

HEA

Higher Education Authority
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas

Annual Report of the Higher Education Authority 2009





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Key Developments and Achievements 2009

- A significant increase in the demand for higher education.
- The Institutions achieved a breakeven outturn for 2009/10 and prepared plans for elimination of any accumulated deficits, notwithstanding a worsening funding situation as the year progressed.
- Due to the employment moratorium on public service posts, an Employment Control Framework and ongoing monitoring committee, was set up to deal with the situation.
- On a positive note, supplementary, targeted funding for the sector was provided, including the re-introduction of a minor works grant for the universities and €4 million was allocated to Labour Market Activation, in response to the unemployment situation.
- The PRTL Cycle 5 competitive process was launched and completed.
- Progress and advances under PRTL Cycle 4 projects included:
 - a 123% increase in peer review publications
 - building on international and industrial collaborations with 257 international & 75 industrial collaborations developed to date
 - receipt of 540 research awards by various projects
 - In excess of €20 million in European funding was leveraged
- A number of significant infrastructure programmes were approved, moved to design stage or were commenced, including an engineering building at NUI Galway; the UL Graduate Medical School; the undergraduate element of the proposed UCD Science Centre; a new Library/Auditorium at MIC and a library extension at NUI Maynooth.
- There was a 34% increase in the allocation of the Fund for Students with a Disability.
- The Student Assistance Fund was allocated to 33 Higher Education institutions, while €2.4 million was allocated from Dormant Accounts Fund to institutes of technology for further development of access services and initiatives.
- The HEA was awarded a grant of over one million euro by the European Commission for a three-year *Research e-Infrastructure Policy Network*. The policy body, called **e-InfraNet**, will comprise a high-level group from a number of European countries, and will develop policies in – environmental (Green) Computing, Open Agenda – access, source and sharing, and Cloud Computing – to reinforce and promote efforts to foster world-class IT infrastructures.
- The HEA managed the reduction in the 2009 allocation to the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) (from €43.4 million to €26 million) through a targeted, multi-faceted approach entailing the close monitoring of activity and expenditure of all SIF projects as a basis for releasing or withholding funds.
- An interim evaluation of the SIF was undertaken in December 2009 by an independent, internationally renowned expert in higher education, Dr. Gordon Davies, with support from HEA staff. Dr. Davies conducted a desk review of the progress and outcomes of every SIF project, supplemented with site visits to the larger SIF collaborations and some restructuring projects. The report makes recommendations on the future of each project given the reduced funds available in the current climate, plus some overarching recommendations on the administration of SIF and on future cycles. It was finalised in early 2010.



- The HEA made a submission to the National Strategy Group on Higher Education and published a position paper on Open and Flexible Learning which was referred to the Group as part of their working materials.
- A Labour Market Activation Group focused on increased needs for new and expanded, education and training provision, corresponding to future skills needs and targeted at those who have lost their jobs, or who face uncertain employment prospects.
- Significant progress was made in the area of Shared Services and Procurement – ongoing commitment by the sector to securing efficiency savings continues to be a priority.
- The HEA made a submission to the Department of Education and Science on integrating HETAC, FETAC, IUQB, NQAI, and the HEA's quality assurance overview role.
- A fundamental review of the apprenticeship model was initiated, due to the reduction in apprentice provision in institutes of Technology, following the collapse in construction activity.
- The HEA submitted a report on Ireland to the OECD, as part of a major study by OECD, on pathways for disabled students to third level education and employment.
- A study on the benefits of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to the economy and society was progressed, with the final report due for completion in early 2010.
- As part of on-going HEA collaboration with Irish Aid, the Programme of Strategic Co-operation established a Performance Measurement Framework.
- The HEA continued to promote take up of undergraduate and post graduate IT courses, through the Information & Technology Investment Fund.
- The HEA produced a paper on trends in progression from further education to higher education and the development of a framework for the provision of access/foundation courses to facilitate progression continued.
- A charter on inclusive teaching and learning was launched in collaboration with AHEAD.
- Further progress was made in the quality and coverage of the student records system and the most recent Facts and Figures bulletin now includes private higher education institutions.
- The HEA as National Agency for Erasmus, in partnership with the Department of Education and Science, the European Commission and the Department for Employment and Learning (Belfast), organised the "European University – Business Co-operation Thematic Forum on New Skills for New Jobs" in Dublin. A report of the event was published and submitted to the European Commission and the Department of Education.

