



Waterford Institute *of* Technology

Strategic Priorities and Vision
to 2017



Waterford Institute *of* Technology
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA PHORT LÁIRGE

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Foreword

Waterford Institute of Technology is a university level institute and one of the largest institutes of technology in Ireland. It was established as a Regional Technical College in 1970, and was awarded Institute of Technology status in 1998. From small beginnings, the Institute community has grown to almost 10,000 staff and students.

In recent years, WIT has expanded the breadth of its programme offerings, developed its capacity to offer qualifications at the highest levels on the National Framework of Qualifications and enhanced its research activities. The Institute is embedded in the South East region, it is an important driver of economic growth and a significant contributor to the social and cultural life of the region. The campuses have also seen major developments, with new facilities coming on stream to match the growth in activity.

This strategic plan maps out the next stage in the evolution of the organisation. It will be a period of time that will see significant changes. However, the Institute community has responded confidently to change in the past and the outcomes have been positive for both the Institute and the region.

The plan is framed across four main themes; facilitating learner potential, harnessing research capacity, engagement & positioning and organising resources for sustainable development. Under each of these themes a number of strategic priorities have been specified. The implementation of the plan will be guided by a KPI (Key Performance Indicator) framework that sets measurable targets against which progress can be measured. By 2017, Ireland, the South East and WIT will be very different places; this plan offers an opportunity to influence these developments in a meaningful way.

The trust placed in the Institute by its stakeholders is highly valued. With the continued support of learners, staff and stakeholders, the Institute will overcome the challenges that this plan envisages and will emerge as a stronger, more relevant organisation that will continue to contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of the region.

Dr Donal Ormonde
Chairperson, Governing Body

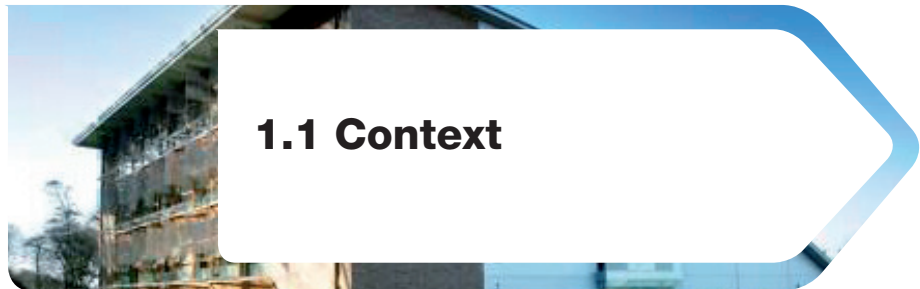
Dr Ruaidhrí Neavyn
President



Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1 Introduction



1.1 Context

1.1 Context

This strategic plan sets out the proposed strategic direction of Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) until 2017, a period that is likely to be the most challenging in the life of the organisation.

Irish higher education is at a point of transition. The factors influencing this include; the number of learners entering the system, the changing learner profile and the priorities set, not just for each institution, but for the complete higher education system by the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and other policy statements.

WIT too is at a point of transition. Driven by some of the policy priorities identified in the national strategy and elsewhere, but also informed by its history and traditions and its areas of considerable strength and expertise, the Institute will apply for designation as a Technological University during the life of this strategic plan. This will be done in partnership with IT Carlow. Together, the two institutions will form a more significant and effective higher education institution that will serve the needs of the South East.

The criteria for this designation inform the strategic priorities proposed in this plan. Designation, as well as amalgamation, will have an enhanced impact on programme provision, student numbers and the profile of students recruited.

As a community, the Institute will respond to these challenges, effecting change that will have a positive impact on the region and beyond. Our strengths lie in our ability to focus on priorities that will lead to sustainable economic development. This strategic plan articulates these priorities.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.2 Mission Statement

While this document represents the strategic priorities for Waterford Institute of Technology; the mission, vision and graduate profile detailed herein is consistent with ours and Institute of Technology Carlow's shared ambition to become a Technological University. The proposed Technological University will have a mission and vision differentiated from existing higher education providers, a mission expressed in its approach to teaching and learning, the extent and nature of its regional engagement, its programme portfolio, student profile and discipline specialisation, its research activity and, ultimately, the distinctive graduates it forms.

The mission of the Institute and the emergent Technological University is encapsulated in the following:

Engage, Learn, Challenge, Innovate

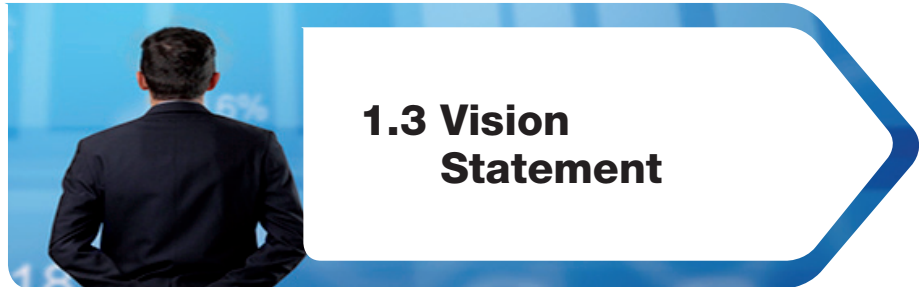
In a vibrant environment for creative teaching and research, we educate and inspire a lifelong passion for learning, exploration and discovery that will ensure leadership with a global outlook and real world innovative designs for sustainable economic, social, cultural and personal development.

We embrace access and equality of opportunity and vertical progression so that our learners are empowered to succeed as citizens in a challenging world. We blend theoretical with applied enquiry, scholarly, professional and vocational pursuits with scientific and creative expression.

We serve to improve our region, our country and our world by being at the heart of a co-operative teaching and research eco-system, which includes other higher education and further education institutions, schools, regional communities, government and non-governmental agencies.

We actively nurture continuous enhancement of our relationships to progress excellence in a globally-benchmarked higher education and knowledge transfer.

