanced Manufacturing (LYIT – €500,000)</li><li>2. Renewable Energy (LYIT – €2,600,000)</li><li>3. Centre for Personalised Medicine (LYIT – €400,000)</li></ol> <p>The academic partners in these collaborative research and innovation project proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Queen's University Belfast</li><li>• Ulster University</li><li>• NUI Galway</li><li>• IT Sligo</li></ul> <p><i>North West Strategic Growth Partnership</i></p> <p>Work is ongoing between local authorities on both sides of the border with the relevant Government Departments. This has coincided with the publication of the Fresh Start Stormont Agreement and has resulted in the development of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership.</p> <p>Brexit has introduced uncertainty in terms of how it will impact cross-border collaboration, however, all partners to the cross-border cluster are committed to the collaboration and are working together to better understand the challenges and opportunities it presents.</p> <p>LYIT is acutely aware of the potential challenges and opportunities presented by Brexit and has been involved with Donegal County Council and Derry City Council in examining these matters (see Case Study 3 on Donegal County Council partnership).</p> <p>The Institute recognises the commitments in the Action Plan for Education 2017 to consult with stakeholders regarding Brexit and LYIT will fully engage with this process to bring our unique perspective to this debate.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved

## 2. Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning







## Overarching Statement

Service provision from the Access Office at LYIT was substantially redesigned in 2012/13 and now encompasses Access Programmes, Learning Support (Mathematics and Communications Learning Centres) and Lifelong Learning. The Access Office continues to support three particular categories of students: mature students; students with sensory, physical and multiple learning difficulties; and students from low income families.

For the academic year 2016/17 a total of 120 students registered for the Certificate in Preparatory Studies for Higher Education and the Certificate in Access Studies HEA (March Census Returns 2017). Four courses were run in Letterkenny for the full academic year along with an intensive access course from February to June. A total of 114 students passed and achieved their Level 6 (Special Purpose Award); this includes 28 students who received individual subject certification awards and 86 were eligible to progress onto programmes at LYIT.

The Maths Learning Centre has been in operation since November 2007 to deal with the large number of learners who seek help and support in modules which have a mathematical component. It complements the existing tutorials delivered by lecturing staff and operates as a drop-in clinic from the Learning Support Unit. In addition, students can also avail of supports from the Communications

Learning Centre (CLC) on communications/study skills.

Total student numbers at LYIT have grown substantially from 3,010 in 2011/12 to 3,958 in 2016/17, an increase of 32%. This was made up of an increase in full-time numbers from 2,684 in 2011/12 to 3,062 in 2016/17, a 14% increase and very strong growth in terms of part-time student numbers from 326 in 2011/12 to 896 in 2016/17, an increase of 175%. 70% of the current part-time students are participating on industry-related programmes and there appears to be a strong correlation between increased numbers in part-time study and job creation activity in FDI companies in Donegal in recent years.

HEA's 2015 analysis of Student Grant Recipients for the Academic Year 2013/14 found that the highest proportion of new entrants in receipt of a grant (71%) was in LYIT compared to the lowest at 24% in TCD and further found that 67% of new entrants from Donegal are in receipt of a grant compared to just 35% from Dublin. These grants are having a transformative effect on the local population, allowing students from all backgrounds, abilities and disabilities to progress to the highest level of education they aspire to, with the possibility of finding relevant gainful employment in their own region.

<b>1. Institution Objectives</b>	Ensure that the portfolio programmes on offer is in line with national policy objectives, LYIT's mission, the needs of employers and learner demand.
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	As above
<b>Baseline</b>	Existing graduate employment levels – graduate first destination survey. Current professional body recognition and feedback. Existing programme portfolio by NQF level. Existing student numbers by department and programme.
<b>Final target, end 2016</b>	Rebalanced programme portfolio aligning with national and regional policy objectives.
<b>Commentary and data source</b>	<p>LYIT's Academic Programme Plan 2015/16 -2016/17 and W/N-W Cluster Academic Planning Process have been developed to ensure coherence with national and regional policy objectives.</p> <p>LYIT identified part-time provision as a strategically important area. In line with national strategy priorities, the priority has been to significantly grow part-time student programmes and numbers. This strategy has resulted in part-time provision (including Springboard, Lifelong learning and work-based learning) increasing by 175% in five years:</p> <p>2011/12: 326 2012/13: 574 2013/14: 626 2014/15: 703 2015/16: 882 2016/17: 896</p> <p>(Source: HEA Census Returns, March annually)</p> <p>LYIT's strategy has been to grow full-time student programmes and numbers in strategically important areas, including STEM. Despite flat demographics, this strategy has resulted in full-time provision increasing by 14% since 2011/12.</p> <p>2011/12: 2,684 2012/13: 2,821 2013/14: 2,867 2014/15: 2,980 2015/16: 3,039 2016/17: 3,062</p> <p>(Source: HEA Census Returns, March annually)</p>



The Institute has succeeded in achieving a significant annual growth in student numbers; LYIT has actively grown total student numbers by 32% in five years. The growth in student numbers has been particularly successful in lifelong learning

	<i>Full-time</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Total</i>
2011/12	2,684	326	3,010
2012/13	2,821	574	3,395
2013/14	2,867	626	3,493
2014/15	2,980	703	3,683
2015/16	3,039	882	3,921
2016/17	3,062	896	3,958
2017/18 Target*	3,053	1,037	4,090

(Source: HEA Census Returns, March annually)

\*Estimate included in the 2015 Compact document

Graduate employment has significantly increased from the 2013 levels as evidenced in our annual Graduate Destination survey:

	<i>2013 (%)</i>	<i>2014 (%)</i>	<i>2015 (%)</i>	<i>2016 (%)</i>
Working	27	33	37	42
Continuing Education	50	46	50	40
Seeking Work	17	16	9	13
Taking Year Out	6	5	4	5

The LYIT Academic Programme Plan 2015/16 – 2016/17 and W/N-W Cluster Academic Planning Process were approved in 2015/16. The LYIT Academic Programme Plan incorporates all of the relevant targets from this Mission-Based Performance Compact.

These plans have been rolled out through internal programme development processes and cluster programme planning to ensure coherence with employers' skills requirement.

LYIT is an active participant in the North-West Border Regional Skills Forum, which has arisen from National Action Plan for Jobs.

The portfolio of programmes is reviewed annually by Executive Board to ensure programmes are supported by appropriate student demand.

A meeting with regional Guidance Counsellors is held in the Institute in January annually.



	<p>The Institute is involved in a broad range of activities involving schools in the region including: SciFest, Taster Programme (transition year), Business in the Community Programme, Coder Dojo workshops, Engineers Week, Women in Computing, Enterprise and Innovation Day. In addition, LYIT has obtained funding for the Females in Computing initiative for six bursaries from SITA, Internetalia, Pramerica, Allstate (Derry), and Gartan Technologies; UCode involving secondary/grammar schools on both sides of border have been supported and together with the Hour of Code initiative for Primary Schools in Donegal.</p> <p>The REACH Scholarship scheme was established in 2014; in 2016/17 there were 49 REACH bursaries, in 2015/16 there were 53 REACH bursaries and in 2014/15 there were 27 REACH bursaries.</p> <p>Collaborative agreements were signed with Cavan Institute and North West Regional College (NWRC) Derry. The first pilot collaborative programme with the NWRC (BSc Hons Early Childhood Care, Health and Education) commenced in September 2015. A collaborative Sports programme commenced in September 2016 and with planned collaborative programmes in Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Science and Hotel, Restaurant and Resort Management planned for September 2017.</p> <p>The Institute partnered with Donegal ETB to establish a high level Regional HE-FE Planning Group to develop regional learning pathways. A formal Memorandum of Understanding was signed between LYIT and Donegal ETB in 2015/16.</p> <p><i>Implementation of the Transitions Agenda</i></p> <p>The Institute has produced an Academic Programme Plan which includes the vision underpinning the portfolio of undergraduate programmes in the Institute and how planned provision is aligned to institutional mission and industry needs.</p> <p>The Institute's Executive Board and Academic Council embraced the spirit of the recommendations of the Transitions Group. The Institute introduced three new generic entry programmes in 2014/15. Two further generic entry programmes were introduced in 2015/16. This has been achieved without increasing the total number of CAO programmes. Full time programmes provision is reviewed annually by Executive Board.</p> <p><i>2014/15 (2015 CAO Handbook)</i></p> <p>3 new Common Entry programmes introduced, consistent with the Transitions reforms agenda (replacing 4 existing programmes)</p> <p>Net reduction of 6 CAO programmes from 54 (2014 CAO Handbook) to 48 (2015 Handbook)</p> <p><i>2015/16 (2016 CAO Handbook)</i></p> <p>5 new CAO programmes introduced. 4 CAO programmes removed.</p> <p><i>2016/17 (2017 CAO Handbook)</i></p> <p>2 new CAO programmes introduced. 2 CAO programmes removed.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved



<b>2. Institution Objectives</b>	Increase student numbers from outside of the traditional Leaving Certificate cohort
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	<p>Meet national targets.</p> <p>Take up of LLL programmes.</p> <p>Student numbers from different categories (mature, disadvantaged, disabilities).</p> <p>Springboard programmes.</p> <p>Certificate in Preparatory Studies.</p> <p>Certificate in Foundation Studies (now called Certificate in Access Studies).</p> <p>Improve retention rates for different categories (mature, disadvantaged, disabilities).</p> <p>Completion rates for students from different categories (mature, disadvantaged, disabilities).</p> <p>Curve activity levels –success of Maths Learning Centre and Communications Learning Centre benchmarked against student exam performance.</p>
<b>Baseline</b>	<p>Mature enrolments.</p> <p>Socio-economic disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>Maintain numbers on Springboard programmes.</p> <p>Maintain numbers on Certificate in Preparatory Studies (60 ECTS) and Certificate in Foundation Studies (30 ECTS).</p>
<b>Final target, end 2016</b>	<p>Participation in higher education by first time mature students: 30% (draft national target: 25%).</p> <p>Participation in higher education by people with disabilities: 8% (draft national target: 8%).</p> <p>Participation in part-time/flexible higher education: 22% (draft national target: 25%).</p> <p>Participation in higher education by people disadvantaged by socio-economic barriers: 25% (draft national target: 25%).</p> <p>Progress in growing student numbers and improving completion rates for this cohort of learners.</p> <p>Maintain numbers on Springboard programmes.</p> <p>Maintain numbers on Certificate in Preparatory Studies (60 ECTS) and Certificate in Foundation Studies (30 ECTS).</p>
<b>Commentary and data source</b>	<p>It is clear from the data in the tables below that just over 50% of those registering on first year programmes in LYIT come directly from that year's Leaving Cert cohort. Therefore, the objective of diversifying the student body from Leaving Cert only entrants has been achieved.</p>



Level 6/7				
Year	Overall Nett Acceptance	2016 Leaving Cert Results Only Cohort	Percentage of Total	National Ranking
2016	682	363	53%	7
2015	760	380	50%	11
2014	724	365	50%	6
2013	734	375	51%	7

(Source: CAO Nett Level 6/7 Acceptances for LYIT on basis of 2013-2016 Leaving Certificate Results only versus overall nett Acceptances)

Level 8				
Year	Overall Nett Acceptance	2016 Leaving Cert Results Only Cohort	Percentage of Total	National Ranking
2016	294	156	53%	19
2015	276	150	54%	19
2014	246	116	47%	23
2013	262	116	44%	23

(Source: CAO Level 8 Nett Acceptances for LYIT on basis of 2013-2016 Leaving Certificate Results only versus overall nett Acceptances)

Mature learners represent 20% of full-time undergraduate entrants into Year 1 at LYIT in 2016/17 (Source: CUA Project Office using HEA profile methodology).

This compares with 18% for all Institutes of Technology and 13% for all HEA funded institutions (Source: HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2013/14).

Flexible learners represent 23% of total enrolments in LYIT in 2016/17 (Source: CUA Project Office using HEA profile methodology); this compares with 21% for all Institutes of Technology and 19% for all HEA funded institutions (Source: HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2013/14).

In line with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, full- and part-time students are treated equally and any student registered on a part-time programme of 30 ECTS or greater in LYIT has full access to all student services. In addition, academic student supports (including Maths Learning Centre and Communications Learning Centre) are available to all students (full- and part-time). The introduction of an extended induction and the expansion of the Peer Mentoring Pilot have been central to addressing information and supports for this cohort of learners.

Established high level Regional HE-FE Planning Group to develop regional learning pathways between further and higher education.

Entrants with disability (EAS): 9% at LYIT is higher than Institute of Technology average of 7% and all HEA-Funded Institutions also at 7%. (Source: HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2013/14).

Socio-economically disadvantaged:

71% of first year undergraduate new entrants in LYIT were in receipt of SUSI grants in 2013/14. This is significantly higher than the average for all Institutes of Technology (56%) and all Universities (36%) (Source: HEA).



The number of LYIT Springboard students for the last five years is highlighted below. The drop in registrations for 2016/17 represents an improvement in employment in the region.

<i>Year</i>	<i>LYIT Springboard Students</i>
2012/13	79
2013/14	117
2014/15	101
2015/16	153
2016/17	103

LYIT is a national leader in access to higher education. The HEA's Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2013/14 benchmarks LYIT as the national leader in access to higher education, accounting for 61% of all students on Foundation/Access programmes in the IoT sector.

In 2016/17, 79 of these students went on to pursue full-time programmes within the Institute.

	<i>Cert in Preparatory Studies</i>	<i>Cert in Access Studies</i>	<i>Total Foundation Programmes</i>
2014/15	95	28	123
2015/16	100	31	131
2016/17	105	15	120

Nationally published data on non-progression provides useful benchmarks; however, the timeframe for publication means that institutions are not in a position to act on these in a timely manner.

In recognition of this gap, LYIT has introduced a new internal report which captures exam progression at the end of the first semester and the end of the academic year.

The Interim Report on Winter Semester Examinations provides an analysis of overall progression rates by year and Department as well as presenting the historical figures and trend data from the previous two years for comparison purposes. The Final Report on Examinations reports on progression rates at the end of the academic year, including the autumn repeat examination sittings as well as an analysis of progression rates by NQF Level (6-9).

The Interim and Final Reports are reviewed by Executive Board, Academic Council, Heads of School/Department and Programme Boards.

One early outcome of this review process has been a range of targeted retention initiatives introduced in 2016.

The Institute initiated additional classes in August 2016 for students repeating examinations. While this was a pilot project the results would indicate that those who took up the option of the additional classes performed better in their examinations.

The Institute also introduced an Enabling Maths Initiative in September 2016. The details on this initiative are included in Case Study 5.

## Summary

Targets achieved

### 3. Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of the Student Experience







## Overarching Statement

*Strategic Plan 2014-17* was drafted to both guide the further development of good practice in teaching and learning at the Institute over the lifetime of the plan by reinvigorating ongoing activity and to provide the necessary impetus to deliver on important new initiatives. Three key objectives are:

- Develop our student-centred culture and further support students to fulfil their potential; important initiatives will include easing the transition into higher education, encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, and preparing students for a lifetime of learning.
- Assist lecturing staff with their continuous professional development, including: developments in their particular discipline area, trends in teaching and learning, new technologies, and initiatives of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.
- Foster excellence in curriculum design to ensure a portfolio of programmes of the highest quality reflecting existing strengths in the STEM area; the resulting portfolio will be aligned with national and regional policy objectives, best practice in teaching and learning, innovative assessment methodologies, QOI award standards, and student demand.

The Masters in Learning and Teaching (MALT) programme is central to supporting staff in the development of their skills and knowledge of learning and teaching within third-level; the programme is open to educators from higher

education, further education, post-primary and primary sectors. The two year MALT programme reflects the growing understanding of the central role of assessment and evaluation in learning and teaching and the importance of academic writing and research at every stage of education. In addition to the MALT programme, LYIT staff are enrolled in Level 9 programmes teaching and learning in a number of other institutions together with significant numbers undertaking and completing professional doctorates in education.

A number of policy and strategy documents on teaching and learning were completed and approved by Institute's Academic Council in 2016:

- September 2016 – Plagiarism Policy
- September 2016 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies
- October 2016 – LYIT Graduate Attributes.

Each of these documents were completed in sufficient time to inform the Periodic Programme Evaluations (PPEs) which are taking place in May/June 2017.