2009 Publications

- **08/09 Higher Education: Key Facts and Figures** – A summary of enrolment and graduate data collected from Universities, Colleges of Education, NCAD, RCSI and the Institutes of Technology along with other aided institutions, offering a comprehensive view of third level education.
- **What do Graduates do?** – The class of 2007 – A destination report, which year on year is instrumental in communicating the importance of higher education. It illustrates how education benefits the individual, society, research activity and the country in general, reflecting the changing needs of our economy and helping to inform labour market policy – particularly pertinent in present economic times.



- **Eurostudent Survey III** – This report examines the key characteristics that define Ireland’s diverse student population. It provides information on students’ economic circumstances, their living conditions and the social and demographic characteristics of students in higher education.
- **Transformations**, a book celebrating ten years of the PRTL (Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions), was extensively distributed in 2009 to a wide variety of organisations, including Irish embassies around the world. Copies also went on sale in bookshops throughout the country.
- **EuroLink** – the first newsletter on European Programmes.
- **“Provision of Education to International Students – Code of Practice and Guidelines for Irish Higher Education Institutions”**
– published by the Irish Higher Education Quality Network.
- Joint Publication of **Success Stories** with Léargas to celebrate the European Year of Creativity and Innovation.



Overview of 2009

In 2009 the Irish higher education system was presented with a number of significant challenges, as well as opportunities. The Higher Education Authority worked with the institutions, the Department of Education and Science and other key stakeholders to support the institutions in meeting these challenges and in ensuring a continuing appropriate level of accountability from the sector. This Annual Report, in addition to governance information and accounts, provides an overview of the higher education system in 2009 with particular reference to areas in which the HEA had direct involvement.

A year of strong growth in demand

A particularly striking feature of 2009 was the very significant increase in demand for higher education – a 4.2% increase in the universities and 5.8% in the institutes of technology. Although this increased demand was driven to some extent by the impact of recession on employment, it is a positive development in terms of the future skills needs of individuals and the Irish economy. The HEIs successfully accommodated this influx of students, as well as programmes aimed at recently unemployed people, even in a difficult budgetary situation. Even so, this level of increase will place pressure on the institutions in terms of quality and infrastructure and will need careful monitoring at institutional and national level.

... at a time of funding challenges

From a funding viewpoint, 2009 was dominated by the impact of recession. Recurrent funding was further reduced following an equally challenging funding situation in 2008. Subsequent to the original 2009 allocation, there were two further downward adjustments (totalling €24m) to recurrent allocations during the year.

Notwithstanding the difficult recurrent funding position, the institutions working with the HEA all achieved a breakeven outturn for 2009/10 and presented credible plans for the elimination of accumulated deficits, where they existed. A Task Force of the Authority on Institutional Budgets and Accountability met in July to consider the budgetary position in the HEIs and related issues. The Task Force noted these outcomes and acknowledged that they represented a significant achievement by the institutions.

On a more positive note, 2009 saw the re-introduction by the Department of Education and Science of the minor works grant for the universities, after many years of suspension. This was especially welcome in an otherwise difficult funding year.

Positive too were developments on the pensions front. Following the conclusion of the work of the HEA Working Group on university pensions, the Financial Measures (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, passed during 2009. This provides for the transfer to the State of the assets and liabilities of the funded pension schemes of six universities (UCD, UCC, NUIG, NUIM, TCD and NUI). The transfer of the assets and liabilities of the NUIM and TCD schemes to the National Pensions Reserve Fund (NPRF) took place at the end of 2009 with the remaining universities' schemes due to be transferred during 2010. This Act is an important element in providing for the future financial stability of the universities concerned.



The role of shared services in efficiency savings

In light of the funding challenges for HEIs, 2009 saw a renewed focus on the efficient use of existing resources, with particular attention on shared services and central procurement initiatives. This development was consistent with the Government's action plan for the implementation of the report "*Transforming Public Services*", which promotes the establishment of shared services in functions such as payroll, human resources, financial management, procurement and ICT systems management across the public sector.