Chapter 1 Introduction



The mission is further clarified by the vision statement set out below:
To give expression to this vision, the Institute will:

i. Be Regional and Engaged

The Institute and the proposed Technological University will operate across its multiple campuses, strategically enhancing and increasing the scale of operations, expanding the regional reach and opening new access and progression opportunities between campuses, thus serving the entire South East. A strong and continued commitment to social inclusion will be maintained. The Institute will proactively engage and collaborate with regional, national and international partners in a structured, systematic and strategic manner.

ii. Be a Learning University

The Institute and the proposed Technological University will offer a comprehensive breadth of programmes from level 6 to 10 in multiple modes with a significant proportion of life-long learners across multiple sites. It will deliver an interdisciplinary curriculum, renewed in the light of regional engagement and will take approaches to teaching, learning and assessment that encourage active learning, critical thinking, and self-direction through project-based and problem-based, research-informed delivery. It will attract and retain the best academic talent in both its staff and students. It will be strongly committed to innovative experimentation and a robust self-evaluation ethic.

iii. Be Open, Innovative and Entrepreneurial

The Institute and the proposed Technological University will be innovative and outward looking and will develop capacity and specialism in a number of specific research domains, with an emphasis on generating and exchanging new knowledge with the region. It will be dynamic and flexible, focused on knowledge production and transmission. It will be positioned at the centre of a knowledge, research and innovation ecosystem, leading the convergence of education, research and knowledge exchange in a globally connected and industry facing manner. It will encourage and foster social entrepreneurship and civic renewal within the region. It will operate as a responsive, sustainable organisation, resourced from diverse income streams.

Chapter 1 Introduction



1.4 The Graduate Profile

All the objectives of this strategy are underpinned by the vision for a profile of capabilities, skills and attitudes that all graduates should possess on leaving the Institute. The objectives outlined in this strategy are aimed at supporting and developing a learning environment that facilitates learners in developing the academic, interpersonal and practical capabilities and self-awareness enshrined in the profile. The graduate of WIT is defined as someone who will be:

- research-literate and research-informed;
- entrepreneurial and versatile;
- creative and innovative;
- professionally aware, dependable and ethical;
- socially and regionally engaged;
- culturally aware in terms of international and inter-cultural dimensions.

Chapter 1 Introduction



1.5 The Higher Education Environment

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (The Hunt Report) articulates the vision for the Irish higher education system by considering the three main roles of a higher education institution: namely; teaching & learning, research and engagement with wider society. In developing a strategic vision for WIT, these roles have been interpreted via the high level strategic themes as set out in the next section.

Teaching and Learning

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 sets out a number of recommendations in relation to teaching and learning that will require all higher education institutions to commit to a series of improvements in respect of the delivery of programmes, the quality of teaching, the skills developed and the learning environment. This plan specifies the interventions that WIT proposes to implement to achieve these improvements.

Research

Higher education is seen as a key enabler of economic recovery and it is an important element of government policy. Research and innovation, within the higher education institutes, is an essential component of government plans to secure the prosperity of future generations. A similar vision is articulated in the National Strategy for Higher Education stating that “higher education will play a central role in making Ireland a country recognised for innovation, competitive enterprise...”. The recommendations of the National Strategy for Higher Education in relation to research include; greater prioritisation of research activities, enhanced support for the career development of researchers, increased doctoral graduate output underpinned by a consistent quality PhD framework and embedding knowledge transfer into institutional activities. The research related actions proposed in this strategic plan are set out in the theme ‘Harnessing Research Capacity’ and have been informed by the recommendations of the national strategy.

Engagement with Wider Society

A key principle of the National Strategy for Higher Education is that engagement with wider society by higher education institutes must assume greater focus. As the largest provider of higher education opportunities in the South East, WIT is acutely aware of the resultant responsibilities placed on it. The Institute is a major resource for the region, providing opportunities for people to develop existing and new skills and generate new knowledge for its own sake as well as to create new opportunities for economic growth. It provides a focal point for those seeking guidance in business development and a social and cultural resource to enhance the lives of people in the region. This regional remit is complemented with an international focus. The Institute needs to bring international best practices and ideas to bear on its programmes, research activities and internal processes. The strategic theme on ‘Engagement and Positioning’ sets out the priorities of WIT in this important domain.

Chapter 1 Introduction



1.6 High Level Themes

Based on the mission of the Institute, the associated vision statement and national policy priorities; four major strategic themes are proposed for the coming period. There is a theme to accompany each aspect of the Institute's vision, along with an underpinning theme reflecting the objective to organise the resources of the Institute to ensure all learners have a high-quality educational experience at WIT (see Figure 1).

The objective of each theme is set out below:

1 Facilitating Learner Potential

To continue to facilitate learners to achieve their potential both at WIT and beyond by ensuring graduates are responsible, informed citizens, capable of success in their chosen careers and recognised by stakeholders as such.

2 Harnessing Research Capacity

To continue to build a sustainable platform for high-quality knowledge creation and knowledge transfer that is internationally recognised and closely linked with national and regional development priorities.

3 Engagement and Positioning

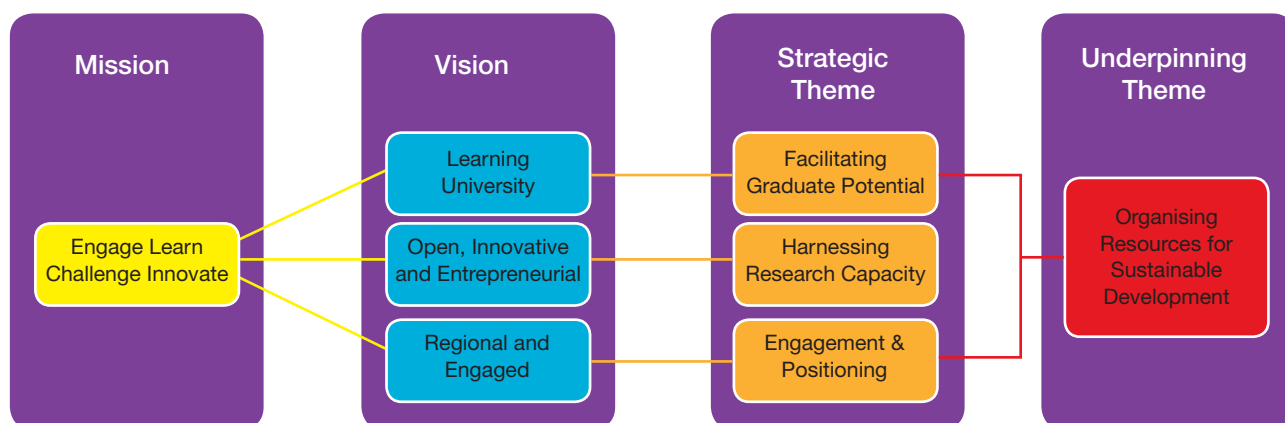
To build on the strengths of the South East region by developing enduring partnerships, alliances and collaborations that will facilitate an exchange of ideas, people and technology.