LYIT remains focussed on the continued development of our Quality Assurance procedures and details how these procedures are updated annually to QQI via the Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report. Benchmarking of QA processes is done against QQI Policy, the UK's QAA process, the European Standards and Guidelines for QA and the identification of good practice published by HEIs both nationally and internationally.

1. Institution Objectives	Enhanced teaching and learning in order to deliver a vibrant high quality, inclusive learning environment for students												
Performance Indicator	Number of academic staff with pedagogical qualification. Student evaluation systems (QA1/3 and INSS [now ISSE]). Retention/progression rates. Number of programmes with accredited work placements.												
Baseline	30% of academic staff with pedagogical qualification. Institutional performance in student evaluation systems (QA1/3 and INSS [now ISSE]). Current retention/progression rates. Current number of programmes with accredited work placements.												
Final target, end 2016	50% of academic staff with a pedagogical qualification Achieve target improvement in progression. 60% of CAO entry programmes will have accredited work placements.												
Commentary and data source	<p>The Teaching and Learning Strategy approved in 2015/16 became part of a more comprehensive strategy document, Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies, in September 2016. The revised strategy is aligned with the National Teaching and Learning Forum and with LYIT's Strategic Plan 2014-17.</p> <p>Further policy documents on Plagiarism and LYIT Graduate Attributes were agreed by the Academic Council in September and October 2016.</p> <p>The new MA in Learning and Teaching commenced in September 2014. The programme was well received in the wider educational community in the North-west and has succeeded in attracting 23 students in 2014/15. A second cohort was recruited at the end of 2015 and commenced in February 2016, resulting in 43 total registered students (two cohorts). The current percentage of full-time academic staff with a pedagogical qualification is now 51% up from 30% at the beginning of the Compact process.</p> <p>LYIT has a strategic commitment to evidence-based enhancement of learning, teaching and assessment. To this end, LYIT rolled out the online Quality Assurance survey across the institute in 2015/16. LYIT led this initiative on behalf of the Connacht Ulster Alliance and became the only Institute in the country to undertake both programme (QA3) and Module (QA1/2) online Quality Assurance surveys for all full-time students in 2015/16.</p> <p>This unique achievement was only possible because of a partnership approach to engagement between management, academic staff, staff unions and the Students' Union.</p> <p><i>Efforts to Improve Retention Rates</i></p> <p>LYIT's progression rates are better than the IoT average at levels 6 and 8.</p> <table><tr><td><i>Non- Progression 2013/14 to 2014/15</i></td><td><i>Level 8 (%)</i></td><td><i>Level 7 (%)</i></td><td><i>Level 6 (%)</i></td></tr><tr><td>LYIT</td><td>13</td><td>32</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>All IoTs</td><td>16</td><td>27</td><td>26</td></tr></table> <p>(Source: HEA "A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education, 2013/14 to 2014/15)</p>	<i>Non- Progression 2013/14 to 2014/15</i>	<i>Level 8 (%)</i>	<i>Level 7 (%)</i>	<i>Level 6 (%)</i>	LYIT	13	32	24	All IoTs	16	27	26
<i>Non- Progression 2013/14 to 2014/15</i>	<i>Level 8 (%)</i>	<i>Level 7 (%)</i>	<i>Level 6 (%)</i>										
LYIT	13	32	24										
All IoTs	16	27	26										



	<p><i>Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)</i></p> <p>In the 2013/14 pilot the LYIT response rate to ISSE was 12%, benchmarked against the national response rate of 15.6%.</p> <p>Following the initial pilot, the Institute set a target to increase the response rate to 20% and put in place a detailed plan to achieve this. The result was a vastly increased response rate of 34.3% in 2014/15, which compares very favourably when benchmarked against the response rate for the pilot and the national response rate of 21.9%.</p> <p>In 2016/17 the LYIT response rate to ISSE was 34% benchmarked against the national response rate of 27%. This achievement is all the more remarkable given that LYIT also rolled out the on-line QA1/3 survey across the Institute in 2016/17.</p> <p>The results of the ISSE survey are reviewed by Executive Board, the staff and students on the Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Committee of Academic Council, Academic Council and by Programme Boards.</p> <p>The ISSE student responses in 2016/17 demonstrate high levels of student engagement at LYIT. 88% of students surveyed evaluated their entire educational experiences as good or excellent. This compares with 83% of all Institute of Technology students. 86% of LYIT students surveyed would choose LYIT if they could start their studies again. By comparison the figure across all Institutes of Technology was 82%.</p> <p>The ISSE responses reflect LYIT's strong commitment to staff–student relationships. 72% of students surveyed assess the quality of student interactions as good, very good or excellent. The average of all Institute of Technology students surveyed was 70%.</p> <p>LYIT has actively targeted increased levels of work placements on our full-time programmes to enhance the student learning experience and the employability of graduates. In 2016/17, we succeeded in having accredited work placements on 24 out of 47 (51%) CAO entry programmes. This has increased from 22 out of 48 (46%) in 2014/15.</p> <p>LYIT identified part-time provision as a strategically important area. In line with national strategy priorities, the LYIT priority has been to significantly grow part-time student programmes and numbers. This strategy has resulted in part-time provision (including Springboard, Lifelong learning and work-based learning) increasing by 175% over a five-year period:</p> <p>2011/12: 326  2012/13: 574  2013/14: 626  2014/15: 703  2015/16: 882  2016/17: 896</p> <p>(Source: HEA Census Returns, March annually)</p>
Summary	Targets achieved





2. Institution Objectives	Enhance the quality of the student experience through improved student supports
Performance Indicator	As above
Baseline	
Final target, end 2016	Complete identified student support improvements.
Commentary and data source	<p>Student feedback on student support services is garnered via ISSE and internal QA1/3 surveys and formally reviewed through Programme Boards and the Learning, Teaching and Student Engagement Committee of Academic Council.</p> <p>A formal evaluation process (Periodic review of Central Services) to review non-academic areas was approved by Academic Council in 2015/16 and is now underway as part of the Institutional Review process in 2016/17.</p> <p>The Curve (LYIT's Access and Learning Support Centre) reports on student take-up of available supports annually.</p> <p>A formal induction programme is held for new entrants and a Student Handbook is published annually.</p> <p>Feedback is received from student representatives on Governing Body and Academic Council.</p> <p>Student supports and information provision operates via Student School Committee meetings, learner involvement in Programme Boards and via Class Reps and the Students' Union.</p> <p>Student involvement in clubs &amp; societies and sporting activities is reported annually and celebrated in the Annual Awards Ceremony.</p>
	<p>Joint Students' Union initiative (focused on promoting positive mental health) with CUA partner colleges was launched in 2013/14.</p> <p>LYIT has been involved in the National Student Engagement Programme 2016 Pilot (NStEP) the details on this initiative are included in Case Study 2.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved



3. Institution Objectives	Further develop LYIT’s quality assurance processes					
Performance Indicator	As above					
Baseline						
Final target, end 2016	Completed development of required QA processes.					
Commentary and data source	A new Annual Institutional Quality Report and annual dialogue process with QQI commenced 2014/15 and has continued in 2015/16 and 2016/17. This provides a detailed report of quality assurance processes and quality outcomes. The most recent formal report from QQI was very positive (report available on request). LYIT’s QA procedures were formally approved by QQI in May 2017.					
	External Examiners are key in benchmarking international quality standards.					
	Profile of LYIT External Examiners 2016/17:					
	Profile of External Examiners 2016/17					
	Type of Organisation	No.	School	No.	Location	No.
	Institute of Technology	45	Business	38	Rol	71
	University	23	Engineering	13	Outside of Rol	16
	Industry	17	Science	30		
	Other	2	Tourism	6		
	Total	87		87		87
	The Institute is represented on the Technological University Quality Framework (TUQF) Plenary Group.					
Summary	Targets achieved					

## 4. High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation







## Overarching Statement

The core of the LYIT Research Strategy agreed by Academic Council in September 2016 is to contribute to the achievement of the Institute's mission by creating a research and development environment that brings researchers and students together with start-ups, regional industries and local communities.

The Research Strategy goes beyond committing LYIT to a further expansion of research activity and brings research forward as a key strand of the Institute's mission. It is underpinned by the establishment of new research structures and supports: Intellectual Property Rights Policy; Certificate in Research Practice; Postgraduate Degree Regulations; Postgraduate Research Advisory Board; and the Research Ethics Committee.