The HEA, in association with Deloitte, hosted workshops in May and June 2009 with the objective of encouraging the achievement of concrete efficiency gains across the higher education sector in 2009 and beyond. The workshops were particularly well attended by senior officers from the higher education institutions and there was a genuine commitment from the sector to progress the agenda of securing cost reductions and improving efficiency through shared services and procurement initiatives. Quantified savings were achieved during the year, particularly in the area of joint procurement, and work is on-going.

Progress towards a new funding model for the institutes of technology

2009 saw continued progress on the introduction of a new funding model for the institutes of technology. Policy in this area is influenced by three key objectives –

- Ensure greater transparency and consistency in funding;
- Encourage innovation
- Promote performance which supports national objectives.

A significant amount of work was carried out during the year, including unit cost analysis, risk and sensitivity analysis and modelling of potential allocations based on a subject price group approach. A small amount of grant (€3m) was allocated towards the end of the year on the basis of principles of a new funding model.

At the request of the HEA, the institutes of technology undertook a major study of their unit costs using the HEA unit costing model. A preliminary analysis, based on the data received, was carried out and discussions in relation to the outcomes are ongoing with the institutes. A risk and sensitivity analysis was also carried out independently by an external expert, based on the findings of the 2004/05 and 2005/06 unit costs data.

Other important developments in 2009 in respect of the funding and accountability role of the HEA include –

- An independent review was carried out on the regulation and accountability practices in place in the HEA by comparison with those in place in the UK.
- A review of internal resource allocation models in the institutes was commenced.
- Significant data on the sector was provided to the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Programmes.
- Reporting requirements were completed to the HEA under the Code of Governance in respect of Institutes of Technology and smaller institutions (MIC, SPD, Mater Dei, St Angela's) as well as the second report in respect of the universities.
- Significant progress was made in agreeing revised frameworks required under the Universities Act (Departures from Approved Salary Rates and the Borrowing Framework) while work is continuing to conclude the Framework for Payments by Corporations and the Frameworks required under the institute of technology legislation.



- The format of accounts for the institutes of technology was agreed in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General and approved by the HEA as required under the legislation.

Responding to recession

Apart from the impact of recession on overall funding, the sector was required to respond in three further specific areas – labour market activation, apprenticeships and the public sector recruitment moratorium.

Labour market activation

The higher education sector responded proactively to the unemployment situation by providing a range of short programmes for unemployed people and participating in the Government's labour market activation programme and the positive contribution of the sector is acknowledged. Funding (€4m) was made available by the Government. The HEA was part of the working group that drew up initiatives for labour market activation initiatives in the higher education sector. Significant progress was made in developing and implementing proposals for both the institute of technology and university sectors. The following initiatives were undertaken:

1. Provision of 1,500 Part-time undergraduate places at NFQ Level 6-8 for persons who are unemployed. Funding is calculated on the basis of student numbers and total institutional funding for this cohort will be based on a maximum amount of €2,500 per student per part-time place, providing a minimum of 30 ECTS credits.
2. Provision of 1,000 part-time postgraduate places at NFQ Level 8-9 for unemployed graduates. Total institutional funding for this cohort will be based on a maximum amount of €2,500 per student per part-time place, providing a minimum of 30 ECTS credits.

3. Provision of accelerated/compressed full-time courses in Institutes of Technology.
4. Provision of short part-time modular programmes.
5. Provision of a FETAC Level 5 Certificate in Construction Technology and a FETAC Level Certificate in Engineering Technology (PP5) in the Institutes of Technology.
6. Support for the National Energy Technician Programme in the Institutes of Technology.