4 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development

To organise our human, financial and physical resources efficiently so that learners have a high-quality higher education experience.

These themes will be elaborated upon in the succeeding chapters. In addition, the activities that will be undertaken by the Institute to achieve the resultant goals will be outlined.

Figure 1 Mission to Strategy Map



Chapter 1 Introduction



The proposals contained herein have been informed by considerable internal and external debate and discussion. The strategic planning process was initiated with a review of the previous strategic plan and a discussion paper on the development of an institutional strategy was circulated for external and internal comment. This initial document, and the feedback received, created the framework for the themes that form the spine of the current plan.

After consultation with executive and departmental management a draft strategic plan was produced. Next, a phase of consultation with the internal institute community was undertaken. Following briefings by the President, staff members, through their respective departments, were asked for feedback and comment. This led to considerable debate and discussion at both academic and administrative level. The output of this process was a revised draft that was then sent for comment to the Institute's external stakeholders. The responses of the external stakeholders were reflected in a further draft. This draft was then reviewed by executive and departmental management before final adoption by the Governing Body. Throughout the development of the plan the Governing Body monitored progress and the Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Governing Body provided direction and support.

This strategic plan is the output of numerous contributions by many individuals and groups throughout the college and beyond. The enthusiasm and commitment that was shown towards the process reflects the importance of the Institute to the region and its communities. The result is an ambitious plan that will produce a positive dividend for the region and the country.

Accompanying the strategic plan is a series of clearly specified and measurable KPIs that will be cascaded throughout the organisation. This will provide a sound basis to measure progress against internally agreed targets and peer benchmarking. These metrics have been developed in consultation with the management of the Institute and reflect a deep commitment to the commonly shared objectives and priorities that this plan stipulates.

Chapter 2

Facilitating Learner Potential

Chapter 2 Facilitating Learner Potential



Introduction

To continue to facilitate learners to achieve their potential both at WIT and beyond by ensuring graduates are responsible, informed citizens, capable of success in their chosen careers and recognised by stakeholders as such.

The aim of this theme is to ensure that the WIT learner experience will help and inspire our students to reach their full potential both at college and beyond in a manner that is distinctive to the Institute. We will encourage the holistic development of our learners while at the same time ensuring that graduates leave the Institute 'work ready'.

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (The Hunt Report) affirms the central role of higher education institutions in delivering education and facilitating learning. However, there are considerable challenges to ensuring that all our learners have a high-quality higher education experience.

These challenges include an increasing demand for higher education caused by an expanding population and a desire to broaden participation as a means of achieving greater socio-economic equality. This is coupled with a more diverse student body who demand flexibility in education provision and programmes that develop generic skills suited for the 21st century workplace. Technological developments present an opportunity to deliver considerable efficiencies while improving the delivery of our programmes, however, these advances need to be implemented in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of the learner. The priorities set out below are intended to ensure that WIT meets these challenges and are consistent with the recommendations of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and our ambitions to become a Technological University.

This theme is further subdivided into a number of related areas, namely:

- Maintaining a relevant, distinctive, challenging and broad portfolio of programmes is an essential element in serving the needs of the region and our learners; this is addressed under 'The Programme Portfolio' sub-theme.
- 'Supporting Excellence in the Curriculum and its Delivery' is concerned with ensuring that the programme portfolio is delivered in an effective manner.
- 'Supporting Students' considers the Institute's approach to assisting and supporting our diverse cohort of learners through their higher education experience.
- 'Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement' addresses the mechanisms that need to be in place to ensure that there is public confidence in the qualifications that our learners achieve.

Chapter 2 Facilitating Learner Potential



2.1 The Programme Portfolio

Key strategic priorities:

- Continue to develop the programme portfolio in areas aligned with disciplines of strategic importance, both regionally and nationally, where the Institute has demonstrable strength and which are relevant to sustainable economic development.
- Develop structured research programmes, in particular continue to develop doctoral (level 10) and research masters (level 9) offerings.
- Increase life-long learning opportunities available to the learner population.
- Expand the flexibility of the programme portfolio and encourage more interdisciplinary programmes across Schools.

Other priorities/actions:

- Expand the development of programmes and other linkages with industry, state agencies and other higher education institutes; concentrating on joint programme initiatives, work placement opportunities and industry-led research.
- Expand flexible delivery methods, out-reach and online/blended offerings where demand exists. Each School will develop and implement a 'flexible delivery strategy'.
- Continue to offer and expand programmes of relevance to the cultural and societal needs of the region.
- Establish closer links between research specialties and undergraduate programmes to ensure that students learn in an environment that is informed by research.
- Ensure all programmes develop skills in employability and citizenship.
- Develop further the Institute's portfolio of collaborative programmes and specifically develop a significant body of collaborative programmes with IT Carlow.
- Further enhance executive and professional postgraduate programmes, particularly industry-led, shorter CPD style programmes with appropriate accreditation.
- Develop further access routes for 'non-standard' students into higher education (including recognising that more learners are attending the Institute with learning already achieved through the RPL (recognition of prior learning) framework).

Chapter 2 Facilitating Learner Potential



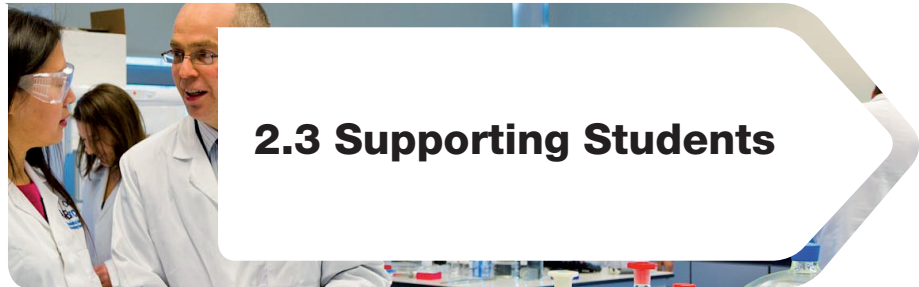
Key strategic priorities:

- Further develop the curriculum and the core teaching and learning competency to deliver that curriculum in the light of international, national and regional priorities.
- Introduce additional supports to aid in the delivery of the curriculum.