Specific elements to be addressed via the strategy are:

1. Implement a consistent quality framework for all postgraduate research activities.
2. Improve the coordination of research funding; underpinned by effective foresight, review and performance measurement systems.
3. Undertake research in our four Schools that informs teaching and builds a platform for strong research in strategically important areas.
4. Ensure a balance between individual investigators and multi-disciplinary teams working with and for our stakeholders.
5. Embed knowledge and the commercialisation of intellectual property into institutional activity and reward researchers accordingly.

A key focus for research at LYIT over the lifetime of the compact was securing research funding via Interreg VA by the end of 2016. LYIT was a key partner in three successful cross-border proposals addressing Renewable Energy, Advanced Manufacturing, and the cross-border Centre for Clinical Research. In addition, LYIT was also successful in 2016 in securing funding via Horizon 2020 for a further renewable energy project TAOIDE which is concerned with technology advancement of ocean energy devices in conjunction with a number of international industry partners. The WiSAR Lab, an Enterprise Ireland funded Technology Gateway, continues to perform as an important Institute research centre. WiSAR offers technology solutions for companies locally and nationally utilising its platform of wireless sensor technologies in areas, such as, health monitoring, RF design and testing, and the application of wireless sensor networks to the optimisation of industrial processes.

On 20 February 2017 the Institute obtained additional delegated authority from QQI to make research degree awards at Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications. Having delegated authority greatly reduces the administrative burden in registering new postgraduate students and it is a further recognition of the good quality of research supports at LYIT. Having delegated authority for Level 9 research programmes will allow the Institute respond more flexibility to available opportunities and provides a platform for the Institute to further grow the number of postgraduate researchers.



<b>1. Institution Objectives</b>	To develop a new Research and Innovation Strategy 2014- 2017								
Performance Indicator	New Research and Innovation Strategy developed.								
Baseline	Research Strategy 2008-2013 at an end.								
Final target, end 2016	Collaborative submission for Horizon 2020 funding. Collaborative proposals for research funding within the region (regional cluster/ CUA/ Northern Ireland).								
Commentary and data source	<p>The Institute is conscious of the concerns raised by the HEA in the outcomes from our previous Strategic Dialogue engagement. The success in a number of recent initiatives outlined below reflect the realistic ambitions of the Institute in this area while recognising that the original targets set were optimistic but achievable.</p> <p>€5 million NWRSP extension to CoLab was formally opened in November 2015.</p> <p>LYIT is a partner in three successful Interreg VA project submissions:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Approved</i></th><th><i>LYIT Amount</i></th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Advanced Manufacturing</td><td>€500,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Renewable Energy</td><td>€2,600,000</td></tr> <tr> <td>Centre for Personalised Medicine</td><td>€400,000</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>LYIT has also been successful in a collaborative Horizon 2020 research project on tidal energy and will receive €350,000 in funding.</p>	<i>Approved</i>	<i>LYIT Amount</i>	Advanced Manufacturing	€500,000	Renewable Energy	€2,600,000	Centre for Personalised Medicine	€400,000
<i>Approved</i>	<i>LYIT Amount</i>								
Advanced Manufacturing	€500,000								
Renewable Energy	€2,600,000								
Centre for Personalised Medicine	€400,000								
Summary	Targets achieved								

<b>2. Institution Objectives</b>	The Establish new National Research Centre in marine/seafood development
Performance Indicator	New National Research Centre established.
Baseline	Success of former EI ARE CAMBio.
Final target, end 2016	Research funding proposal confirmed
Commentary and data source	<p>Two projects detailed above are very strongly marine based projects; the Interreg VA funded Renewable Energy project and the Horizon 2020 tidal energy project.</p> <p>LYIT has submitted a formal application to Enterprise Ireland in 2017 for a Marine Campus Innovation Centre proposal for the Institute's Killybegs campus. This is part of the Regional Action Plan for Jobs.</p>
Summary	Targets achieved

<b>3. Institution Objectives</b>	Increase research income
Performance Indicator	Annual research income received.
Baseline	€1m (2012)
Final target, end 2016	€2m (€1.25m revised) as agreed at Annual Dialogue meeting with the HEA.
Commentary and data source	Research grants and contracts as per audited accounts: 2012/13 €1.17m. 2013/14 €1.30m 2014/15 €1.59m 2015/16 €1.60m (draft accounts)
Summary	Targets achieved

<b>4. Institution Objectives</b>	Increase postgraduate research activity, infrastructure and enabling frameworks
Performance Indicator	Number of postgraduate students, number of research- active staff.
Baseline	8 research post grad students registered in 2012, 10 research active staff.
Final target, end 2016	18 research post grad students registered in 2016. 16 research active staff.
Commentary and data source	Full Time Research Masters Students - 22 <i>Research Active Staff</i> 2014/15 Externally funded research staff: 15 2015/16 Externally funded research staff: 15 2016/17 Externally funded research staff: 16 (Contract Researchers; Principal Investigators; Fusion projects; IOTI Competitive funded PG scholarships) Other research active staff (staff undertaking Doctoral level studies): 2014/15: 29 2015/16: 31 2016/17: 30 The percentage of academic staff with level 10 Qualifications (2016/17) is 25.3%.
Summary	Targets achieved





## 5. Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange



## Overarching Statement

Strategic Plan 2014-17 sets out LYIT's commitment to engagement as:

- Develop and implement a plan for active engagement with stakeholder groups to assist them in pursuit of their respective agendas including community groups, schools, public service employers, private industry, and development agencies; this engagement will address regional development and include a focus on promoting the region's heritage and particularly the Irish language.
- Ensure that available Institute supports for enterprise and industry are easily accessible through a single point of contact and develop additional services through the North West Regional Science Park (NWRSP) and via the Institute's incubation, enterprise, research and development centre, CoLab.

Key companion documents to the strategic plan are the twelve Functional Area Plans (FAPs) which includes an Innovation and Regional Engagement FAP. Actions identified in this FAP (adopted by the Executive Board in March 2016) include:

- Position the Institute to lead initiatives that are key to the economic development of the region and actively supporting key partners in their pursuit of complementary agendas
- Establish at an Institute level a social engagement plan that details assistance available to community groups and schools
- Establish partnerships with relevant regional groups to promote broader regional development; including promoting the region's rich heritage and importance in respect of the Irish language
- Work to attract high quality technology and knowledge based businesses to the NWRSP including indigenous businesses and higher value added inward investment projects and jobs to the region.

Key actions in addressing this engagement agenda have included the June 2016 framework agreement with Donegal County Council (see Case Study 3), the January 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Donegal ETB, and the July 2016 MoU with Cummann Lúthchleas Gael Dhún na nGall which formalises the strong working relationship between both organisations and recognises the opportunity to develop significant value in civic society and local communities.

Donegal Education and Training Board (DETB) is a very important strategic partner for LYIT. DETB was established from the merger of Donegal VEC and FÁS training services bringing the majority of publicly funded adult education and training together for the first time. The recent publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Bill provides for the extension of award making powers for the IoTs to all levels of the National Framework of Qualifications, with the exception of doctoral degrees, these new powers have significant potential in our continued engagement with Donegal ETB.