Reduction in Apprenticeship Provision by Institutes of Technology

Apprentice training is organised in seven alternating phases of on and off the job activity. Two of the off the job phases are provided by Institutes of Technology. Following the severe contraction in construction activity in recent years the number of FÁS registered apprentices dropped from c.8,000 in 2006 to c. 1,500 in 2010. The number is forecast to rise again by 2014 to a sustainable level of c. 5,000. In response to this reduction in demand, the HEA appointed an independent panel under the chairmanship of Professor Patrick Fottrell to recommend on the reductions in provision that should take place in the Institutes. The panel met in December 2009 and considered data on national and regional demand, and received submissions and presentations from Institutes of Technology and from the TUI. The Panel's recommendations to reduce apprentice provision by 40% in line with the forecast level of sustainable demand, and the allocation of this reduction to individual institutions, were formally accepted by the HEA in February 2010.



Implementing the public sector staffing moratorium

In March 2009, the Government directed that a general moratorium was to be applied to the filling of public services posts. In respect of the higher education sector, it was agreed that an employment control framework would be put in place to be monitored by an Employment Control Framework Monitoring Committee, chaired by the HEA and including the Departments of Education and Science and Finance. A Framework was put in place in July 2009 which gave some flexibility to the institutions in relation to the appointment of academic staff. The operation of this Framework, however, proved particularly onerous as the filling of each post was to be the subject of specific approval by the HEA and the Departments. The HEA Executive liaised closely with both Departments on the operation of the Framework and, following further refinement, a revised Framework, which allowed for greater flexibility to institutions (in relation to academic and non-academic staff) was formally approved. All of the HEIs took appropriate action during 2009 to ensure that the targets set out in the Framework could be met by end 2010 as required.

A continuing focus on research and development

The HEA continued its work with other stakeholders in implementing the Government's Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation. The Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLTI) – along with investments through the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and the Irish Research Council for Science, Engineering and Technology (IRCSET) – has provided a modern, high-tech physical infrastructure and an increased supply of PhD students. This funding has also developed and strengthened, national/regional, structured PhD programmes. The shared objective is the broadening of our skills base, leading to greater employability across all sectors of the economy and society.

A particularly significant development in this context was the announcement by the Minister for Education and Science of Cycle 5 of the PRTLTI. This gave a clear signal of the Government's continued commitment to investment in research and development as a key element of economic recovery and future prosperity.

A further important development in 2009 was the work undertaken by the HEA in partnership with Forfás to map research activity in Ireland, and its culmination in 2009 with the publication of an independent bibliometric report for the Irish public research performing system, with higher education institutions being a particular focus.

A year of action on policy and planning

The National Higher Education Strategy was the main focus of the HEA's policy advice work through 2009. The importance of this exercise cannot be over-stated with its capacity to shape the higher education and research system for the decades ahead. The Secretariat of the Strategy Group is a joint HEA/Department of Education and Science team.

The HEA made a submission to the Strategy Group, the key theme of which was responsiveness and adaptability to change, both internal responsiveness of the academy to the needs of learners and researchers and also external responsiveness of the system to the key challenges of our time.

Other key points included –

- The need for a renewed emphasis on quality and innovation in teaching and learning and for parity of esteem between the teaching and research missions.



- A concern about the increasingly narrow focus of many undergraduate programmes and the need for a broader focus at undergraduate level through a re-shaping of undergraduate informed, in the university sector, by the principles underlying the liberal arts and science model and incorporating generic skills development throughout the system.
- Flexibility of provision is a key indicator of the responsiveness of Irish higher education to Irish society and required parity of funding.
- System-level responses to our social, economic and academic challenges were necessary leading to a transformation of Irish higher education from a set of isolated institutions into a coherent, efficient and dynamic system of higher education and research.
- The financial sustainability of Irish higher education into the future will depend on our ability to maximise the impact of current levels of investment and on our ability to increase funding through continued public investment and a diversification of funding sources.
- All aspects of the mission of Irish higher education – teaching, research and civic engagement – must be pursued with an enthusiastic commitment to innovation and excellence.

During the year, the HEA provided technical and professional support to the Department of Education and Science in the production of a detailed report to Government on student contributions and possible student loan systems. The completed report is now subsumed into the broader exercise on National Strategy for Higher Education.