Other priorities/actions:

- Establish a Teaching and Learning Centre to lead initiatives for the benefit of students and staff.
- Continue to facilitate staff to undertake training (and qualifications) in pedagogy/teaching with a view to ensure that all academic staff have a pedagogical qualification.
- Establish communities of teaching and learning practice within School-based subject groupings.
- Further develop the current formal system of supervisor training with accreditation (in tandem with the development of structured PhD's).
- Encourage staff to disseminate the outputs of their scholarly activity on all aspects of teaching and learning, with particular emphasis on developing an Institute-wide knowledge and expertise base.
- Continue to expand the capabilities of the virtual learning environment (VLE).

Chapter 2 Facilitating Learner Potential



2.3 Supporting Students

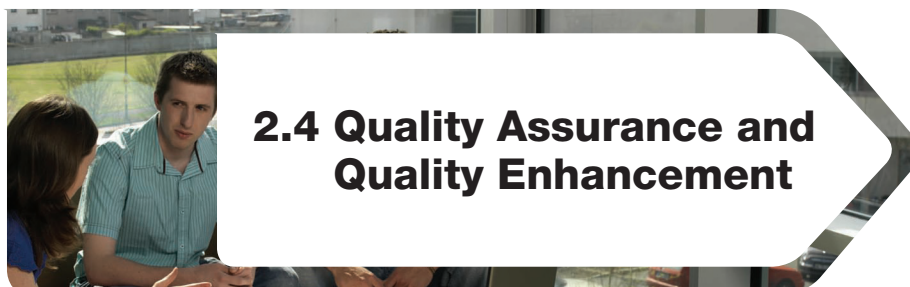
Key strategic priority:

- Build on the series of coordinated supports to learners and potential learners to meet both their academic and personal development needs.

Other priorities/actions:

- Continue to emphasise strategies and interventions that increase student progression and enhance the student experience.
- Support the development of innovative teaching methodologies and the integration of retention initiatives into the mainstream culture of the Institute.
- Put in place a series of additional measures to further support first year students make the transition from their previous educational experience to third level education.
- Provide a timely system of feedback to students to promote more effective student learning.
- Develop additional access initiatives for 'non-standard' students into higher education while continuing to operate and expand existing schemes and activities that target groups with low participation rates.
- Further expand the student support services facilities including learning support and sport & recreation activities.
- Recognise relevant learning already achieved prior to entry to the Institute by students through the institutional RPL (recognition of prior learning) policy.

Chapter 2 Facilitating Learner Potential



Key strategic priority:

- Continue to enhance quality assurance policies and operations in line with Institute needs, core quality enhancement principles and the evolving regulatory environment.

Other priorities/actions:

- Review formally all academic and non-academic units at least once across the life of the plan.
- Develop formal feedback mechanisms from learners to ensure that the Institute has regular and clear information on programmes and the learning environment.
- Engage, influence and participate in quality assurance developments, particularly at a national level.
- Continue to monitor and report on progress in addressing issues identified through the quality assurance processes.
- Develop mechanisms to embed the input of stakeholders into the quality assurance and enhancement processes.
- Deliver on the recommendations of quality reviews undertaken.
- Continue to match the curriculum of the Institute's programmes with international, national and regional practice and need through regular peer review.
- Work with national agencies on the development of subject guidelines.
- Perform a review of the external examiner process.

Chapter 3

Harnessing Research Capacity

Chapter 3 Harnessing Research Capacity



Introduction

To continue to build a sustainable platform for high-quality knowledge creation and knowledge transfer that is internationally recognised and closely linked with national and regional development priorities.

The aim of this theme is to deliver on the Institute's Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy. In the forthcoming period, the Institute will ensure that it continues to build the best possible platform for sustainable growth in research which informs the taught curriculum and supports regional development in all its aspects.

At a policy level the main influences on the development of this research strategy are the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group.

These reports present a new vision for research in the higher education system in Ireland. Fourteen priority research areas have been identified; these areas will attract the majority of future government funding for research. While it is advocated that the government needs to invest more in research, any research activity outside of these areas will only attract limited, if any, funding. Other challenges set for the higher education colleges include the need to recognise the role of the researcher formally within the Institute by establishing clear career paths for research staff, the development of a high-quality framework for PhD education and embedding knowledge transfer more into the activities of the Institute.

In order to present a strategy for our research activities that is both focussed and achievable, this theme is divided into three sub-themes.

- The first of these considers how we will prioritise our research effort through identifying and supporting research areas.
- A key aspect of our research activity is its conversion into social, cultural and economic benefit; this is the subject of the second sub-theme.
- The final sub-theme is concerned with supporting the growing research community within WIT.

Chapter 3 Harnessing Research Capacity



Key strategic priority:

- Focus research activity in priority areas and nurture the emergence of research centres in areas where potential competencies have been identified.

Other priorities/actions:

- Establish a new designation – that of Research Institute .
- Establish a graduate structure to facilitate the development of graduate education and stimulate interdisciplinary graduate projects and research. The graduate structure will act as a conduit to channel resources to research and further develop the research infrastructure.
- Grow the existing research centres, by diversifying their funding base, particularly through the development of strategic collaborations.
- Continue to support and develop high-quality research of national and international standing.
- Foster emerging research centres by bringing together existing expertise and creating a supportive environment to facilitate the development of new research themes.
- Encourage high-quality research in all disciplines, particularly using multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches.

Chapter 3 Harnessing Research Capacity



Key strategic priorities:

- Continue to transfer knowledge to industry and society and to the wider academic community in meaningful and productive ways.
- Promote an enterprise, commercialisation and innovation culture within the Institute.
- Encourage the development of a research informed undergraduate curriculum.

Other priorities/actions:

- Encourage and support researchers and postgraduate students to exploit their research and knowledge through the provision of structured training and mentoring.
- Further increase stakeholder involvement in the governance of research centres.
- Continue to emphasise the commercialisation of Institute-developed intellectual property.
- Increase the support provided to the creation of new enterprises in sectors where the Institute has developed expertise and knowledge.
- Identify and target research funding opportunities at a national and international level to support bilateral and multi-party industry research partnerships.
- Partner with public sector agencies, private sector networks and other universities / institutes of technology on joint initiatives relating to technology transfer, enterprise development and regions of knowledge programmes.
- Deepen engagement and participation in public bodies and organisations that operate in areas of strategic relevance.
- Continue to be a source of quality, evidence based research which informs policy making in social, cultural and economic development, both regionally and nationally.
- Continue to support interaction and transfer between academic and research units and encourage the activity of research as a vehicle to improve and inform teaching.

Chapter 3 Harnessing Research Capacity



3.3 Valuing and Supporting Research Career Development

Key strategic priority:

- Emphasise the development of research careers in the Institute through continued support of staff engaged in research and its supervision as well as students undertaking research and doctoral-level qualifications.

Other priorities/actions:

- Establish research careers with the Institute in line with national and international developments.
- Develop an Institutional HR strategy for researchers through involvement in the EU HR Strategy for Researchers Group (HRS4R).
- Further enhance research as a career.
- Create opportunities for research students to engage in meaningful teaching activity.
- Further develop a suite of support and training opportunities for supervisors of postgraduate students.
- Support the personal and professional development of graduate learners and researchers through appropriate structured programmes that emphasise the notion of the 'industry ready research graduate'.

Chapter 4

Engagement and Positioning

Chapter 4 Engagement and Positioning



Introduction

To build on the strengths of the South East region by developing enduring partnerships, alliances and collaborations that will facilitate an exchange of ideas, people and technology. Over the coming period the Institute will further develop and expand partnerships regionally, nationally and internationally. In addition, the establishment of a Technological University is a stated objective of this plan. Existing relationships with external partners will be enhanced with a view to establishing long-term alliances that will offer enduring benefits for the region.

The nature of engagement of higher education with wider society is multidimensional and can take many forms. The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 sets a number of challenges in this domain for all the higher education institutes. These include the requirement to embed engagement more in the activities of the Institute by encouraging greater mobility of staff between the Institute and other organisations, to respond positively to the learning and development needs of the wider community, to ensure that learners achieve appropriate recognition for civic engagement and to develop structures to involve the wider community in programme design.

Over the past number of years there has been an increasing trend towards the internationalisation of education. The National Strategy for Higher Education recognises this trend and advocates that all institutes should set out their international strategy. An internationally diverse cohort of both staff and students allows domestic and overseas students to learn from one-another and enriches the learning experience. It also acts as a basis for improving cultural awareness and mutual respect & understanding. The challenge for the Institute is to put in place the appropriate structures to ensure that international students are supported while they are studying at WIT.

The National Strategy for Higher Education allows for the creation of a Technological University. It envisages that a Technological University will have a distinct mission and ethos with a career-focused portfolio of programmes and an industry focussed research and innovation agenda. The tradition of offering programmes at upper levels of the national framework of qualifications will continue to be an important aspect of the proposed Technological University.

The commitment to access and progression will continue, the diversity of the student base will be preserved and the breath of higher education provision will remain. The Technological University is put forward as a mechanism to facilitate the evolution of some institutes of technology. WIT, along with IT Carlow, is committed to fully engaging in the process for re-designation as a Technological University. This strategic plan affirms that the establishment of a Technological University is a key strategic priority for the forthcoming period.

The Institute's strategic objectives under this theme can be articulated under four sub-themes:

- The first considers the Institute's positioning within the region.
- The second elaborates on WIT's engagement on a national basis.
- The third concentrates on the international dimension of the Institute's activities.
- The final sub-theme addresses the emerging relationship that exists with IT Carlow and the objective of achieving Technological University designation.

Chapter 4 Engagement and Positioning



4.1 Regional Engagement

The relationship of the Institute to the South East region is a defining characteristic of WIT. The economic importance of the Institute to the region is frequently emphasised, but equally important is its role in society. Close integration of the Institute with its local community provides the opportunity for students of WIT to become contributing citizens and to experience the rewards of civic engagement. Embedding a partnership between WIT and its region is an essential ambition of the Institute.

Key strategic priority:

- Develop and promote the South East region through the establishment and maintenance of partnerships and alliances across all our activities.

Other priorities/actions:

- Continue to offer programmes of relevance to the community of the South East region.
- Further develop partnerships with second level schools to increase participation to national averages.
- Work with the enterprise agencies and organisations to align higher education provision with industry needs.
- Place greater emphasis on the development of transferrable skills for engagement in society with the widest possible range of learners being rewarded for civic and community engagement through the modular framework where appropriate.
- Further deepen existing engagement processes through a framework of engagement for all external relationships. This will help to provide focus and direction to partnerships, alliances, enterprise and community based interactions.
- Continue to enhance outreach and schools liaison activities to the South East region.

Chapter 4 Engagement and Positioning

4.2 National Engagement

Key strategic priority:

- Actively engage in the development of higher education clusters with the objective of:
 - Developing programmes on a collaborative basis with other organisations, both nationally and internationally.
 - Supporting collaborative research initiatives with other organisations in prioritised research areas.
 - Offering students greater opportunities and progression pathways.
 - Developing centres of excellence where the Institute has proven expertise.
 - Developing new approaches to cross institutional issues.

Other priorities/actions:

- Developing existing and new relationships with professional bodies and other representative organisations.
- Influencing, participating and implementing national initiatives and policy developments.
- Further strengthen links with industry as part of the continuing development of the knowledge economy both regionally and nationally.
- Contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of the nation.
- Continue to promote the Irish language throughout the Institute and further develop the collaborative partnership with Gaeltacht na Rinne.

Chapter 4 Engagement and Positioning

4.3 International Engagement

Key strategic priority:

- Nurture existing alliances and support the development of new strategic partnerships with highly regarded international higher education institutes with a view to promoting the development of collaborative academic programmes, supporting the existing research centres in developing joint research projects and encouraging the exchange of staff and students.

Other priorities/actions:

- Encourage greater mobility of staff, facilitating short and long term exchange of staff between other higher education institutes.
- Grow the main research centres by diversifying their funding base further, particularly through the development of strategic collaborations both nationally and internationally.
- Support the international learner to enable them manage the regulatory, financial and emotional challenges of living and studying in a new cultural environment.
- Offer to the widest possible range of learners the opportunity to undertake some of their studies abroad and obtain credit for such study whilst at the same time develop their employability skills.
- Develop joint programmes with our international partners – particularly those that employ flexible delivery methods and lever the benefits of modern communication technologies.

Chapter 4 Engagement and Positioning



Key strategic priority:

- WIT, in partnership with IT Carlow, will continue with the process to achieve designation as a regional, multi-campus Technological University.

Other priorities/actions:

- Play an active role in the development of national policy around the Technological University.
- Shape the subsequent Technological University model that will emerge in order to make a positive contribution to the region and the country.
- Make an application for designation as a Technological University, in line with the published National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 and the provision in the programme for government.

Chapter 5

Organising Resources for Sustainable Development

Chapter 5 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development



Introduction

To organise our human, financial and physical resources effectively and efficiently so that the Institute is an active contributor to social and economic renewal and our learners have a high-quality higher education experience.

Managing human, financial, and physical resources effectively and efficiently is critical to achieving the goals of this plan. A principal determinant of a high-quality student experience is the financial, as well as the academic viability of the Institute's curriculum. This means that the resources deployed to support each individual student's experience is sustainable. Therefore, the strategic plan must be built on a financially robust and viable basis.

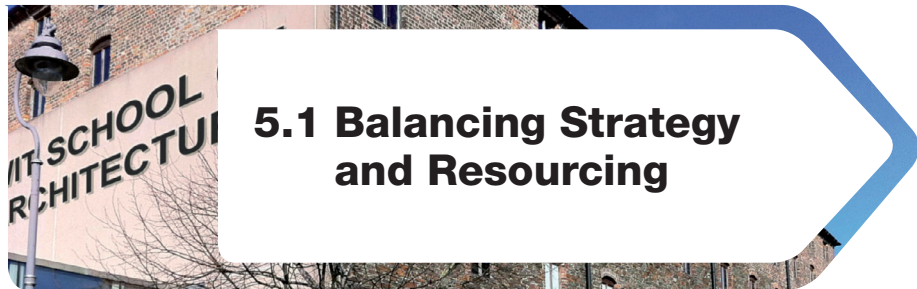
The challenge of increasing student numbers against a backdrop of reduced exchequer funding will be a feature of the next strategic planning cycle.

A more efficient use of resources and a widening of the funding base have been put forward as possible solutions by the National Strategy for Higher Education. In addition, exchequer funding is now more closely aligned with student numbers (through the Recurrent Grant Allocation Model – RGAM), agreed levels of service and national policy priorities. These considerations will demand a more effective allocation of resources.

The strategic focus of the Institute under this theme can be categorised under four sub-headings. The first of these sub-headings addresses the notion that strategy and the allocation of scarce resources will be one of the key challenges facing the Institute in the forthcoming planning period.

One of the most important resources that the Institute possesses is its human resource; this is the focus of the next sub theme in section 5.2. This leads on to the physical resources of the Institute and how these resources will be managed and developed over the next five years. Finally the last section, organisational structures and governance, considers how the Institute will organise itself in order to achieve its strategic objectives.

Chapter 5 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development



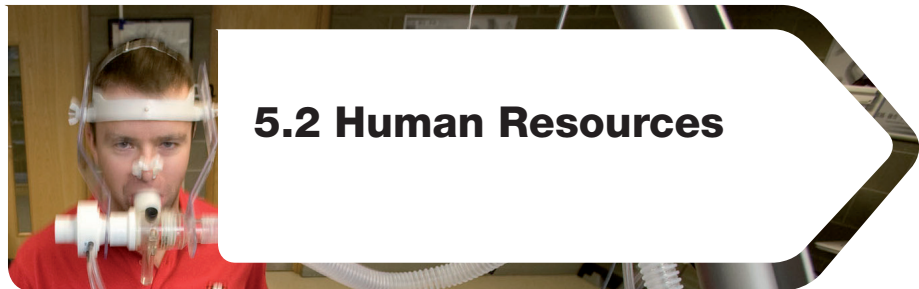
Key strategic priority:

- Prioritise resource allocation into those activities articulated in this plan, placing an emphasis on economic and social benefits for the region and the Institute's stakeholders.

Other priorities/actions:

- Commit to a model of resource allocation to incorporate the priorities set out in this plan.
- Continue to ensure that our available resources are fully and effectively utilised.
- Continue to prioritise research and programme development in sectors of key importance to the economy and society.
- Accelerate programme development processes to ensure that strategic, regional and resource priorities will be an important factor in determining which programmes will be offered.
- To undertake a resources analysis for each School that will consider the resource implications of existing programmes, planned programme development and other activities.

Chapter 5 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development



5.2 Human Resources

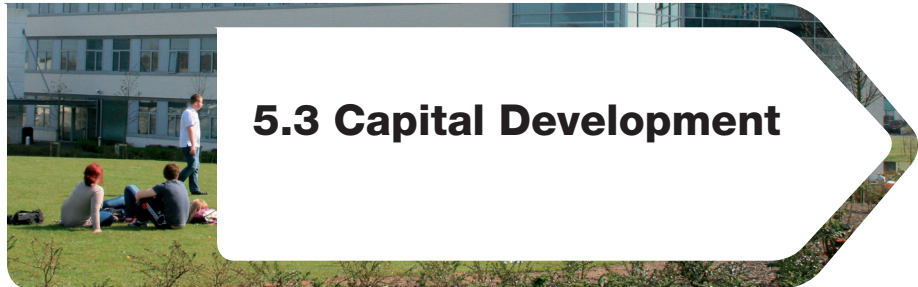
Key strategic priority:

- Continue and enhance the support of the academic and professional development of all staff.

Other priorities/actions:

- Continuing to ensure that staff are provided with a supportive environment to enable them to exercise and achieve their professional and personal responsibilities and aspirations.
- Emphasise the development of the skills required to lead and manage research teams.
- Continue to support PhD research programmes undertaken by faculty.
- Ensuring each academic area and function unit incorporates a training and development strategy into their internal reviews focussed on achieving higher standards and qualifications in teaching & learning and research.
- Prioritising role-related training and professional development to underpin the maintenance of Institute-wide quality assurance in management, academic, administrative and support areas.
- Encouraging greater mobility of staff, facilitating short and long term exchange of staff between other higher education institutes and industry.

Chapter 5 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development



5.3 Capital Development

Key strategic priority:

- Continue to manage and develop the physical resources of the Institute in an innovative manner to ensure that the anticipated growth in student activity can be accommodated within the physical environment.

Other priorities/actions:

- Review and manage space utilisation in all buildings with a view to ensuring maximum usage.
- Develop a plan for the constant upgrading of lecture rooms, laboratories, workshops and other facilities.
- Review the Institute's capital development plan with a view to meeting the Institute's future physical space requirements.
- Seek the re-commencement of the PPP (public-private partnership) projects as the funding landscape improves.
- Develop plans for a new facility for humanities based programmes.
- Develop plans for a dedicated student support centre.

Chapter 5 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development



5.4 Organisational Structures and Governance

Key strategic priority:

- Continue to develop strong governance processes and structures consistent with the demands of a leading Technological University.

Other priorities/actions:

- Deliver a new organisational structure that will permit more effective leadership and management of the organisation.
- Broaden diversity at management level to reflect the wider organisation by encouraging all sections of the Institute community to take on leadership roles.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities at different management levels and in different bodies and committees with the objective of improving decision making and implementation processes.
- Increase the transparency behind the process of resource allocation to activities and units as a vehicle to improve confidence and trust in the system of governance.
- Ensure adherence to the Code of Governance of Irish Institutes of Technology.
- Develop a self-evaluation process for the Governing Body.

Chapter 6

Key Performance Indicators

Chapter 6 Key Performance Indicators



Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are an important means of measuring the implementation of the strategic plan. KPIs should not drive activity, instead they should be the logical outputs of the priorities identified by the strategic planning process.

WIT has adopted a KPI framework which is described by the diagram below (based on the Institutes of Technology Ireland KPI Framework, 2011). The starting point of the framework is the development of a strategic plan. The strategic plan sets out the priorities for the Institute for the next planning period. Based on these priorities, a number of KPIs have been identified as the metrics that best measure our performance and progress towards the objectives of the strategic plan.

As part of the framework, targets (where appropriate) are agreed for each of the identified KPIs. External benchmarks have been used as reference points in setting these targets. However, directly comparable data cannot always be obtained. The information from the HEA's Institutional Profiling Project has proved useful in this regard.

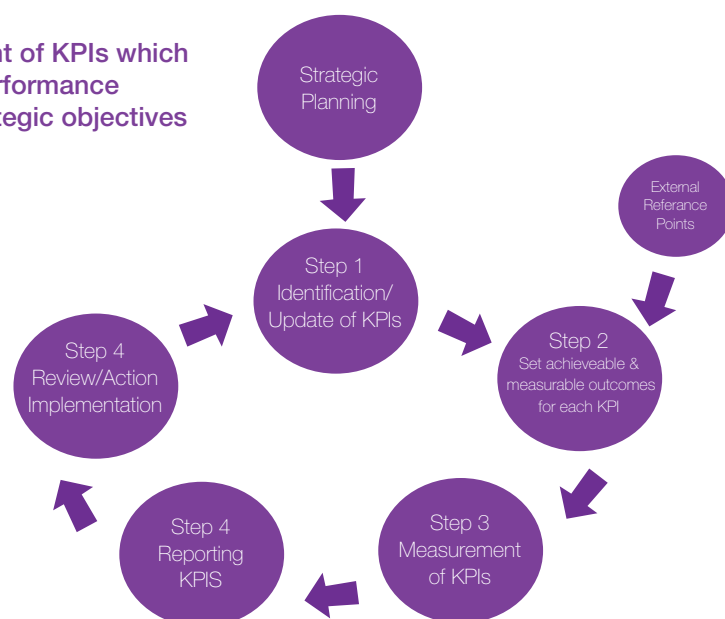
Over the life of this strategic plan, these KPIs will be periodically measured and reported to executive management and the Governing Body of the Institute. This process will help identify those priority areas of the strategic plan that may require attention and further actions can then be identified. At the end of the planning cycle, the KPIs are reviewed in light of the development of the next strategic plan and the cycle begins again.

Following the development of this strategic plan, a set of KPIs were identified.

These were based on the sub-themes; with each sub-theme having a number of related KPIs to measure progress against the strategic priorities under that related sub-theme. The identification of KPIs is not an exact science and proxies are sometimes used as a result. Also, in arriving at the KPIs consideration was given to reporting and measurement mechanisms and existing information sources were employed as much as possible.

The main strategic priorities for each sub-theme, the related KPIs and a brief definition are set out in the following tables.

Development of KPIs which measure performance against strategic objectives



Sub-Theme Proposed KPI	Programme Portfolio	Supporting Excellence in the Curriculum and its Delivery	Supporting Students	Quality Assurance and Enhancement
Key Strategic Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the programme portfolio. Develop structured research programmes. Increase life-long learning options. Expand the flexibility of the programme portfolio and encourage more interdisciplinary programmes across Schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop the curriculum and the core teaching and learning competency. Introduce additional supports to aid in the delivery of the curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on the series of coordinated supports to learners and potential learners to meet both their academic and personal development needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to enhance quality assurance policies and operations in line with Institute needs and the evolving regulatory environment.
KPI	Student enrolment profile % programme level analysis % flexible % mature Graduate employability rate. WIT % relative to national average	Number of staff engaged on CPD activities Student satisfaction with delivery Academic staff with pedagogical qualification	Deregistration rate Attrition rate Student satisfaction with support services	Compliance with quality review enhancement plans. Graduate rating.
Definition	As per HEA return. As per graduate employment survey (undergraduate only 6 to 9 months after graduation)	Statistics provided by CPD co-ordinator As per national student survey Internal definition of pedagogical qualifications.	Number of students de-registering as % of full time under-graduates HEA defined rate; % of students who do not progress into the next year of study As per national student survey	Review of enhancement plans by Quality Manager – will be a quasi-subjective analysis As per survey (6 to 9 months after graduation).

Chapter 6 Key Performance Indicators

Theme 1 Facilitating Graduate Potential Proposed KPIs

Sub-Theme Proposed KPI	Identifying and Supporting Research Areas	Translating Research for Cultural Societal and Economic Benefit	Valuing and Supporting Research Career Development
Key Strategic Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus research activity in priority areas and nurture the emergence of research centres in areas where potential competences have been identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to transfer knowledge to industry, society and the wider academic community. Promote an innovation culture within the Institute. Encourage the development of a research informed undergraduate curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasise the development of research careers in the Institute through continued support of staff as well as students undertaking research and doctoral-level qualifications.
KPI	Total research income. Number of funding proposals submitted.	Peer reviewed publications. Knowledge transfer index.	Number of students on research programmes (L9, L10). Increase in the number of academic staff with formal research supervision training.
Definition	As per HEA return. Number of proposals facilitated by RSU.	Publications subject to peer review, entry in the research repository. Spin-outs plus patents and licences plus companies supported. Definitions as per HEA return, companies supported is an internal definition.	Attendees on Level 9 Research Supervisor Module as per CFD co-ordinator records.

Chapter 6 Key Performance Indicators

Theme 2 Harnessing Research Capacity Proposed KPIs

Sub-Theme Proposed KPI	Regional Engagement	National Engagement	International	Enhancing Regional Capacity - TUSE
Key Strategic Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and promote the South East region through the establishment and maintenance of partnerships and alliances across all our activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively engage in the development of higher education clusters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurture existing alliances and support the development of new strategic partnerships with highly regarded international higher education institutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIT, in partnership with IT Carlow, will continue with the process to achieve designation as a Technological University.
KPI	Regional Intake Number of Institutional-Level regional partnerships in place	Number of collaborations/alliances (programmes, research and other)	% of international students (EU, Non-EU). % of outgoing students.	Progression versus the TU process Progression versus the TU criteria.
Definition	As per HEA return. Regional partnership is an internal definition.	Programmes developed with other bodies, research income with other partners, 'other activities' is an internal definition.	As per HEA return, as % of full time enrolments. An international partner is where an MOU has been signed.	Submission deadlines achieved on time as per current HEA schedule. Progress against the five key TU criteria..

Chapter 6 Key Performance Indicators

Theme 3 Engagement and Positioning – Proposed KPIs

Sub-Theme Proposed KPI	Balancing Strategy and Resources	Human Resources	Capital Development	Organisational Structures and Governance
Key Strategic Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritise resource allocation into those activities articulated in this plan with an emphasis on efficient economic and social outcomes for the region and the Institute's stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue and enhance the support of the academic and professional development of all staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to manage and develop our physical resources in an innovative manner to ensure that the anticipated growth in student activity can be accommodated within the physical environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop strong governance processes and structures consistent with the demands of a leading Technological University.
KPI	% split of income across sources. % split of expenditure analysis (incl. pay versus non-pay). Academic staff allocation analysis.	Staff analysis between academic, research and admin/support. Academic staff qualification analysis.	Gross space per on-campus FTE student. % of non-pay expenditure on capital renewal.	Annual surplus/deficit. % compliance with governing body code of governance.
Definition	As per HEA return. As per HEA return. Staff allocated as 'Other'; as per central timetabling analysis.	As per HEA return. As per HEA return (full academic time staff only).	As per HEA return. Capital renewal includes all expenditure on upgrades, maintenance and capital improvements.	As per HEA return. Requires self-evaluation by Governing Body.

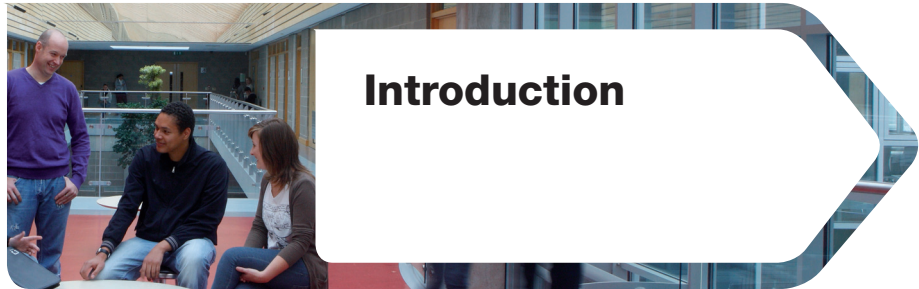
Chapter 6 Key Performance Indicators

Theme 4 Organising Resources for Sustainable Development – Proposed KPIs

Chapter 7

Implementation

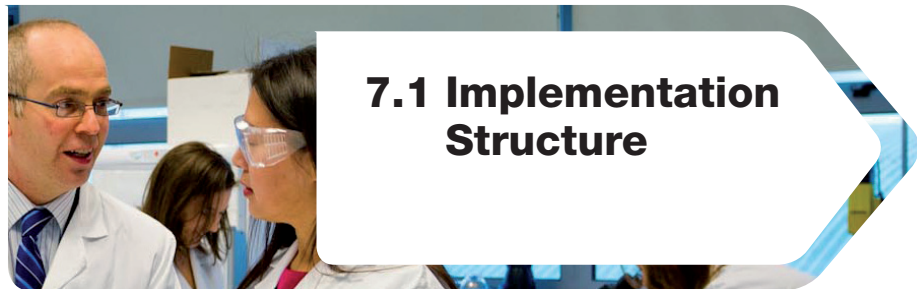
Chapter 7 Implementation



Implementation is the link between strategic planning and strategic achievement. Designing an effective process is, accordingly, a crucial part of successful strategic management. For objectives to be meaningful, they must be accepted by the community that is charged with their achievement and they must be adopted by the units and individuals that deliver and engage the activities of the Institute. The implementation plans developed, therefore, must:

- recognise that strategic achievement is delivered through the communities of the Institute, its staff, stakeholders and students;
- be developed and supported by those communities;
- be achieved in partnership; and
- be open to participation, review and adjustment.

Chapter 7 Implementation



7.1 Implementation Structure

The Governing Body of the Institute is ultimately responsible for strategic direction and strategic achievement within the Institute. Consistent with the implementation objectives, identified above, the Governing Body recognises the need for an inclusive but accountable structure for strategic delivery to occur.

The implementation of the strategic plan will be overseen by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Governing Body, while the execution of the plan is the responsibility of the executive management of the Institute.

In the first instance, an operational plan will be developed to guide the process of implementation. This plan will:

- assign the responsibility for coordinating strategic achievement and the reporting of progress on the strategic plan;
- assign objectives to executive level managers for sponsorship, reporting and resource allocation responsibilities;
- ensure that the priorities articulated in the plan are supported with tangible and effective actions; and
- set out timelines for the achievement of the Institute's strategic priorities.

Chapter 7 Implementation



7.2 Reporting, Monitoring and Review

The Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Governing Body will meet regularly to review updates on progress and to consider the actions that are being proposed as part of the implementation process.

Executive management will carry out an annual review of the implementation of the strategic plan and report the findings to the Governing Body and to the Institute community.

Progress on the implementation of the strategic plan will be measured against the selected KPIs using the framework set out in chapter six.

This strategic plan exists in a dynamic environment; as part of the review process any developments will be monitored and the plan may be updated to reflect significant changes that may impact on its delivery. This will help to ensure that the Institute repositions itself to respond effectively to deliver on its ambitions.



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