1. Institution Objectives	Strengthen engagement and knowledge exchange with enterprise
Performance Indicator	<p>Maintain full occupancy at CoLab and increase supports for clients.</p> <p>Enhance enterprise development supports.</p> <p>Improved regional workforce development.</p>
Baseline	<p>CoLab activity levels (number of companies, number of employees).</p> <p>Existing enterprise development supports (numbers supported, training activity, new business start-ups).</p> <p>Workforce development activity levels (collaborative programmes with industry, number of learners, employment statistics).</p>
Final target, end 2016	Review engagement initiatives and knowledge exchange activities and benchmark against emerging best practice.
Commentary and data source	<p>CoLab</p> <p>2014: 28 Client Companies, 100 people employed</p> <p>2015: 35 Client Companies, 120 people employed</p> <p>2016: 40 Client Companies, 200 people employed</p> <p>€5 million NWRSP extension to CoLab was formally opened in November 2015.</p> <p>Innovation and Engagement Strategy 2015-19 developed 2015/16. The new strategy is aligned with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, the HEA's Enterprise Engagement strategy and with LYIT's Strategic Plan 2014-17.</p> <p>Active participant in North-West Border region skills forum.</p> <p>Established high level Regional HE-FE Planning Group to develop regional learning pathways (LYIT and Donegal ETB). This was formalised through an MoU in 2015/16.</p> <p>New bi-annual Lifelong Learning Open Evenings launched May 2014 (incl. Springboard) and rolled out annually thereafter.</p> <p>LYIT is an active member of numerous Northern Ireland employer-led forums, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Derry City Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Software Collaborative network</li> <li>• Engineering Collaborative Network.</li> </ul> <p>LYIT is also represented on numerous other fora, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IBEC NW Regional Executive Committee</li> <li>• Local Community Development Committee (LCDC)</li> <li>• Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Donegal Digital Action Group.</li> </ul>
Summary	Targets achieved





2. Institution Objectives	Enhance engagement with the community and public service
Performance Indicator	Staff involvement on policy development groups in the region. Support and engagement activities with schools. Engagement with community and voluntary groups.
Baseline	List of current leadership and membership of regional development groupings. On-going liaison with schools Community and voluntary group supports.
Final target, end 2016	Roll-out of strategy for engagement with community and public services. Development of staff engagement matrix. Staff and students awards for recognition of best practice in civic/community engagement.
Commentary and data source	Innovation and Engagement Strategy 2015-19 developed 2015/16. The new strategy is aligned with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, the HEA's Enterprise Engagement strategy and with LYIT's Strategic Plan 2014-17.  Recent Conferences hosted by the Institute include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect and Rejuvenate - Nursing and Health Studies Conference May 2016</li> <li>• Diaspora Conference May 2016</li> <li>• DICE (Design, Innovation, Creativity, Enterprise) Conference 2017</li> <li>• EduLogic Seminar October 2016.</li> </ul> LYIT is also represented on numerous social/community fora, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol Forum</li> <li>• Donegal Citizens Information Service.</li> </ul>
Summary	Targets achieved

## 6. Enhanced Internationalisation





## Overarching Statement

LYIT has a very positive history of engagement in international education stretching back over 30 years, primarily based on our participation in the Erasmus Programme. Consistent with Government Policy, Higher Education Strategy and LYIT's strategic planning, the Institute committed through the Compact to leverage this experience of incoming EU international students, to support the recruitment of non-EU international students. In doing this the Institute was clear that its primary intention was to further internationalise all of our students' higher education experience and prepare them for employment in an inter-culturally rich and globally connected world. A clear benefit in recruiting non-EU International students is that it represented a source of non-exchequer funds while at the same time the Institute was cognisant that this growth would have to build from a modest base.

Initial target countries for non-EU student recruitment were the USA, Canada, Malaysia and China. In focusing on North America the Institute is working closely with Donegal County Council's Diaspora project and building on the long tradition of emigration to North America from Ireland's North West. Established strategic partnerships with the State of Massachusetts and its higher education institutions such as Lasell College, UMass Lowell and Worcester State University offer potential in this regard. From 2014 LYIT has been

represented at a number of key events in our focus countries. Enterprise Ireland's Education in Ireland initiative was an important support in respect of these events. In 2014, LYIT selected for the first time a non-EU Student Ambassador as part of Education in Ireland's programme of International Ambassadors aimed at promoting Ireland as a location for international students and the Institute has continued to support this initiative over the past three years.

QQI will authorise use of an International Education Mark (IEM) by providers who have demonstrated that they have appropriate QA processes and comply with QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners. The recent publication of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Amendment) Bill paves the way the introduction of the IEM when the legislation is enacted.

A common approach to international office activity is covered by the 2012 Connacht-Ulster Strategic Alliance Agreement and the three partner IOTs are working collaboratively to attract greater numbers of international students. Achieving the Compact targets for international fee paying students has proved challenging but in 2016 evident progress was made.





1. Institution Objectives	To increase the number of international students studying at LYIT														
Performance Indicator	Number of international students.														
Baseline	80														
Final target, end 2016	<p>250 (100 fee paying international students).</p> <p>Increase participation in student exchange.</p> <p>Enhance the internationalisation of the institute and its programmes through providing and encouraging students and staff to learn a new language.</p>														
Commentary and data source	<p>The HEA in the outcomes from the last Strategic Dialogue process articulated its concerns regarding LYIT's approach to internationalisation. In agreeing the Institute's original Compact stretched targets were set by LYIT. While recognising the Authority's reservations, LYIT's performance over the relatively short timeframe of the Compact shows a remarkable improvement particularly with respect to the recruitment of non-EU international fee paying students.</p> <p>2013/14 - 44 International students* registered</p> <p>2014/15 – 45 International students* registered</p> <p>2015/16 – 96 International students* registered</p> <p>*(domicile not = IE)</p> <p>(Including 25 non-EU International fee paying students in 2015/16)</p> <p>2016/17 – 145 International students* registered</p> <p>*(domicile not = IE)</p> <p>(Including 47 non-EU International fee paying students in 2016/17)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th><th>Erasmus (out)</th><th>Placement Erasmus (in)</th><th>Study</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2015/16</td><td>17</td><td>17</td><td>61</td></tr> <tr> <td>2016/17</td><td>9</td><td>23</td><td>71</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>12% of first year students have indicated that English is not their primary language (LYIT Studyscan Profile 2016/17)</p> <p>While the Institute has not fully achieved this one target (fee paying international students) in 2016/17, we have dramatically grown our overall numbers and have increased the numbers of fee paying international students from a base of between 0 and 2 in the previous three years. We are committed to growing activity in this space in keeping with national strategy priorities.</p> <p>Consistent with LYIT's Strategic Plan and Internationalisation Strategy LYIT continues to prioritise target markets in North America in association with the Donegal Diaspora and in South East Asia building on our strengths in Mandarin.</p>			Year	Erasmus (out)	Placement Erasmus (in)	Study	2015/16	17	17	61	2016/17	9	23	71
Year	Erasmus (out)	Placement Erasmus (in)	Study												
2015/16	17	17	61												
2016/17	9	23	71												



	The Institute has participated in a joint delegation with Donegal County Council and the organisation of the Golden Bridges Conference in Boston for a number of years. This delegation has been successful in identifying areas of academic interest for LYIT while also developing institutional partnerships. In 2016 this delegation was extended to include both Derry City and Strabane District Council and the Ulster University demonstrating a strong regional approach to developing Derry/ Letterkenny City region.
Summary	Partially achieved

<b>2. Institution Objectives</b>	To develop a coordinated international strategy with regional educational partners
Performance Indicator	Coordinated regional International Education Strategy with cluster and other partner institutions.  Develop International Partnerships in priority markets Information provision to partner institutions.  Number of formal partnerships in place.  Staff exchanges Institutional supports for international students.
Baseline	Existing agreements for incoming and outgoing students Number of institutions.  Staff exchanges.  Student exchanges.
Final target, end 2016	Review and renew international education strategy.  Development of collaborative programmes with priority partners.
Commentary and data source	Initial collaboration has commenced through the CUA/Cluster.  LYIT, IT Sligo and GMIT collaborated to represent the Region at the Ireland Country of Honour forum in China in October 2016.  LYIT is looking forward to benchmarking our Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners through the adoption of QQI's International Education Mark.
Summary	Partially achieved

## 7. Institutional Consolidation





## Overarching Statement

Over the past number of years the Institute has been engaged in extensive dialogue with the HEA regarding the financial challenges facing LYIT. A central strand of these discussions has been the amalgamation of the School of Tourism, formerly the Tourism College Killybegs, into LYIT and the impact that this amalgamation has had on Institute finances.

The Tionchar project funded by the Irish Research Council and based at Trinity College, Dublin was established to analyse the economic impact of the Irish higher education sector and in particular the impact of innovation spending on the sector. A paper published by this research group 'The Different Consequences of State Funding Cuts to Irish HE' recognised that LYIT was the IoT that had to sustain the largest decline in total income over the period 2008/09 to 2011/12 and recognised the "impressive resilience" of IoTs that survived such funding reductions.