In November the HEA published a Position Paper on open and flexible learning. This initiative was prompted in part by the trend towards increased demand for access to higher education, from both school leavers and adults wishing to enhance their skills. Given the likely scale of the demand, it is unlikely that conventional delivery methods alone can meet it. Blended learning provides options that increasingly should form part of the policy response to demand. The Paper, which was also an input into the Higher Education Strategy exercise, is available on www.heai.ie. The following are the key points in the Paper –

- The paper described international trends in flexible learning and discussed the implications of new web technologies and open educational resources for the future of Irish higher education.
- It noted the considerable advances that are occurring within Irish higher education institutions in terms of the innovative use of technology and virtual learning environments (VLEs) in teaching and research, although starting from a low base by international comparison.
- The current funding arrangements both for students and for institutions emerged as a significant barrier to progress and the Paper proposes reform of the public funding allocation model to achieve parity for flexible learning.
- Steps were proposed to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and system-wide improvement in open and flexible learning, including consolidation of infrastructural investments in flexible learning, the development of a national database of courses and modules and a national databank of open educational resources.
- The paper also emphasised the central importance of institutional leadership and outlined steps to advance the flexible learning agenda at institutional level.



During 2009 the HEA contributed to the work of the Innovation Taskforce both through written submissions and the Chairman's membership of the Group. The HEA also put in place a process to develop a foresight exercise for the arts, humanities and social sciences. The report, which as of the date of this publication, has yet to be published is intended as providing an appraisal of the role of AHSS in our society and the economy and how that role can be optimised.

Equity of access

Progress continued in 2009 on implementation of the National Access Plan, including allocation of the Disability Fund and the Student Assistance Fund. Updates on Equal Access data showed growth in participation among most target groups. In collaboration with AHEAD, a Charter on inclusive teaching and learning in higher education was launched. A HEA Taskforce was formed in 2009 to draw up policy recommendations on access/foundation courses – the outcome of this work is due in summer 2010.

Bologna Process

The HEA plays a key role in furthering the Bologna Process – the most important and wide ranging reform of higher education in Europe. The Bologna Process aims to establish a European Higher Education Area by 2010, in which students can choose from a wide and transparent range of high quality courses and benefit from smooth recognition procedures.

- The Bologna Process completed its first decade in 2009. Seven Irish Bologna Experts were appointed to cover the period 2009-2011. The HEA works closely with the National Qualification Authority of Ireland in addressing the aims and objectives of the Process.
- The Irish National Agency (HEA) in partnership with the NQAI organised a Colloquium on "The Bologna Process and Employability". Representatives of industry including IBEC participated.
- The NA in partnership with the NQAI organised a Colloquium on "Supporting the Design of Discipline-Specific Learning Outcomes".
- The NA was a joint participant in a project with the UK National Agency (British Council) on the theme "Implementing Bologna in Practice".
- A series of student information seminars were held in partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland.
- The NA part-supported the publication of "USI Student Guide to the Bologna Process".

Further achievements for 2009 include:

- The second Annual Erasmus Lecture – delivered by Mr. Peter Quinn, Business Consultant, Chair of TG4 and former GAA President.
- The selection of the Irish Representative of the 2 millionth Erasmus Student.



HEA Governance

Members of HEA

Members of the HEA are appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Minister for Education & Science generally for a period of 5 years, with the exception of the President of USI who holds membership for the duration of his/her office as President of USI.

HEA Members for 2009 are:

HEA Board Membership 2009
Ms Cepta Brougham
Dr. Mary Canning
Dr. Tommy Cooke
Ms Grace Corcoran
Mr. Michael Cotter
Mr. Martin Cronin
Professor Mary Daly, Vice Chairperson
Mr. Noel Davern (from 5/5/09)
Ms Doreen Delahunty
Mr. Louis Dockery
Ms Sheila Drum
Dr. Pat Kelleher (to 2/7/09)
Mr. Michael Kelly, Chairman
Mr. Shane Kelly (to 30/6/09)
Ms Kathleen Lough
Mr. Ray McCarthy (from 13/10/09)
Mr. Peter Mannion (from 1/7/09)
Professor Sarah Moore
Professor Frances Ruane
Dr. Jim Ruane

Outlined in appendix 1 are details of Authority and standing committee meetings attended. Members are paid a fee approved by the Minister for Finance. Travel and subsistence payments are in accordance with rates approved by the Minister for Finance. Details are outlined in appendix two.

Meetings of the HEA

Meetings of the Higher Education Authority are normally held every second month. There were 7 meetings of the Authority in 2009. In addition the Authority undertakes work through three standing committees and task forces which it sets up from time to time. During 2009 meetings of the following task forces took place:

- National Strategy for Higher Education (3 meetings)
- Recurrent grant allocation model (1 meeting)
- Accountability and Funding (1 meeting)
- Research (2 meetings)
- Higher Education Access and Foundation Courses (1 meeting)

New Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies 2009

The Revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies published by the Department of Finance in 2009 sets out the governance framework for the application of best practice in the Governance of State Bodies, making reference to the recommendations of the Task Force on the Public Sector, which was established by the Taoiseach on foot of the 2008 OECD Review of the Irish Public Service.



The expectation is that each State body will comply fully with the Code. The chairperson of every relevant entity must, annually, confirm such compliance to the parent Department.

The HEA, following a review of its compliance with the provision of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies during 2007 and 2008, issued a governance manual for Members in early 2009. The Board undertook a self-evaluation review during 2009.

HEA Committees

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee's primary function is to assist the Authority to fulfil its oversight responsibilities. It does this by reviewing the financial information provided in the HEA audited accounts; employing established systems of internal financial controls and financial risk management; and the internal audit function.

During 2009 the Committee met on four occasions and considered the following issues:

- HEA 2008 Annual Accounts
- Report on Risk Management
- Appointment of internal audit service following tender by Education Shared Services Group
- System of internal financial controls
- Risk policy
- Good-faith reporting policy
- Travel policy
- Internal audit report on governance for IRCHSS and IRCSET

The HEA is a member of the Education Shared Services Group – a group of 9 state agencies operating under the aegis of the Minister for Education & Science. The group carried out a tender for the provision of internal audit services to the various agencies and from this process the Auditing Firm Mazars was selected. The HEA, on the recommendation of the Audit Committee, reappointed Mazars to provide an internal audit service to the Authority for the period to December 2012.

Members of the HEA Audit Committee:

- Dr. Jim Ruane (Chairman)
- Ms Doreen Delahunty
- Mr. Louis Dockery
- Dr. Pat Kelleher to July 2009
- Dr. Sarah Moore to October 2009
- Mr. Martin Cronin from October 2009

Finance Committee

The HEA Finance Committee met on four occasions in 2009. The main role of the Committee is to review and recommend to the Authority, the proposed recurrent grant allocations to the Universities, Institutes of Technology and other bodies funded by the Authority, along with funding allocations under a number of additional programmes.



Members of the HEA Finance Committee:

- Mr. Michael Kelly (Chairman)
- Professor Tom Boylan
- Mr. Martin Cronin
- Mr. Louis Dockery
- Ms Sheila Drum
- Dr. Pat Kelleher to July 2009
- Mr. Shane Kelly to 30th June 2009
- Mr. Peter Mannion from 1 July 2009

Action Plan for the Modernisation of Public Services

As part of the Towards 2016 Agreement, the HEA continued to engage with staff representatives from SIPTU and the Partnership Committee during 2009, on issues relating to the implementation of the action plan for modernisation and flexibility. During the year agreement was reached on a number of policies including:

- Recruitment and Promotion
- IT Security
- Fraud
- Good-faith Reporting

Revisions were also agreed to the HEA policy on Dignity at Work.

Functions and Legislation

The general functions of the HEA derive from the following legislation:

1971 Higher Education Authority Act, 1997 Universities Act 2006 Institute of Technology Act

These functions include:

- Development:** (a) Furthering the development of higher education
- Co-ordination:** (b) Assisting in the co-ordination of State investment in higher education and preparing proposals for such investment
- Promotion:** (c) Promoting an appreciation of the value of higher education and research
- Equity:** (d) Promoting the attainment of equality of opportunity in higher education
- Democracy:** (e) Promoting the democratisation of the structure of higher education.
- Excellence:** (f) Promoting the attainment and maintenance of excellence on learning, teaching and research in higher education (from 2006 Act)

Further functions from the 1971 Act include:

- advising the Minister on the need for the establishment of new institutions
- maintain a continuous review of the demand and need for higher education.