The Report of The Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education (March 2016) and the HEA's Financial Review of the Institutes of Technology (October 2016) clearly presented the challenges that IoTs faced since 2008. In particular, the HEA Report detailed that LYIT had the lowest percentage non-pay budget in the sector in 2008 leaving the Institute with little room for cost savings when the funding reductions were implemented. LYIT was also among the five IoTs who saw the steepest decline in income per student for the period 2010/11 to 2014/15, more than 10%, when the

average for the sector was 7%. The review, also recognised a point made by LYIT management throughout the period of funding cuts, that high costs were associated with the delivery of education in second campuses and attributed campus deficits of €1.3mn for Killybegs. The review also raises the broader question of how the higher education funding system should value the regional role and contribution of IoTs and the access they provide to higher education for large cohorts of the population.

In February 2017, LYIT received the much-needed good news from the Minister of Education and Skills that €3m in funding for the School of Tourism in Killybegs, or €750,000 per annum for a four-year period, would be made available. LYIT is cognisant that this does not resolve our funding difficulties, however, it places the Institute in a position where the continued commitment to current good practices will return Institute finances to a more sustainable position.

As a result of the focus on managing costs and the success of growing student numbers the Institute has reached a breakeven position in the draft accounts for 2015/16 and is working with a financial expert from the HEA in developing a new Financial Plan for the coming years.



1. Institution Objectives	To achieve financial sustainability
Performance Indicator	Financial performance
Baseline	<p>Recurring deficits, primarily arising from (a) 2007 consolidation of Tourism College Killybegs and (b) 43% cut in core grant since 2008.</p> <p>Autonomous institution, collaborating with CUA and regional cluster.</p>
Final target, end 2016	<p>Balanced budget, subject to resolution of School of Tourism funding.</p> <p>Consolidation of programmes – all levels.</p> <p>Continue development of shared services and common processes.</p> <p>Common RPL policy and procedures.</p>
Commentary and data source	<p>As a result of the focus on managing costs and the success of growing student numbers the Institute has reached a breakeven position in the draft accounts for 2015/16 and is working with a financial expert from the HEA in developing a new Financial Plan for the coming years.</p> <p>The structural deficit attached to supporting the second campus is actively being addressed and the securing of additional funding of €3m over the next four years for the Killybegs campus is a welcome development.</p> <p>The Institute has produced an Academic Programme Plan which includes the vision underpinning the portfolio of undergraduate programmes in the Institute and how planned provision is aligned to institutional mission and industry needs.</p> <p><i>Systems and workload management</i></p> <p>Workload management is well defined in the Institute of Technology sector. The academic contract is defined in terms of teaching hours and the additional work expected of a staff member in an academic institution. Similarly, contracts are tightly defined for administrative and technical staff. Within Letterkenny IT and taking on board the restrictive nature of budget cuts that have been endured over the last eight years, a Resource Review Committee is in operation. This committee comprises the SFC, Registrar and HR Manager and was originally established in 2008 and was refreshed in 2012. All staffing and other resource requests are dealt with by this committee to ensure the Institute has reference to all factors that could impact on such decisions, including redeployment, retraining, demand for programmes, re-prioritisation of Institute activities. This group is a sub-committee of the Executive Board and all recommendations are considered by the Board before approval.</p> <p>The Executive Board also considers once per semester the allocated hours to each academic staff members, noting any redeployments or divergence from normal timetabled teaching hours. In addition, the Board considers the actual teaching hours delivered against approved course schedules to ensure that students are receiving the allocated hours per module.</p>

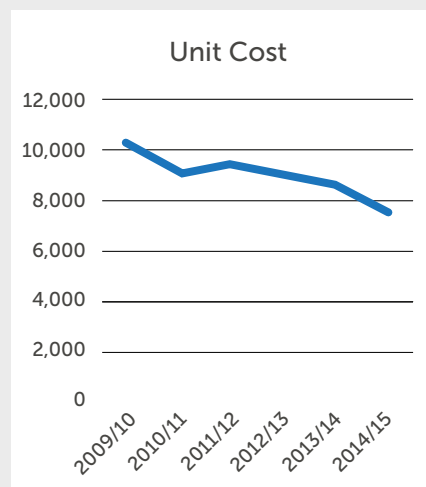


Administration, technical and maintenance staff are all required to clock in and that has been in operation for many years. All additional hours to be worked as a consequence of various national agreements have been incorporated.

These processes have been subject to a number of internal audit reports in the recent past and improvements to processes have been incorporated where necessary. The formal models and reports of workload management adopted by the Institute include:

- Revised modularisation/semesterisation Framework 2015. This unique Framework sets out guideline contact hours for all programmes across the Institute using the HEA's three programme discipline classifications.
- Report on Timetabled Hours versus Mod/Sem Contact Hours (reviewed by Executive Board annually)
- Report on Timetabled versus Contract hours (reviewed by Executive Board in each semester)
- Report on CAO programmes with low first year intake (reviewed by Executive Board annually).

The formal approaches and models of workload management introduced by the Institute have contributed to the objectives of improving both accountability and performance of the Institute. The Institute has succeeded in dramatically reducing the unit costs of programmes over the last five years:



Shared services in the CUA have been agreed in a number of areas, including:

- CUAL (Research Repository)
- RPL (myexperience.ie)
- Online Quality Assurance Survey
- Student mental health initiative
- PhD support service.

Summary

Targets achieved

<b>2. Institution Objectives</b>	To pursue a trajectory that achieves re-designation as a technological university
<b>Performance Indicator</b>	A plan to meet TU criteria
<b>Baseline</b>	<p>Signing of CUA MoU July 2012.</p> <p>Agreed Implementation Plan December 2012.</p> <p>Submission of four collaborative SIDF proposals to the HEA – one of which CEOL was funded but additional funding for a Programme Manager has also been secured.</p>
<b>Final target, end 2016</b>	Ensure a diverse range of programmes across the Cluster, while avoiding unnecessary duplication.
<b>Commentary and data source</b>	<p>The partners of the Connacht-Ulster Alliance remain committed to pursuing a trajectory that achieves re-designation as a Technological University. Over the 3-year period of the Compact the CUA has become a recognised Alliance, has worked effectively together across a broad range of projects to the benefit of our students and regions, and has progressed through the first formal stage of the four stage re-designation process, with a submission of the second stage document planned for 2017. An element of matched funding has been obtained from the HEA to support the CUA plans to meet the criteria for re-designation.</p> <p>However, there have been challenges including: the absence of legislation to enable the establishment of Technological Universities; the challenge of merging as a legal consolidation prior to applying for designation as a TU; delays in receiving approved funding from the HEA; industrial action from the TUI prohibiting members from participating in merger related activities; and the turnover of senior staff amongst a number of the partners and the CUA itself.</p> <p>The impact of the funding model and the reduction in budgets over the duration of the Compact has imposed significant constraints on the partners meeting its stated objectives. Coupled with the financial difficulties two of the partners find themselves in, it is imperative that funding is continued to assist the alliance in achieving the criteria for TU designation.</p> <p>Given these challenges and the financial context, the progress that has been made has been significant.</p> <p>The Steering Committee of the CUA has been in existence since October 2012. This Committee comprises the three Presidents, 3 Registrars, 1-2 Senior Executives per Institute, the CUA Chairperson and the Programme Manager.</p>



Since January 2015, the Steering Committee has met 12 times and the Presidents and Chair and met (as Working group 1) six times in 2016. The staff portal link on the CUA web site provides a summary of the meetings that have been held by the Steering Committee and by the Presidents.

Since January 2017 in response to a request from the Department of Education and Skills the three CUA Presidents convened a number of meetings with the Presidents of Dundalk, Athlone and Limerick Institutes with the objective of exploring the possible expansion of the CUA.

## **Pursuit of a Trajectory that Achieves Re-designation as a Technological University**

### *Interim Target 1: Mainstream online QA student survey across the CUA*

Status at the end of 2016: A working group to produce an online student survey in the three CUA institutions was established in 2014. The working group, in consultation with Academic Councils, Executive Boards and union representatives agreed an online version of the QA1/3 survey. A pilot of the QA3 was rolled out in GMIT and a pilot of the QA1/3 was rolled out in LYIT in 2014/15, using the Evasys survey methodology and protocols. Following the successful pilots, GMIT rolled out the full QA3 across the Institute and LYIT rolled out the full QA1/3 across the Institute in 2015/16. IT Sligo are planning to roll out the QA3 in the 2016/17 academic year. This is a unique collaboration that is consistent with national policies and priorities. The success of this collaborative project has led to a proposal to the ISSE Plenary Group to adapt the QA3 forms as a prospective local customisation project.

### *Interim Target 2: Report on the feasibility of online exams management system with CUA partners*

Status at the end of 2016: A scoping of an online exams management system was commissioned from Deloitte by the three CUA institutions. This collaborative project succeeded in articulating key examination management processes. Given financial constraints, the funds were not available in 2015 to progress to a tendering process and product development phase. Arising from this project, a new collaboration with DCU is emerging using the GURU platform. GMIT piloted this system in 2015/16 and further extended the pilot in 2016/17. Plans are in place to mainstream this system from September 2017. Similarly, the GURU system has been piloted in IT Sligo and plans are in place to mainstream this system from September 2017.

### *Interim Target 3: A common LTA strategy*

Status at the end of 2016: A 'CUA LTA Commitments and Aspirations' document was developed prior to 2015 and this has since informed a 'CUA- LTA visions, principles and strategy' draft document. At the end of 2015, the CUA agreed to establish a cross-institutional Working Group that would commence work in 2016 on, among other outputs, a CUA LTA strategy. The commencement of this WG has since been delayed as a result of the TUI directive, 'Industrial Action in relation to concerns regarding proposed Technological Universities Bill 2015' issued 23rd March 2016.





	<p>Aligned to the LTA strategy, a common RPL policy was developed by staff from across the three CUA institutions. A pilot online RPL portal (<a href="http://www.myexperience.ie">www.myexperience.ie</a>) was launched in 2014/15. The project involved the development of online tools to facilitate the process of RPL portfolio submission and assessment. In addition, a CUA Level 9 staff training module has been developed, accredited and delivered. The success of this pilot has attracted interest from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, with a view to making it available to other HEIs.</p> <p>In October 2015 The Connacht Ulster Alliance was granted approval by the Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O’Sullivan, TD, to proceed to the next stage of the process of building a Technological University for the West/North-West of Ireland. Stage 2 of the process involves the preparation of a plan to meet the criteria, Stage 3 is an evaluation of this plan by an external panel and Stage 4 is the application to become a Technological University.</p> <p>The Institute was successful in June 2016 in securing funding reserved by the HEA to provide support to the CUA Technological University consolidation project for its Stage 2 submission. LYIT with its partners (GMIT and IT Sligo) looks forward to engagement with the HEA in future planning exercises and on-going review of progress.</p> <p>The indicative timeline for the future stages, which are contingent on the finalisation of legislation, of the CUA project are:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="384 1088 1051 1254"> <tr> <td>Submission of Stage 2 Plan</td><td>Q4 2017</td></tr> <tr> <td>Evaluation of Stage 2 Plan</td><td>TBC</td></tr> <tr> <td>Application for merging</td><td>TBC</td></tr> <tr> <td>Application for designation as a TU</td><td>TBC</td></tr> </table> <p>The timeline of the Stage 3 and Stage 4 applications are dependent on the alliance partners collectively achieving the criteria and it is anticipated will be achieved within the timeframe of the next Compact.</p> <p><i>Working to Achieve the Objective of TU Status</i></p> <p>Four CUA working groups across the Connacht-Ulster Alliance have been established during Q4 2015 and Q1 2016 covering: Governance; Teaching Learning and Assessment; Research; International &amp; Engagement. A draft thematic working group handbook is in use amongst the groups (Toolkit for Project Collaboration and Management) for further use across a total of nine planned working groups across the CUA. The work of these groups has since been delayed as a result of the TUI directive, ‘Industrial Action in relation to concerns regarding proposed Technological Universities Bill 2015’ issued 23rd March 2016.</p>	Submission of Stage 2 Plan	Q4 2017	Evaluation of Stage 2 Plan	TBC	Application for merging	TBC	Application for designation as a TU	TBC
Submission of Stage 2 Plan	Q4 2017								
Evaluation of Stage 2 Plan	TBC								
Application for merging	TBC								
Application for designation as a TU	TBC								
Summary	Targets achieved								

A close-up photograph of a man with dark, wavy hair, a full beard, and black-rimmed glasses. He is looking down and to the right, presumably at a computer screen. He is wearing a dark-colored sweater with thin, horizontal, light-colored stripes. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be an office environment with other people and computer monitors.

## Case Study Outline



## CASE STUDY 1: North West Cross-border Educational Partnership

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT), Ulster University (UU), North West Regional College (NWRC) and Donegal Education and Training Board (DETB) are committed to actively engaging with Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council in developing new collaborative cross-border arrangements to promote the regional development work of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership. The North West Cross-border Educational Partnership is the output from the active engagement of the partners over the past eighteen months and will be launched in the near future. Led by Local Government and involving close and co-ordinated partnership working with Central Government in both jurisdictions, the North West Strategic Growth Plan was developed with the strategic assistance of the International Centre for Local and Regional Development (ICLRD).

This plan identifies that for the North West 'to remain competitive and at the cutting-edge, the education partners must increasingly collaborate and adopt a joined-up approach to attract students to their campuses'. The North West Strategic Growth Plan also acknowledges the importance of education 'and especially expansion and investment in third-level education, is central to the continued growth of the knowledge economy of the North West.' The growth plan also highlights the need for a greater focus on R&D and details the positive outcomes that have been delivered through collaboration with the education partners, such as, the North West Regional Science Park complexes in both Derry/Londonderry and Letterkenny.

The focus for the partnership's activity will initially be drawn from the benefits of a regional cluster as detailed in the Irish HE strategy and the cross-border objectives as set out in the Northern Irish HE strategy. Positive benefits from this initiative will include:

- better planning and organisation of programmes
- greater impact through pooling of effort and development of shared services, more attention to student pathways and progression including cross-border student mobility,

- coordinated approach to enterprise and supporting other stakeholders in the region.

The partnership will also address the opportunities identified by Indecon Intl/London Economics through the North West Gateway Strategic Alliance (NWGSA) project. These opportunities encompass:

- further development of educational programmes, primarily at postgraduate level and with flexible delivery modes, e.g. part-time or online, that address the population's lifelong need for access to higher education
- joint initiatives in the development of programmes with an emphasis on STEM subjects
- collaboration in research, particularly in those areas where LYIT has current strengths
- joint approaches to the provision of services to businesses in the region.

The North West Cross-border Educational Partnership will support the delivery of the education strategies of both jurisdictions and will be a particularly important player in respect of cross-border commitments. Appropriate funding for the partnership will support LYIT, Ulster University, North West Regional College, and Donegal ETB leverage the benefits of what is a unique collaboration spanning apprenticeships to world leading research.



## CASE STUDY 2: Student Engagement Pilot

LYIT is one of five institutions selected to participate in the National Student Engagement Programme 2016 Pilot (NStEP). The initial phase of the NStEP had two aspects:

- enhancing the capacity of students for engagement higher education by focusing on student training
- enhancing the capacity of our institution for student engagement by focusing on institutional analysis and evaluation.

LYIT established an internal working group co-chaired by the Head of Teaching and Learning and the LYIT SU President. Membership of the working group was drawn from senior managers and administrators with equal numbers of student representatives from across the institution. Three representatives from the internal working group are part of the National Working Group.

85 LYIT student representatives participated in NStEP class rep training. Student feedback from the session was very positive with over 90% of students reporting that they found the training very valuable improving their understanding of the class rep role, the mechanisms for student engagement and representation within their institution. LYIT SU considered that the training heightened student engagement throughout the academic year and noted a 66% increase in active participation at Class Rep Council meetings. LYIT has committed to continue to support the student rep training beyond the national pilot.

The Institutional Analysis Session recently held at LYIT was facilitated by consultants to NStEP, Eve Lews of Student Partnership in Quality Scotland (SPARQS). The session was attended by 10 student class reps and society leaders and 30 LYIT staff (including President, Registrar, senior managers, academic staff and student services staff). The full day session examined five aspects of student engagement aligned to the Report of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Higher Education (HEA, 2016): feedback; teaching and learning; students and institutional strategy; students and programme interaction and communication, feedback and transparency.

Participation in NStEP has provided LYIT with the opportunity to critically analyse student engagement within our institution in a structured way. The evaluation of the Institutional Analysis highlighted many ways in which the organisational culture within LYIT supports student engagement. An example is the student initiated anti-bullying policy which has been co-drafted by students and staff and is proceeding through Academic Council. The institution plans to formalise and deepen its commitment to student engagement through the adoption of an institutional student engagement strategy which is currently under review with the Teaching, Learning and Student Engagement committee of Academic Council. The NStEP pilot has been extended to 2017 and LYIT will lead one of the agreed work streams.





## CASE STUDY 3: LYIT and Donegal County Council Partnership

Recognising the very important responsibilities that both Donegal County Council and Letterkenny Institute of Technology have in delivering on national and regional policy objectives, both partners in striving to further develop their capacities to achieve their respective missions agreed a framework for enhanced collaboration. This framework agreement formalises the strong working relationship between both organisations and recognises the very important responsibilities that both the Council and LYIT have in delivering on national and regional policy objectives.

Initial aims of the partnership, signed on 8 June 2016, are consistent with the Donegal County Council Corporate Plan 2015-19, the Donegal Local Economic & Community Plan 2016 – 2022, and LYIT's Strategic Plan 2014-17. The initial aims of the partnership are:

- Promote sustainable economic development and job creation by working with stakeholders to address their various education and training needs.
- Support the further development of the local education infrastructure to enhance the region's reputation as a leading location for education provision.
- Develop the region's capacity for research and innovation.
- Promote and support entrepreneurship, investment, and enterprise.
- Conserve, manage, support and promote the region's arts, culture, environment, heritage and the Irish language.
- Deliver on the potential of cross-border collaboration through the North West Strategic Growth Partnership and the opportunities available via Interreg funding.
- Examine opportunities for the sharing of resources to assist each of the partners to improve service provision.

This partnership will focus on promoting sustainable economic development and job creation by working with stakeholders to address their various education and training needs, to develop the region's capacity for Research and Innovation and to promote and support Entrepreneurship, Investment, and Enterprise. There is particular emphasis on cross-border collaboration in the framework agreement.

LYIT through this partnership is working to address the challenges posed by Brexit. Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane Council hosted the Driving Growth in the North West conference in December 2016 to focus on the Brexit challenge. Both councils also came together to publish the comprehensive Initial Analysis of the Challenges and Opportunities of Brexit – The North West City Region (February 2017).



## CASE STUDY 4: LYIT and Industrial Development in Donegal

From 2000 there has been an influx of new FDI companies into Letterkenny particularly in the Financial Services and IT industries which was complemented by the establishment of number of innovative companies elsewhere in Donegal. Pramerica was founded in Letterkenny in 2000 with less than 100 employees and has grown significantly in the intervening period and now employs more than 1,300 employees. Pramerica provides a range of business and technology services to their US parent company, Prudential Financial, Inc.

SITA's growth in Letterkenny can be traced back to 1999 when it was part of the Irish-owned business Eland Technologies with a single digit number of employees and was supported in its growth by LYIT. SITA, a specialist in air transport communications and IT solutions, now has close to 150 employees in Letterkenny.

Optum/UnitedHealth came to Donegal in 2006, when it acquired existing US health insurance provider Pacificare who had a presence in Letterkenny from 1999. Optum is a health services and innovation company with an emphasis on using data, technology, people and actions to better the way healthcare works and now has more than 650 employees in Letterkenny, it is part of the family of companies that make up the USA based UnitedHealth Group.

E+I Engineering is an electrical switchgear manufacturer offering unique in-house integrated power solutions tailored specifically to client's requirement and has a presence in Burnfoot since 2004. Employment at the Donegal facility has grown to more than 300 employees.

Randox Teoranta, part of Randox Laboratories, was founded in Dungloe in 2008 as a next generation life-sciences and engineering research and manufacturing centre. Randox Teoranta is involved in scientific research into conditions impacting human health such as Alzheimer's and diseases of the kidneys and liver with plans in place to grow

employment in Dungloe from the current 100 employees to 540 by 2020.

LYIT, Donegal County Council, the IDA, Enterprise Ireland, and Údarás na Gaeltachta have all played their part in supporting the growth of these dynamic, knowledge economy companies.

Programmes developed at LYIT to address the specific needs of these employers, include:

- Certificate in Development and Operations (Dev Ops)
- Certificate in Mainframe Technologies
- Higher Diploma in Computing in Business Systems Analysis and Design
- Higher Diploma in Financial Services Technologies
- Higher Diploma in Computing in IT Project Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Computing in Systems and Software Security
- Postgraduate Diploma in Computing in Big Data Analytics
- MSc in Computing in Big Data Analytics.



## CASE STUDY 5: Enabling Maths Initiative

The Enabling Mathematics Course is a new joint initiative between Donegal Education and Training Board and Letterkenny Institute of Technology arising from the signing of a formal memorandum of understanding between LYIT and DETB in January 2016. The overall objective of this partnership is to provide for enhanced progression opportunities and pathways for learners consistent with the Further Education and Training Strategy, 2014-2019 and the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030.

The Enabling Mathematics Course is in direct response to the impediments to access to higher education arising from the number of students not passing mathematics at Leaving Certificate and therefore failing to meet the minimum entry requirements for programmes. The development of this enabling mathematics course is designed to give young people a second chance to succeed in Mathematics and thus, overcome the entry requirements to enter a wide range of courses in 2016. The course ran in LYIT for two weeks from Monday – Friday, 5 – 16 September 2016. The final examination is of an equivalent standard to the

current Leaving Certificate ordinary mathematics paper and is set and assessed by mathematics teachers nominated by Donegal ETB.

Students passing the Enabling Mathematics Course were eligible for a place on any programme in LYIT for which there are CAO 'Available Places'. In all cases applicants must meet the minimum entry requirements and the current CAO points for the relevant programme. There are 5 strands to the programme aligned with the Ordinary Level Leaving Certificate Syllabus; each of the strands will be followed by a rigorous assessment. Successful students were required to participate in on-going maths support throughout year 1 delivered by the Mathematics Learning Centre in LYIT.

The majority of students who progressed through this programme and who registered with LYIT, have been successful in their subsequent examinations in the Institute. The value of this programme has been proven and will be provided to students who find themselves in similar circumstances this summer.



## CASE STUDY 6: Industry based Hospitality Training Programme

The start of the 2016/17 academic year saw another significant development in terms of industry based education programmes offered by the LYIT School of Tourism. In June 2016, the School of Tourism applied to Fáilte Ireland for funding of two new industry based training programmes. Fáilte Ireland funded both programmes on a pilot basis for the 2016/17 academic year. Both programmes are Level 6 programmes (minor awards, 60 ECTS):

- Certificate in Food and Beverage Operations
- Certificate in Hotel Front Office and Accommodation Operations

As a pilot scheme, the School of Tourism offered the programmes to six hotels:

1. Ashford Castle, Mayo
2. Solis Lough Eske Castle, Donegal
3. Radisson Blu Hotel, Sligo
4. Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo
5. Slieve Russell Hotel, Cavan
6. Allingham Arms Hotel, Bundoran, Donegal

In total 30 students registered on the programmes (15 on each programme). All of the students attended an induction/registration day on the Killybegs Campus where they were introduced to School of Tourism/LYIT, school, received ID cards and were logged onto the 'Blackboard' system.

Each programme has two modules per semester (Sep – Dec and Feb – May) plus credit based work placement. The participants in each hotel received three days of workshops per module per semester between September and December and between February and May. The workshops were delivered in the hotels, either on a Monday or Tuesday, every fortnight for the two semesters. Lecturers from the School of Tourism delivered the workshops on-site. The students' learning was supported through

online materials, and the lecturers liaising with a supervisor in the hotel who provided mentoring support throughout the normal working week.

Following discussions with the IHF, RAI, VFI and Fáilte Ireland, there is strong evidence of the demand for an industry based programme focusing on the development of hospitality managers. Both level 6 60 credit certificate programmes have now been incorporated into a level 7 BA in Hospitality Management programme that has been submitted to Academic Council for validation.

As this was a pilot programme, the School of Tourism has been exploring options for further funding and has met with Donegal Skillnets and the Regional Skills Manager with regard to funding post pilot stage. In conjunction with the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF), Restaurants Association of Ireland (RAI) and the Vintners Federation of Ireland (VFI) a funding application has been prepared seeking national Skillnets support. The plan would involve establishing a national steering committee. The programmes have the potential to be developed and expanded to be offered on a nationwide basis.









lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta  
Leitir Ceanainn  
Letterkenny Institute  
of Technology

Port Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal  
F92 FC93

[www.lyit.ie](http://www.lyit.ie)