- conduct and publish studies on challenges affecting higher education and research
- assess amounts of State financial provision, both current and capital, which it recommends for higher education and research)
- allocate among Universities, Institutes of Technology and the designated institutions the grants voted by the Oireachtas.

Under the **1997 Universities Act**, and the subsequent **Institutes of Technology Act 2006** the Higher Education Authority's remit broadened and it now carries out an additional number of functions in respect of the higher education sector.

Areas covered include reviews of:

- Strategic development plans
- Quality Assurance Procedures
- Equality and access policies & implementation
- Frameworks for: Salary Rates; Borrowing; Payments by Corporations; Acquisition of Land.

Other relevant legislation

There are a number of Government Acts which have particular relevance to the HEA in the management of its business.

Freedom of Information Act

Since January 2001, the HEA is covered by the provisions of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 1997. The Act asserts the right of members of the public to obtain access to official information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest and the right to privacy of individuals.

This Act established three new statutory rights:

- A legal right for each person to access information held by public bodies;
- A legal right for each person to have official information relating to him/herself amended where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
- A legal right to obtain reasons for decisions affecting oneself.

To date, the HEA has received sixty-eight requests (October 2001 – December 2009)

The FOI Act allows public access to records held by the HEA, which are not routinely available through other sources. Access to information under the Act is subject to certain exemptions and involves specific procedures and time limits.

Copies of the HEA Manuals – Section 15 (Structure and Functions of the Authority) and Section 16 (outlines the rules, regulations and precedents used by the HEA in carrying out its functions) - as required under the ACT, are available on the HEA website: <http://www.heai.ie/en/foi>

Re-Use of Public Sector Information

The re-use of Public Sector information regulations 2005 sets out a harmonised framework within which public sector data from across the EU can be accessed. The Directive is intended to stimulate economic activity, innovation and competition and to assist the evolution of an information and knowledge-based, economy and society.

The Higher Education Authority complies with the regulations on the re-use of Public Sector information regulations 2005 and actively encourages the re-use of the information that we produce. The regulations are available at www.psi.gov.ie



Official Languages Act, 2003

The HEA is designated under the Official Languages Act, 2003. The primary objective of the act is to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public services through Irish. The Official Languages Act seeks to give legislative effect, insofar as the delivery of public services is concerned, to Article 8 of the Constitution as follows:

- The Irish language as the national language is the first official language
- The English language is recognised as a second official language
- Provision may, however, be made by law for the exclusive use of either of the said languages for any one or more official purposes, either throughout the State or any part thereof.”

In accordance with Part 3, (sections 9 – 13) of the Act, the HEA prepared a scheme specifying which services it proposes to provide through the following channels:

- Exclusively through the medium of the Irish language
- Exclusively through the medium of the English language, and
- Through the medium of both the Irish and English languages.

The Authority met with a representative of An Coimisinéir Teanga during 2009 to discuss ongoing progress in implementing the HEA scheme.

Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and Standards in Public Office Act, 2001

In accordance with the provisions of the above Acts, Members of the Authority are obliged to provide statements of interest each year to the Chief Executive and copies of their statements are sent to Standards

in Public Office Commission. Senior members of the Executive also provide statements of interest to the Chief Executive.

Employment Equality Acts, 1998 and 2004

The HEA is committed to a policy of equal opportunities. The HEA has agreed with its Partnership Committee a number of policies including an equal opportunities policy and dignity at work policy. The Authority also has in place a number of schemes to enhance work-life balance opportunities including a flexi time scheme and a formal policy on part-time working agreed in 2008.

Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1989

The HEA has prepared a safety statement in accordance with the Act. This was reviewed in 2007.

In 2007 the HEA introduced an Employee Assistant Programme for its staff and pensioners.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997

The HEA complies with the provision of the above Act and has put in place procedures to ensure all invoices are paid promptly.

Quality Customer Service Plan

Following consultation with its stakeholders the Authority adopted a Quality Customer Service Plan in 2005. A review of this plan was carried out in 2009.

Environment Friendly Initiatives

The HEA operates a recycling scheme. The Authority took further measures to cut back on the use of paper. In 2009, the IT unit reviewed ways of improving the energy efficiency of its PCs.

Appendix 1

HEA Membership and Meetings attended during 2009

	Meetings of Authority attended – 7 meetings	Meetings of Finance Committee attended – 4 meetings	Meetings of Audit Committee attended – 4 meetings	Task Force Meetings attended – 8 meetings
Professor Tom Boylan	4 out of 7	4 out of 4		6
Ms Cepta Brougham	5 out of 7			3
Dr. Mary Canning	7 out of 7			6
Dr. Tommy Cooke	5 out of 7			4
Ms Grace Corcoran	7 out of 7			7
Mr. Michael Cotter	6 out of 7			
Mr. Martin Cronin	5 out of 7	4 out of 4	1 out of 1	4
Professor Mary Daly, Vice Chairperson	7 out of 7			7
Mr. Noel Davern (from 5/5/09)	4 out of 5			
Ms Doreen Delahunty	7 out of 7		4 out of 4	1
Mr. Louis Dockery	5 out of 7	2 out of 4	4 out of 4	
Ms Sheila Drum	6 out of 7	3 out of 4		1
Dr. Pat Kelleher (to 2/7/09)	3 out of 3	1 out of 2	2 out of 2	3
Mr. Michael Kelly, Chairman	7 out of 7	4 out of 4		6
Mr. Shane Kelly (to 30/6/09)	2 out of 3	1 out of 2		3
Ms Kathleen Lough	7 out of 7			6
Mr. Ray McCarthy (from 13/10/09)	2 out of 2			1
Mr. Peter Mannion (from 1/7/09)	4 out of 4	1 out of 2		1
Professor Sarah Moore	5 out of 7		0 out of 3	4
Professor Frances Ruane	7 out of 7			2
Dr. Jim Ruane	6 out of 7		4 out of 4	1

Appendix 2

Payments made to Members during 2009

	Members Fee ¹	Travel & Subsistence
Professor Tom Boylan	€8250	
Ms Cepta Brougham	€8250	€651.00
Dr. Mary Canning	€8250	€321.70
Dr. Tommy Cooke	€8250	
Ms Grace Corcoran	€8250	€1871.59
Mr. Michael Cotter	€8250	€262.73
Mr. Martin Cronin	€8250	
Professor Mary Daly, Vice Chairperson	€8250	
Mr. Noel Davern (from 5/5/09)	€5312.90	
Ms Doreen Delahunty	€8250	
Mr. Louis Dockery	€8250	
Ms Sheila Drum	€8250	
Dr. Pat Kelleher (to 2/7/09)	€4200	€2062.66
Mr. Michael Kelly, Chairman		€697.90
Mr. Shane Kelly (to 30/6/09)	€4200	
Ms Kathleen Lough	€8250	
Mr. Ray McCarthy (from 13/10/09)	€1763.61	
Mr. Peter Mannion (from 1/7/09)	€4050	
Professor Sarah Moore	€8250	€814.85
Professor Frances Ruane	n/a ²	
Dr. Jim Ruane	€8250	
Mr. Pat Kirby (for period April '04-Jan'07)	n/a	€238.30

1 Members' fee is subject to PAYE and PRSI deductions

2 Payment of €8,250 made to ESRI



Appendix 3

Designated Institutions under the HEA

Universities

University College Cork (UCC)
University College Dublin (UCD)
National University of Ireland (NUIG)
National University of Ireland (NUIM)
The University of Dublin (TCD)
The University of Limerick (UL)
Dublin City University (DCU)

Institutes of Technology

Athlone Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
Institute of Technology, Carlow
Cork Institute of Technology
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Limerick Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology, Sligo
Institute of Technology, Tallaght
Institute of Technology, Tralee
Waterford Institute of Technology
Dublin Institute of Technology

Other (Designated) Institutions

Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI)
National College of Art and Design (NCAD)
Royal Irish Academy (RIA)
Mater Dei Institute of Education
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
St. Angela's College of Education, Sligo.

HEA

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An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas