HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

institiúid teicneolaíochta dhún dealgan
DUNDALK
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3
Self-Evaluation Report 2015

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Glossary

ACE	Accelerating Campus Entrepreneurship
ATP	Access, Transfer and Progression
CAO	Central Applications Office
CASALA	Centre for Assistive Solutions for Ambient Living Awareness
CELT	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
CELT	Certificate in Learning and Teaching
CEEN	Campus Entrepreneurship Enterprise Network
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CREDIT	Centre for Renewable Energy Dundalk Institute of Technology
CRO	Companies Register Office
DCU	Dublin City University
DkIT	Dundalk Institute of Technology
EI	Enterprise Ireland
ETB	Education and Training Boards
EU	European Union
FE	Further Education
F/T	Full-time
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
IDA	Industrial Development Authority
IoT	Institute of Technology
IReL	Irish Research eLibrary
ISSE	Irish Survey of Student Engagement
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LOA	Licenses, Options and Assignments
MALT	Masters in Learning and Teaching
MEND	Midlands- East-North Dublin
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NE	New Entrants
NEFHEA	North-East Further and Higher Education Alliance
NFP	New Frontiers Programme
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
OECD	The Organisation for Economic and Co-operation and Development
RDC	Regional Development Centre
RDI	Research Development and Innovation
SEG	Socio-Economic Group
SFI	Science Foundation Ireland
SIDF	Strategic Innovation Development Fund
SLDC	Student Learning and Development Centre
SLMRU	Skills and Labour Market Research Unit
SME	Small Medium Enterprise
SMRC	Smooth Muscle Research Centre
SRS	Student Record System
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Maths
TEAM	Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
The Region	Counties Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Meath and North Dublin
TTO	Technology Transfer Office
TTSI	Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative
UA	Undergraduate Awards
WTE	Whole Time Equivalents

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1 Context

The Draft Mission-based Performance Compact Progress Report for 2015 for Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is presented against the background of one of the most challenging years for the Institute since the recession. Over the years DkIT has grown and delivered its education, research, training and enterprise provision within budget and in good value for money terms for the State (*Socio-Economic Impact Study of Dundalk Institute of Technology, 2013, showing that for every €1 DkIT received in state funding, it generated €7.57 in economic impact).* In 2012/13 expenditure per student in DkIT stood at €8,383. The IoT average for 2012/13 was €8,369. (*Higher Education System Performance Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/13*).

Arising from the public finance crisis in Ireland in 2007, DkIT (like all State funded Higher Education Institutions) has had substantial cuts in funding, resulting in a deficit since 2013. In particular, DkIT reported a financial deficit of €1.2 million for the financial year 2014/2015. As a result, during Quarter 4 2015 a detailed forensic examination of all income and expenditure was carried out in an effort to develop a sustainable 3 year financial plan for the Institute, which would see it return to a breakeven operating position by 31st August 2018. This plan was approved by the DkIT Governing Body and the HEA in January 2016.

As a consequence of the outcome of the Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 Process, a critical self-evaluation of the Institute was conducted in order to ensure that, going forward, institutional strategy is coherently focused and strategic objectives and activities are carefully prioritised. This evaluation resulted in a clearer articulation of the strategic priorities for DkIT. These were incorporated in a smaller number of high-level strategic objectives as set out in the revised Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016 submitted to and approved by the HEA in June 2016.

It is within this context that the Institute is reporting on its performance for 2015. In this regard, it should be noted that the Institute is reporting retrospectively. It's reflections on performance for each of the seven areas within the HEA Compact are aligned to the revised Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016 and unquestionably reflect this more recent analysis and insight.

This Progress Report is structured as follows:

Section 2 provides the summary overview of the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 set against each of the Institute's objectives across the seven areas of the HEA Compact.

Sections 3 – 9 provide a detailed reflective analysis of the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 (specified for either year-end or academic year) as outlined in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016. Each section provides a self-evaluation and critical assessment of overall performance for 2015, drawing out key points with a particular focus on any challenges encountered in meeting the stated targets. Where appropriate the Institute benchmarks its performance against national and international benchmarks. This is followed by self-evaluation of progress against targets presented in tabular format. The data source to evidence the outputs achieved for each KPI is included in Appendix 1. In addition, the Executive Team Member responsible for each of the targets is also included in Appendix 1.

Section 10 provides a signed copy from the President of the Progress Report 2015.

This is followed by a series of Appendices which provides additional information as follows:

Appendix 1	Data Source, Executive Responsibility and Benchmarks
Appendix 2	MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016
Appendix 3	DkIT's Part-time Accredited Programmes 2016/2017
Appendix 4	DkIT's Institutional Profiles 2016/2017 and Projected Institutional Profile for 2017/2018
Appendix 5	DkIT's Report on the Implementation of the Transitions Agenda
Appendix 6	DkIT's Report on Efforts to Improve Retention
Appendix 7	DkIT's Report on Systems and Workload Management.

2 Summary Overview of DkIT's 2015 Performance

DkIT is a major contributor to the economic, social, and cultural development of the North East region with over 5,295 registered students, 484 staff and an impressive 86 acre campus serving as a knowledge and enterprise hub for the area. DkIT's vision and mission are encapsulated within its 3 overarching strategic goals, underpinned by the need to return to financial stability and sustainability, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 DKIT's Vision, Mission and Goals

These goals set out the strategic intent of the Institute, reflecting the needs of DkIT's learners and the region it serves. They seek to differentiate the Institute but also to represent a performance stretch in ambition through the delivery of its integrated and coherent strategy, within the context of its financial constraints.

Producing *highly-skilled and creative graduates* who have the competences and entrepreneurial flair coupled with generic and discipline specific skills to enhance employability. The ambition is to ensure that there are participation and equal access opportunities for a diverse group of learners to include full-time, part-time, mature and international students.

Providing *Academic and research excellence* within a student-centred learning environment to support the development of highly-skilled and creative learners and graduates, underpinned by research-informed teaching, learning and engagement with industry.

Regional engagement with industry and the wider community to meet the economic, social and cultural needs of the region and for the benefit of the Institute's learners.

This report outlines how DkIT has delivered on its overall mission, articulated within its three strategic goals and embedded within its strategic objectives. The performance of DkIT for the reporting period 2015 is measured against agreed targets with the HEA in the revised Draft Mission-based Performance Compact dated March 2016.

DkIT has made substantial progress in respect of the broad range of targets under its seven priority headings. Overall 78% (40) of the targets have been met or exceeded, 20% (10) of the targets are partially met and just 2% (1) of the targets is not met. (See Table 1).

Among the many achievements in 2015, those of note include:

- Formal Signing of MOU with Dublin/Leinster II Cluster (also referred to as the Midlands, East, North Dublin (MEND)[1] Cluster;
- Cited by the OECD as a best practice exemplar for embedding entrepreneurship education;
- Awarded prestigious HR Excellence in Research Award by the European Commission;
- Awarded the Team 'Teaching Expert Award' from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning;
- Opening of Student Sports Complex to enhance student services;
- 10 Year Anniversary of the Iconic Wind Turbine on Campus, the first of its kind in the HEI sector in Ireland.
- The Institute achieved 3 spin-outs companies from the commercialisation of its research.

1 The Dublin/Leinster II Cluster is referred to as the MEND Cluster throughout this report

Table 1 provides a high-level view of the Institute's performance against targets for 2015.

TABLE 1 Summary Overview DkIT's Performance against Targets for 2015

HEA Compact Reference	Area	Number of Institute Objectives	Number of KPIs	Green	Yellow	Red
5.1	Research Clusters	4	5	5	0	0
5.2	Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning	3	9	6	2	1
5.3	Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience	4	11	8	3	0
5.4	High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation	2	9	7	2	0
5.5	Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange	3	9	7	2	0
5.6	Enhanced Internationalisation	2	7	7	0	0
5.7	Institutional Consolidation	1	1	0	1	0
TOTALS		**19**	**51**	**40**	**10**	**1**

With respect to benchmarking, within the national context, comparisons are made with Irish Institutes of Technology and Universities using data published by the HEA and others. In the international context, it is difficult to identify appropriate overall benchmarks which reflect an Institution of comparable size and composition operating within similar resource and financial constraints. However, where possible and appropriate, broad international benchmarks are used. For example, with reference to the Institute's key differentiator as an entrepreneurial Institute, the Institute has benchmarked itself against other international HEIs using the EU Commission's HEInnovate Tool. In this instance, DkIT is scored against seven areas and these are benchmarked against the average scores of all the other international HEI self-assessments. In other cases, particular benchmarks have been identified for specific targets at national and international level and are detailed in Appendix 1.

DkIT: Strong Performing Areas in 2015

DkIT: Challenges in 2015

3 Regional Clusters: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

During 2015, the Institute remained committed to a number of key strategic and cluster alliances in support of its overall vision and mission. These included the North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) and the MEND Cluster as well as a number of key cross-border partnerships. As the only Third level Higher Education provider in the region, such engagement has enhanced progression opportunities for students, helped to build supervision and research capability within the academic staff and leveraged greater research-industry engagement and enterprise development. This has contributed to achieving the Institute's priority objectives as set out in its three overarching goals through the integration of its teaching and learning, research and engagement strategies.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) and Dublin City University (DCU) Strategic Alliance

In July 2012, DkIT and DCU signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Strategic Alliance. This provided a framework for deep engagement and collaboration between the two Institutions in the following areas:

- Teaching and Learning, including defined access, progression and articulation between the institutions and the development of a Graduate School focusing on postgraduate research provision;
- The further development of existing research collaborations, including the establishment of joint research centres and joint submission of cross-border, national and international research funding proposals;
- Further development of existing activities in regional innovation and engagement with enterprise.

During 2015, the two Institutions continued to deepen and develop their strategic alliance across the areas outlined above.

Under teaching and learning, much of the work on academic planning and access and progression routes was conducted under the auspices of the MEND Cluster, and is discussed later in this section. Progress towards a joint taught Masters has been delayed as both parties wish to see the successful completion of the Graduate School before moving to the taught Level 8 domain.

A key achievement for 2015, has been the further development of this DCU-DkIT Graduate School, which was launched in October 2014. Phase 1 of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School has been successfully completed resulting in:

- Increased brand and external awareness of Level 9 and 10 research degree offerings at DkIT through the Graduate School;
- The recruitment of 29 additional Level 9 and 10 postgraduate researchers across three of the Schools and within the Institute's prioritised research areas as shown in Table 2;
- DkIT taking a leading role in the IoT sector for the establishment of structured PhD provision, in accordance with national policy, within the Institute's prioritised research areas and in partnership with DCU;
- The alignment of policies and governance structures with DCU with regard to postgraduate research degrees.

TABLE 2 Postgraduate Numbers Registered with DCU across Discipline and Research Areas.

Discipline	Postgraduate Numbers[2]	Research Area	Postgraduate Numbers
Informatics and Creative Arts	16	ICT, Health & Ageing	13
Health and Science	10	Energy Environment	3
Business and Humanities	3	Creative Arts	10
		Business Humanities	3
TOTAL	**29**		**29**

Notwithstanding its success to date, the Institute is not fully capitalising on this key strategic asset. More work needs to be done in promoting these opportunities to students within the wider region. To date, this has been somewhat constrained by the Institute's budgetary situation, but with the recent recruitment of a Marketing and Communications Manager and greater use of digital marketing strategies, this will be a key focus in 2016. DkIT will work in partnership with DCU in this respect.

Phase 2 has been relatively slow to get underway. In this regard, this phase is not without its challenges. In particular, issues of dual registration and the on-going operational costs to run the Graduate School remain to be addressed. The Institute is currently in discussions with DCU to explore how the Graduate School might be funded. An appropriate funding model will need to be devised which will facilitate the operation of the Graduate School on a sustainable basis. The priority for DkIT, as the only HEI provider in the region, is to afford students in the region, the opportunity to progress to Level 9 and 10 in those areas, where the Institute has research strengths. In doing so, it is essential that the students registered in DkIT and through the Graduate School have parity of access to library resources, facilities etc. with their DCU counterparts. A current difficulty is that IoT students cannot access IReL.

During 2015, the link with industry was also strengthened through the work of the Regional Development Centre (RDC) at DkIT in its partnership with INVENT at DCU, which resulted in the successful delivery of a number of projects in the area of enterprise and innovation. These included the Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers Programme, the VITAL Project, in partnership with Queen's University, Belfast and the Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative (see Section 7 for outputs). In addition, DkIT and DCU continued to be partners in the CEEN Network (Campus Entrepreneurship Enterprise Network) aimed at embedding entrepreneurship across disciplines. These joint projects reflected the two Institutions' on-going commitment to regional development within the North East and along the M1 Economic Corridor.

2 These numbers refer to DCU registered graduates only. They do not include QQI registered postgraduates for DkIT.

Dublin/Leinster II Cluster (Midlands, East and North Dublin - MEND Cluster)

During this reporting period, the MEND Cluster, comprising Dublin City University, Maynooth University, Dundalk Institute of Technology and Athlone Institute of Technology, has continued to demonstrate its commitment to the on-going development of the cluster with considerable progress made in implementing the objectives agreed by the Cluster HEIs with the HEA. The MEND Cluster finalised its programme of work as detailed in the Strategic Innovation Development Fund (SIDF) proposal in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2015 which aimed:

- to establish and support a sustainable, shared academic planning process to ensure coherent, co-ordinated and rational educational provision and ease of transfer and progression;
- to collaborate on actions to ensure student success and regional economic development.

This multi-component project, designed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and improve access and transition comprised a number of components, namely:

- ***Coherence of Provision:*** the analytic and preparatory work required to enable more co-ordinated provision, through mapping of existing provision, development of protocols for collaborating on and preparing for interoperable student records systems;
- ***Collaboration with Further Education:*** a network of FE providers, a regional 'one stop shop' portal, a comprehensive mapping of progression paths, and foundation courses to assist transition;
- ***Enhanced Student Learning Supports:*** enhanced supports for student learning and retention through increased resourcing and leveraging of complementary expertise across the cluster.

The SIDF Final Report detailing the outputs of the programme activities was compiled and forwarded to the HEA in September 2015. The Cluster Partners subsequently sought additional funding to build on the strands that had informed the initial phase of activity – namely those concerning access, transfer, and progression; the building of a FE-HE network; the mapping portal for FE provision and progression within the region; the agreement on SRS protocols to facilitate collaborative programme development and potential for enhanced transfer within the region and the demographic study and mapping of existing provision.

Following the very positive assessment by the Higher Education Authority which reported that "*the cluster has both achieved the minimum outcomes and has moved beyond that to deliver more ambitious outcomes*", the MEND Cluster was considered a best practice exemplar for the sector. This was corroborated by the additional funding of €287,000 approved by the HEA in its letter to the Presidents on 5th November 2015. This funding was made available to support a specific project, to be developed by the MEND cluster, in respect of student pathways and academic planning across four specific elements:

1. Maintenance and development of the Higher Education and Further Education Network;
2. Maintenance of the FE-HE portal, and the investigation of the feasibility of establishing a national portal;
3. Development of the short- and medium- term academic planning process as an exemplar for the sector; and,
4. Mapping of small and medium sized enterprise across the region and developing systematic engagement with SMEs.

As part of its on-going activities, the MEND Cluster partners have since submitted its detailed project plan setting out the proposed approach to each of these four projects to the HEA in April 2016. The four strands of the project are viewed by the Cluster as interlinking. Thus, the overall governance of the project takes a holistic view, with each element of the project managed by a senior manager and each working group comprising members from the four institutions.

This project plan is the basis of the work plan for the Cluster for 2016. In this regard, some of the targets set out in the Mission-based Performance Compact for the Cluster for 2015 have been incorporated into the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016 (Appendix 2). For these reasons, the Cluster proposes that the Compact targets for 2016 are replaced with the outputs set out in the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016, as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3 Proposed MEND Cluster, Interim Targets End 2016.

Institution Objective	**Within the Dublin/Leinster 2 (MEND) Cluster, agree and implement processes to establish and support a sustainable and shared academic planning process to ensure coherent, co-ordinated and rational higher educational provision across the region.**
Interim Target, End 2016	This institution objective is reflected in the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016 in Strand 3: Academic Planning. The target output of this activity will be an academic plan for the cluster for full time undergraduate courses at Level 6, 7 and 8, showing: **a** Existing enrolment **b** Planned intake **c** Planned entry routes **d** Projected demand **e** Projected changes in disciplinary mix. As supplementary outputs, the cluster will produce: ■ An analysis of postgraduate enrolment across the cluster. ■ An analysis of available information on future skills needs in the cluster catchment area. ■ A mapping of transfer and progression options within the cluster

Table continued overleaf

Table continued from previous

Institution Objective	Within the Dublin/Leinster 2 (MEND) Cluster, develop a regional approach to access, transfer and progression (ATP)
Interim Target, End 2016	This institution objective is reflected in the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016 in Strand 1: Higher Education and Further Education and Training Network and Strand 2: Pathways to Higher Education – PHASE II activity. Target outputs resulting from these activities will be: **a** A working paper on access, transfer and progression (ATP) which is intended to be the first in a series produced by the Network, its dissemination within the Network and beyond the Network by means of its presentation at a number of conferences; **b** A Network regional conference which will be held in November 2016; **c** Collation and dissemination within the Network of regional data relating to formal and informal links between relevant bodies; **d** CPD delivery across the four HE institutions targeted in specific areas, including but not necessarily restricted to STEM. In addition, following the development of a pilot portal designed to improve knowledge on access routes from further education (FE) to higher education (HE) in the MEND cluster area, the second phase of development will focus on (a) updating the existing MEND portal with the latest data and (b) scoping out the development of this portal on a national scale resulting in the output of a working prototype of a national portal hosted on the AIRO server.
Institution Objective	**Within the Dublin/Leinster 2 Cluster, map SME Engagement**
Interim Target, End 2016	This institution objective is an additional objective and is reflected in the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016 in Strand 4: MEND cluster: the mapping of small and medium enterprise across the region and developing systematic engagement with SMEs. Target outputs resulting from these activities will be: **a** The development of a sub network of Regional Skills Fora project managers within the four regions covered by the cluster **b** The mapping of SMEs across the MEND region **c** The build of a portal providing access to the SME network **d** The establishment of an SME/agency/HE & FE forum to identify and develop the optimal mode of systematic engagement between enterprise and the academic Institutions within the MEND region.

The progress on targets for 2015 is therefore reported within the context of the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016. The majority of the targets have been met or partially met, as shown in Table 5 below. Any deviation from the targets is mainly due to the re-focussing of activity following the approval of additional funding and as incorporated into the MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016. The four partners remain highly committed to building upon the recognised achievements to date. This commitment was further strengthened with the formal signing of an MOU between the HEI partners in December 2015.

North East Further and Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA)

The access, transfer and progression agenda is an acknowledged priority area both in National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 and in the Implementation of the Transitions' Agenda. It is recognised that HEIs have a primary responsibility to facilitate progression and thus to enable learners to reach their full potential. During 2015, DkIT continued its commitment to the advancement of these principles through its work with the NEFHEA Alliance involving Cavan Institute, Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE), Dunboyne College of Further Education, Monaghan Institute of Further Education & Training (MIFET) and O'Fiaich Institute of Further Education, Dundalk. This is demonstrated through the on-going dialogue between the DkIT academic Schools and NEFHEA partners aiming to improve participation and access rates and to identify and enhance progression opportunities for the learners in the region.

Progress in 2015 includes the work of the DkIT School of Engineering in tandem with Cavan Institute resulting in opportunities for holders of a QQI Certificate in Architectural Technology & Design to gain direct entry to year 2 of DkIT's BSc in Construction Technology. The School of Engineering has also negotiated a direct-entry relationship with Colaiste Dhulaigh College of Further Education in Coolock. Graduates of their QQI Level 6 award in Architectural Technology and Design may gain direct entry to DkIT's BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying. The development of direct entry relationships with Colleges of Further Education in respect of engineering programmes has been challenging, as few such colleges in DkIT's catchment area offer cognate engineering and technology programmes. However there are now 15 advanced entry FE students registered on the BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying, 5 of whom are due to graduate in 2016.

The DkIT School of Business & Humanities has always offered advanced entry pathways to NEFHEA applicants on three Level 7 programmes and one Level 8 programme and discussions are ongoing regarding opportunities for advanced entry on other programmes.

The School of Health and Science has a number of advanced entry options with NEFHEA partners. Additionally a long standing relationship with Teagasc Ballyhaise Agricultural College in Cavan has led to the collaborative provision of undergraduate programmes in agriculture. In September 2015, the School of Health and Science signed MOUs with Cavan and Monaghan Institutes for the outreach delivery of the part-time BA Applied Early Childhood Studies programme. Plans to provide outreach delivery of this programme to Cork College of Commerce from September 2016 are at an advanced stage with an MOU being finalised at the time of writing. All of the students on these programmes in Early Childhood Studies are afforded advanced entry into Stage 2 if they already hold a Level 6 qualification in childcare.

Table 4 NEFHEA 2015 Intake into Year 2

Programme by Partner	Student Numbers
Cavan Institute	**4**
B.A. (Hons) in Music & Audio Production	2
B.A. in Media Arts & Technologies	2
DIFE	**4**
B.A. in Business & Management	4
Monaghan Institute	**1**
B.A. in Business & Management	1
O Fiaich	**13**
B.A. in Business & Management	9
B.A. in Media Arts & Technologies	1
B.Sc. in Computing	2
B.Sc. in Computing (Software Development)	1
Grand Total	**22**

The part-time BA Applied Early Childhood Studies programmes is delivered using blended learning technologies which provides a flexible mode of delivery for these students.

All programmes in the School of Informatics & Creative Arts offer advanced entry opportunities.

Overall DkIT has exceeded its target for advanced entry programmes for students with Level 6 Certificates. DkIT will revise its 2016 target upwards to reflect this. Despite on-going interaction between the Institute and NEFHEA partners, the numbers transitioning from FE to DkIT remain lower than expected. The Institute needs to work with NEFHEA partners to establish the reasons for this low uptake despite the establishment of enhanced progression opportunities. The NEFHEA model has been used as a best practice exemplar for the larger FE-HE network which was established in 2015 by the MEND Cluster aimed at encouraging further collaboration and progression between the two sectors.

External and Internal Factors

External factors that may impact on 2016 target delivery include: (a) financing of the Graduate School and (b) lack of detailed analysis of progression challenges from FE partners to DkIT.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of Regional Clusters met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 5. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 6.

Table 5 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Regional Clusters

Key Strategic Goals	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015
Highly-skilled and Creative Graduates	■ Attracted students to each of the four Schools at DkIT from diverse groups through the NEFHEA network; ■ Provided 28 students access to Level 9 and 10 programmes through the DCU-DkIT Graduate School; ■ Enhanced training opportunities through structured PhD provision for DkIT Level 9 and 10 researchers.
Academic and Research Excellence	■ Shared academic experience and expertise, informing teaching and learning and thus positively impacting on the student learning experience through the work of the NEFHEA and the MEND Cluster; ■ Opportunities for joint supervision of postgraduates provided through the DkIT-DCU Graduate School thus opening up opportunities for progression for students in the region; ■ Impacted upon the teaching and learning agenda through the ability of other early career academic researchers to become involved in postgraduate supervision thereby impacting upon their undergraduate teaching and learning delivery.
Regional Engagement	■ Jointly with DCU met the needs of industry in the region through the delivery of a range of enterprise and innovation projects, as listed above.
Underpinning Financial Goal	■ Contributed to increased income through increased enrolment at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Regional Clusters: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 6 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 6 Regional Clusters: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	Develop a multi-faceted Alliance with DCU			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Specific, deep collaborative initiatives developed.	MOU signed; collaborations in research, entrepreneurship and innovation.	Implement Phase 1 of DCU-DkIT Graduate School.	**Target Achieved**  Phase 1 of the DCU-DkIT Graduate School has been implemented. 29 postgraduate research students registered in DkIT who will receive a DCU award.	Implement Phase 2 of DCU-DkIT Graduate School; Progress the development and delivery model for 1 joint taught Master's Programme. **Change of Target for 2016** Development and delivery of joint taught Master's Programme deferred.

Institution Objective 2	Within the Dublin/Leinster 2 Cluster, agree and implement processes to establish and support a sustainable and shared academic planning process to ensure coherent, co-ordinated and rational higher educational provision across the region. The shared academic planning process will involve: **a** preparation of projections of demand for higher education in the region and consideration of options for a strategic approach to provision by the cluster institutions; **b** preparation of a scoping study that will map existing course provision, student numbers, catchment areas, and arrangements for access, transfer and progression. It will seek to identify areas of demand, potential for collaboration, and potential for more coherent and rational provision; and **c** a review of the student records and administrative systems and agreement of protocols for the development, approval, management and delivery of joint programmes, and also shared registration, alignment of marks and standards, and quality assurance procedures.
Performance Indicator	The cluster institutions will agree and implement a regional cluster plan for higher education provision. More specifically, they will monitor: **a** the number of CAO entry routes by institution; and **b** the number of, and enrolment on, joint academic programmes.
Baseline	There is an absence of systematically compiled data and information at the regional cluster level.
Interim Target, end 2014	Agree methodology for projections of regional demand; Complete scoping study data collation and analysis; Complete draft report on review of systems, protocols and procedures for joint academic programmes.

Institution Objective 2 *(continued)*

Interim target, end 2015	Outputs from scoping study and high level demand projections reviewed by Cluster Board, and management and governance structures in each institution; A draft plan for regional academic programme provision will be completed and agreed among participating institutions and discussed with the HEA. The draft plan will include high level targets for undergraduate and postgraduate provision, and an agreed approach to CAO entry routes in line with the national process; Develop and collectively approve proposals in relation to systems, protocols and procedures for shared and joint academic programmes, and also agree performance indicators for collaborative provision; **The MEND Cluster and the HEA agreed a work plan in April 2016 that will address all of the issues noted above. A report on the Academic Planning Process will be completed by end 2016.**
Progress against 2014 and 2015 targets, commentary	**Very considerable progress has been made in implementing the objectives agreed by the Cluster HEIs with the HEA. All targets have been achieved.** The Cluster represents one-sixth of total enrolments in the entire HEA funded higher education system. The constituent institutions cater for distinctive geographical hinterlands by providing an extensive range of programmes across NFQ Levels 6 to 10. There are strong commonalities and complementarities in provision of programmes between each of the Universities and each of the Institutes, and particularly strong complementarities between the Universities and the Institutes. The Cluster activities are led by the Registrars, with oversight provided by the Cluster Board which includes the Presidents and Registrars of each institution along with the Maynooth University Vice-President for Strategy and Quality. An important factor in the success of the cluster has been its capacity to harness expertise across the four Institutions to make successful bids for funding targeted towards collaborative projects. This regional cluster was the only collaboration awarded funding under the SIDF programme. More recently, three of the ten projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning involved the cluster members. Two of the projects explore the potential of digital technologies to support flexible learners and provision of feedback in first year. **A comprehensive report has already been produced on the feedback project.** The third project examines examples of resources and types of formative assessments that support first year UG mathematics education. *Continued Overleaf*

Institution Objective 2	
Progress against 2014 and 2015 targets, commentary	*Continued From Previous Page* A high level Working Group from the four HEIs reviewed enrolment patterns, the range of programmes provided and levels of demand, and also progress towards the 2016/17 Compact targets, and longer term demand projections. The review highlighted some shifts in demand between full-time and part-time students, more emphasis on Level 8 degree programmes, and shifts in demand across the major ISCED categories, with different responses from the Universities and Institutes in relation to each of these shifts in demand patterns. There is very little evidence of programmes for which there is insufficient demand, but the projections for the next 15 years indicate that a significant expansion in demand is likely to occur. The DES 2014 full-time UG demand projections imply that the numbers of full-time UG new entrants to the four HEIs could increase by between 2,570 (assuming no increase in current share of all new entrants) and 3,580 (sustained modest rate of increase in line with recent years) over the period to 2028. The comparable figures for increases in total enrolments are 7,720 and 8,100. Work on reducing the number of designated entry routes is progressing at a national level with leadership provided by leaders of the cluster HEIs. A Working Group that included the Registrars and others has prepared a *Protocol for the initiation, approval, management and implementation of joint academic activities within the MEND cluster*. This provides a framework for resolving a wide range of issues that are likely to arise in the context of joint programme provision. This WG also examined the requirements for effective, reliable and efficient systems for Student Data Exchange for Joint Academic Programme Provision.
Final Target, end 2016	Commence implementation of plan for regional academic programme provision and commence implementation of rationalised entry routes; The number of, and enrolment on, joint academic programmes as agreed in shared academic programme finalised in 2015; Complete review of pilot phase of delivery of shared and joint programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. **Change of Target for 2016** As outlined above and detailed in Appendix 2 MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016.

Institution Objective	Within the Dublin/Leinster II Cluster, develop a regional approach to access, transfer and progression.
Performance Indicator	The cluster institutions will: **a** develop an integrated regional approach to access, transfer and progression; and **b** Prepare regional inventory of all options and mechanisms for ATP from FE to HE at programme and institutional level. The quantitative performance indicator will be the number of students transferring into or between institutions.
Baseline	There is a complete absence of systematically compiled data and information at the regional cluster level.
Interim Target, end 2014	Complete inventory of current options and mechanisms for ATP into or between cluster institutions and from FE to HE at programme and institutional level.
Interim Target, end 2015	Identification of new progression routes and agreement on pathways to be enabled in 2016; performance indicators agreed for transfer and progression. **This project is progressing as a strand of the work plan agreed between the MEND Cluster and the HEA in April 2016.**
Progress against 2014 and 2015 targets, commentary	A further project has reviewed the procedures for access, transfer and progression between the HEIs and also between the FE and HE institutions in the regional cluster. A Higher Education and Further Education Network has been established and is supported by an MOU signed by the Presidents, and CEOs of the relevant ETBs. A prototype portal has been developed to assist students to navigate through the extensive range of FE and HE programmes that are available, identify the locations at which courses / programmes are provided, and provide information on pathways between FE and HE provision. The prototype is a model that could be rolled out across the entire HE and FE sectors. The prototype portal can be accessed at **http://pathways.maynoothuniversity.ie/** The success of the Cluster can be attributed to the leadership and commitment provided by the four leadership teams; the sustained efforts to build trust and relationships at different levels between the institutions; and the availability of funding via the SIDF that provided resources to progress projects that are closely aligned to the institutional strategies.
Final Target, end 2016	Full implementation of new transfer and progression pathways under way. **Change of Target for 2016** As outlined above and detailed in Appendix 2 MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016.

Institution Objective 4	Develop the NEFHEA Model for wider participation			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of programmes offered which allow for Advanced Entry.	6 advanced entry programmes for students with FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificates.	7 advanced entry programmes for students with FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificates.	**Target Exceeded** 11 advanced entry programmes for students with Level 6 Advanced Certificates to include: **1** BSc in Construction Technology **2** BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying **3** Bachelor of Business in Business & Management (Level 7) **4** Bachelor of Business in Business & Technology (Level 7) **5** Bachelor of Arts in Event Management **6** Bachelor of Business (Hons) **7** Higher Certificate in Agriculture **8** BSc Agriculture **9** BSc (Hons) Health & Physical Activity **10** BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies **11** BA Applied Early Childhood Studies; in addition to those offered through the School of Informatics and Creative Arts.	8 advanced entry programmes for students with FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificates. **Change of Target 2016** Target to be revised upwards to 11.

4 Equal Access and Lifelong Learning: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

DkIT's Strategic Plan 2011-2016 outlines DkIT's continued commitment to widen participation, having due regard to the on-going policy priorities as outlined in the National Plan for Equity for Access to Higher Education 2105-2019. DkIT's students come mainly from Louth (41.8% of the total) followed by Meath (17.5%), Monaghan (12.7%) and Cavan (6.4%) and North Dublin (11.4%), accounting for 89.8% of the total. (*HEA SIDF MEND Cluster - Multi-component: Teaching & Learning, Access & Transition, Final Report 2015).* The catchment area is such that DkIT caters for a geographically distinctive segment of the IoT sector.

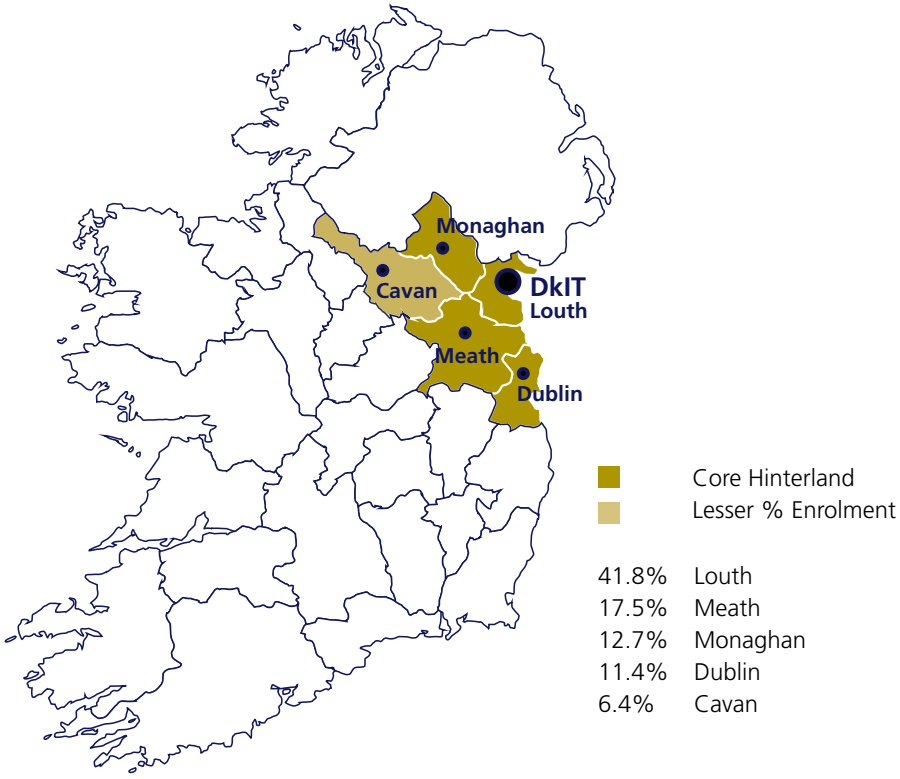


Figure 2 DKIT's Geographical Catchment Area

The demographic profile of the DkIT's regional catchment area presents opportunities for the Institute to further extend its participation and access agenda:

1. A number of counties in the region are within the lowest nationally in terms of population attainment of education to degree level compared to the State average of 16.4% to include Louth (14%), Meath (16.1%) with both Monaghan and Cavan within the 6th lowest across the country with rates of 12.4% and 12.2% respectively (*A socio-economic profile of the DkIT catchment, AIRO, 2012);*
2. Whilst the levels of unemployment in the region have decreased, they remain above national averages. The labour force participation rate for the Border region is the lowest in Ireland at 54% (Regional Skills Bulletin, 2015);
3. Deprivation indices indicate some of the most disadvantaged areas in Ireland are located in this region.

As discussed in Section 3 above, DkIT has continued to play a key role in enhancing participation and equal access within this region. The Institute has achieved the majority of its targets in this area for the reporting period 2015/2016.

The Institute's objective of increasing student numbers as cited in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact specifically refers to the number of full-time undergraduate learners. While the Institute's ambition is to increase student numbers across all cohort groups (part-time, mature, targeted groups, international), targets vary according to learner groupings and market demand. The SRS March 2016 return provides the data for reporting on progress for the increase in student numbers. For the reporting period 2015/2016, DkIT secured 6.4% share of the CAO acceptances within the IoT sector (6th in the IoT Sector). The number of full-time undergraduate new entrants (NE) was slightly below target for 2015/16 (1398 versus 1410). However full-time undergraduate enrolments exceeded the target (4483 versus 4416). This reflects the increased efforts by the Institute to support student progression and monitor student retention (see Section 5).

For this reporting period, the targets for % participation of entrants by mature students (17% against 16% target) and those with a registered disability (8.7% against a 5% target) were exceeded (HEA Equal Access Survey data 2015/2016, SRS March Return 2016). Benchmarked against 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 rates (HEA RGAM Grant Allocation 2016), DkIT participation rates for mature student entrants were higher than the IoT sectoral average in 2013/2014 but fell below the sectoral average in 2014/2015 (see Table 7). The Institute's initial analysis would suggest that the trend for participation rates at DkIT for mature student entrants is fluctuating. A contributing factor may be the increased employment opportunities within a recovering economic climate.

The target for % participation by targeted socio-economic groups for entrants was not met (23% against the base line of 25%)[3]. The Institute performed below the sectoral average rates for participation for targeted socio-economic groups in 2012/2013 (25% vs 27%) and in 2013/2014 and as per sectoral norms in 2014/2015 (HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/13, HEA RGAM Grant Allocation 2016).

Given the demographic profile of the region, the Institute needs to better understand its performance in this area and determine how it could improve on these rates. This will be reviewed in 2016.

3 Calculated from the HEA Equal Access Survey Data 2015/2016 using the formula: Respondents in D, F, G and J/Total Respondents (excluding blanks) * Full-time NE

Table 7 Participation Rates for 2013/204, 2014/2015, 2015/2016

	2013-2014 (HEA RGAM Grant Allocation 2016)			2014-2015 (HEA RGAM Grant Allocation 2016)		
HEI Sector	**Mature Student Entrants 2013/14**	**Entrants Target SEGs + Travellers 2013/14**	**Total 2013/14**	**Mature Student Entrants 2014/15**	**Entrants Target SEGs + Travellers 2014/15**	**Total 2014/15**
DkIT	237	368	605	197	406	603
Avg for IoTs	234	418	652	216	407	623

Source: HEA Equal Access Survey Data

Despite the improving economic climate, participation in the Springboard initiative exceeded the target of 151 to reach 189 participants in 2015/2016. This was primarily due to the nature and content of programmes designed under Springboard to appeal to the demographic needs in terms of meeting skills requirements within the region. A sustained marketing effort was undertaken to ensure that the maximum number of places awarded to DkIT were filled. The Institute was ranked 6th amongst its IoT peers for the number of Springboard / ICT Skills students enrolled in the sector in 2014/15.

The Springboard target for 2016/2017 was set before the Institute was awarded places for Springboard 2016/2017. Given the uptake and retention rates of approximately 78%, it would be prudent to reduce this target from 120 to 95 for 2016/17.

With respect to the apprentice numbers, DkIT fell slightly below target enrolling 246 apprentices against a target of 272 for 2015/2016 as shown in Table 8. However, this represents an increase on the previous year's enrolment of 189, showing an upward trend in apprenticeships, indicative of national norms in line with a recovering economy, particularly in the construction sector.

This is expected to continue in 2016/2017.

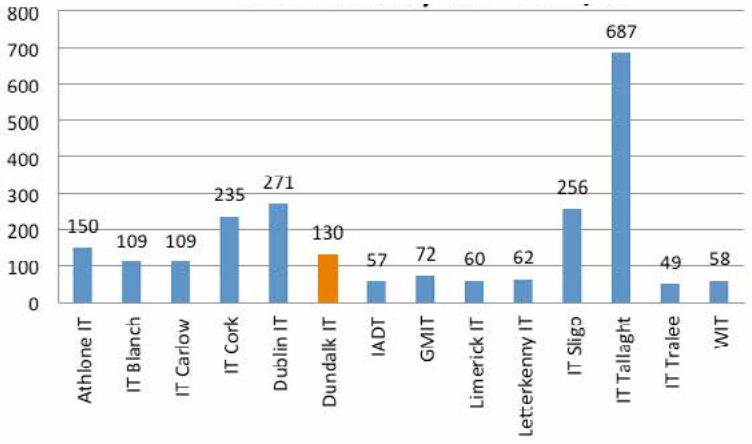


Figure 3 Springboard/ICT Skills Enrolments by IoT 2014/2015

Table 8 Apprenticeship numbers per block 2015/2016

Trade	Blocks Awarded	Numbers Awarded	Numbers Enrolled
Carpentry and Joinery	2	32	29
Electrical	8	128	116
Motor Mechanics	3	48	44
Plumbing	4	64	57
TOTALS	**17**	**272**	**246**

In respect of part-time provision, the number of part-time accredited learners (WTE) enrolled exceeded the target. This reflects the strategic focus of the Institute to increase its part-time accredited provision to learners in the region. The majority of the Institute's part-time learners come from Louth (69%), Monaghan (9%) and Meath (9%). A number of programmes have been developed in response to the needs of local stakeholders (e.g. health service providers, industry) many of which are being offered using blended learning delivery modes. This is reflective of employment growth and job creation opportunities as identified for the Border region (*Regional Labour Markets Bulletin, 2015*). The Institute is currently in the process of finalising its offering for 2016/2017 to include 30 newly accredited programmes. (See Appendix 3: List of new part-time accredited programmes). A key challenge is that part-time students do not receive the same level of supports as the full-time cohort in terms of access to the Institute facilities outside of normal hours, student learning supports etc. The Institute needs to consider this going forward in its strategy to increase part-time provision.

However, the Institute's performance in part-time provision still remains one of the lowest, when benchmarked against the rest of the sector (HEA RGAM Grant Allocation, 2016). In 2012/2013, 9% of DkIT's undergraduates were part-time learners compared to the IoT sectoral average of 21% (HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/2013). In 2015/2016, DkIT's percentage of part-time student numbers accounted for 12% of DkIT's student numbers for 2014/2015 (SRS March Returns 2016). Whilst this represents a positive move towards increasing participation from this learner group, the Institute is conscious of the need to grow its part-time portfolio to at least sectoral norms. The lack of provision of education and training to industry through the industry contacts in the RDC has been identified as a weakness in meeting this key strategic goal. This was addressed in 2015 through the internal reorganisation of these functions in an effort to promote greater interaction and has resulted in increased part-time accredited provision in addition to increased bespoke CPD provision for industry. DkIT has a strong track record in industry engagement in the region and aims to leverage these linkages to increase income streams through CPD training for industry going forward.

The recent establishment, by the Department of Education and Skills, of the Regional Skills Fora as part of the educational and training sectors' response to the Regional Action Plan for Jobs Initiative, further affords the Institute the opportunity to identify training and upskilling requirements for industry. The North East Regional Skills Forum Manager is hosted by the Institute and will work closely with the Regional Skills Forum to identify requirements for additional accredited programme provision. DkIT is committed to responding in a timely manner to these requirements.

External and Internal Factors

External factors that may impact on 2016 target delivery include the recent publication of the Cush Report on Fixed-Term and Part-Time employment in lecturing in Third Level Education in Ireland.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 9. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 10.

Table 9 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning

Key Strategic Goal	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015:
Highly-skilled and Creative Graduates	Provided opportunities to attract students to DkIT from diverse groups including part-time and mature learners, while acknowledging that more can be achieved in this area; Responded to the educational needs of students and the region as evidenced by the increase in Part-Time, Springboard and Apprentices numbers.
Academic and Research Excellence	Provided access and progression routes to allow increased student participation from diverse groups as discussed in Section 3.
Regional Engagement	Established stronger links between the work of the Regional Development Centre and the Lifelong Learning Centre in order to leverage off the Institute's strong industry engagement for the provision of CPD and part-time accredited programmes.
Underpinning Financial Goal	Contributed to increased income through increased student numbers to include new entrants, access groups and part-time students as well as apprentices.

Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 10 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 10 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning

Institution Objective 1	Increase Student Numbers			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
% of IoT Sector CAO Acceptances.	6%	6%	**Target Achieved** 6.4%	6%
FT UG New Entrants.	1262	1410	**Target Almost Achieved** 1398	1420
FT Undergraduate Enrolments.	4127	4416	**Target Achieved** 4483	4501

Institution Objective 2	Widen participation in Higher Education in the region for % of entrants from underrepresented groups.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, 2015/2016**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
% participation by Mature Students.	20%	16%	**Target Achieved** 17%	16%
% participation by Targeted Socio-economic designated groups.	25%	= baseline	**Target Not Met** 23%	= baseline
% participation by Students with a registered disability.	4.7%	5%	**Target Achieved** 8.7%	5%

Institution Objective 3	Increase our number of flexible learners; recognising demand conditions for apprenticeship programmes and labour market activation programmes.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, 2015/2016**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of part-time accredited learners (WTE).	--	94	**Target Achieved** 174	165
Participation in National Labour Market Activation.	136	151	**Target Achieved** 189	120 **Change of Target 2016** Target to be revised downwards to 95.
Number of apprentices.	223	273	**Target Almost Achieved** 246	321

5

Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of the Student Experience: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

Profile of Demand and Discipline Mix

DkIT's range of programmes reflects its strategic focus on delivering highly skilled creative graduates who meet the needs of the employers as articulated in the Institute's Vision and Mission. This is achieved through interrelated activities in the Institute's academic, research, enterprise and knowledge transfer activities aimed at providing graduates with the necessary skills, attributes and qualities for their working life. DkIT's academic programmes include awards ranging from Level 6 to Level 10 on NQF across a wide range of disciplines.

DkIT's current programme portfolio is strongly aligned to the skills needs in the region. The Institute will continue to reinforce its distinctive discipline mix (see Table 11). While the student numbers for 2016/2017 are expected to increase slightly, there is variation across disciplines (Programmes and Budget 2016 Returns). The demand for Business and Humanities Programmes is expected to decrease from 2015/2016 to 2016/2017. The School has conducted a rationalisation of under-performing programmes on the CAO. The Honours degrees in Marketing and Public Relations have been removed and a new Level 7 degree in Digital Marketing is being offered through the CAO from June 2016. This is a late addition to the CAO list and is likely to result in reduced numbers initially. This is reflected in the lower projected intake for September 2016. DkIT is currently finalising a strategic review of engineering provision and expects engineering programmes to show a marginal increase in enrolment in 2016/2017. The unprecedented collapse in the construction sector in the Irish economy since 2009 led to a collapse in recruitment to

third-level education programmes in the built environment and in apprenticeships relating to the construction trades. As reported in the SLMRU figures (2016) this sector is currently showing signs of an upturn. Leaving Certificate students are once again beginning to turn their attention to careers in the built environment. A new Level 6 programme, which emerged from the Department of Engineering Trades, was launched in September 2015 and has potential to be an important new addition to the School's portfolio as a feeder programme to a range of Level 7 and 8 programmes. In Nursing the static projections for CAO entrants relate to the cap on numbers by the HSE. The main increases will be in Health and Science with Informatics and Creative Arts showing modest growth only. DkIT is the only provider of Agriculture programmes in its Regional Cluster and the projections for this programme anticipate increases. This is different to the national trend and most likely linked to the introduction of a Level 8 ab-initio offering in this area in September 2015. It is acknowledged that the Institute is unable to respond adequately to the demand for Level 8 programmes in Health, Science and Agriculture and ICT programmes due to lack of capital investment in laboratories and related infrastructure.

Overall the Institute's projections are reflective of the employment projections for the border region to 2020 showing expansions in all sectors particularly construction, hospitality, high-tech manufacturing and health. Only the agricultural sector is expected to decline. However, in contrast to this prediction, demand for agricultural programmes at DkIT remains high. (SLMRU 2016).

Table 11 Student Numbers by Discipline for 2014/2015, 2015/2016 and 2016/2017

Discipline *All Levels (including full-time undergraduates and postgraduates, excluding part-time)*	**2014/2015**		**2015/2016**		**2016/2017**	
	Number	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**	**Number**	**Percentage**
Business & Humanities	1822	40.3%	1836	40.2%	1762	38.4%
Informatics and Creative Arts	1035	22.9%	1087	23.8%	1118	24.3%
Engineering	482	10.7%	534	11.7%	543	11.8%
Health and Science	1143	25.3%	1110	24.3%	1171	25.5%
Other	38	0.8%				
Total	**4520**	**100%**	**4567**	**100%**	**4594**	**100%**

Source: Programmes and Budgets Return 2016

Table 12 Student Numbers by Level for 2014/2015, 2015/2016 and 2016/2017

	2014/2015 Actual Programme and Budgets	2015/2016 SRS March 2016 Return and cited in Programme and Budgets 2016	2016/17 Projected as outlined in Programme and Budgets 2016
Diploma & Cert (Level 6)	267	207	211
Ordinary Degree (Level 7)	2044	1962	1,824
Honours Degree (Level 8)	2129	2312	2,466
Postgraduate (All levels)	80	86	93
TOTALS	**4520**	**4567**	**4594**

Source: Programmes and Budgets Return for 2016

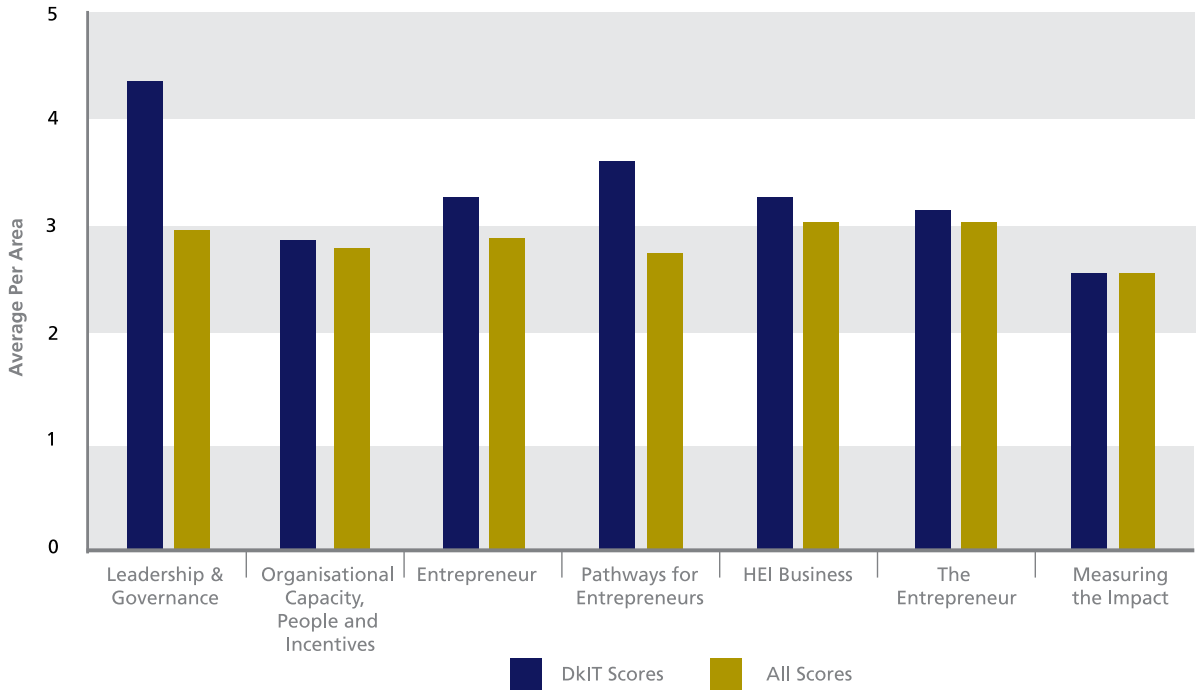
It is anticipated that there increased demand for Level 8 programmes as per national norms. There will be a decrease in demand for full-time programmes at Level 7 with static demand for Level 6 (See Table 12). However there are opportunities to provide additional provision at Level 6 and 7 particularly through the provision of special purpose awards to meet CPD demands and to increase part-time student intake.

In line with the transitions' agenda, a number of programmes within the Institute now offer a common first year. For example, in the School of Engineering, two such programmes are the BSc in Construction Technology and the BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying. In the School of Informatics and Creative Arts, the BSc in Computing has been designed to allow students to progress to specialist areas in year 2 following completion of a common first year. In the School of Business and Humanities, business programmes in particular have been designed to allow students to transfer from one programme to another within the first year. In the School of Health and Science a common first year delivery model is employed in most of the Science undergraduate programmes and plans are ongoing to examine common entry with differing options in some of the programmes. In addition, in 2015, the Institute allowed students to transfer internally to an alternative programme after the close of CAO offer rounds subject to availability and provided applicants have the necessary entry qualification/points.

Aligned with the DkIT's strategic goal to produce 'highly skilled and creative graduates' with the 'entrepreneurial flair' necessary for employability, the Institute has achieved its objective of embedding entrepreneurial learning outcomes across all its programmes. The Institute benchmarks itself internationally on its performance in the area of entrepreneurship education using the EC HEInnovate Self-Assessment tool, which assesses HEIs across seven areas (see Figure 4). In this regard, the Institute has out-performed peers in the areas of: Leadership and Governance (4.4 versus 3.0); Entrepreneurship Development in Teaching and Learning (3.3 versus 2.9) and Pathways for Entrepreneurs (3.6 versus 2.8). The Institute scores were similar to other international HEIs for Organisational Capacity, People and Incentives (2.9 versus 2.8); HEI-Business/External relationships for Knowledge Exchange (3.3 versus 3.1), the Entrepreneurial HEI as an internationalised institution (3.2 versus 3.1) and Measuring Impact (same at 2.6). The Institute's lowest scores were in the area of Organisational Capacity, People and Incentives and in Measuring Impact. In respect of the former, a number of the assessment areas related to the

financial supports for driving entrepreneurship. Given its financial situation, the Institute scored itself low on these questions. However the Institute's scores for other questions under this theme were high (4) for effecting cultural change through capacity building. This has been independently corroborated through the selection of DkIT as the subject of an OECD case study for its achievements in this area[4]. Improvements can be made in measuring the impact of the Institute's wider entrepreneurial agenda and in preparation for the Programmatic Review in 2018, the Institute is evaluating its performance in embedding its strategic themes across the curriculum.

Figure 4 DkIT's HEInnovate Scores Benchmarked Against International HEIs



4 Thorn, R (2016) HEInnovate Case Study. Entrepreneurial Behaviours and Organisation Culture – A Case Study. OECD, Paris. 12pp. https://heinnovate.eu/sites/default/files/entrepreneurial_behaviours_and_organisation_culture_-_a_case_study.pdf

Learning and Assessment Strategies

DkIT has continued its track record in adopting a learner-centred approach to its educational provision, aimed at enhancing the student learner experience and supporting learners through the adoption of innovative learning and teaching strategies. The following provides a reflective assessment of the use of such strategies within the four Schools during 2015/2016.

The 2013 cycle of Programmatic Reviews focussed heavily on learning and teaching strategies and how these strategies were to be embedded in all programmes. This has brought about a shift in teaching, learning and assessment practices. The Institute's core strategic themes (entrepreneurship, sustainability and local & international engagement) are integrated into the curriculum. More innovative and creative teaching strategies, accompanied by a wider more flexible repertoire of assessment methods are provided on a programme wide basis, so that they are congruent with learning outcomes. The number of barriers to progression has been also reduced by making greater use of continuous assessment techniques and reducing the number of terminal examinations on each programme.

Learner-centred assessment strategies are embedded in all programmes. Programme assessment employs a diverse and balanced range of student-centred assessment methods, both formative and summative. In first year programmes, a reduction in the number of modules was effected through programmatic reviews, in addition to an increase in the number of modules assessed solely through continuous assessment assignments.

This has served to enable ease of transition to higher education for first year students. Group projects help students to get to know their peers, make new friends and improve self-confidence whilst developing team working skills. The curriculum itself and the specific learning and assessment activities within the individual modules are designed to promote active, deep learning and understanding in line with a student–centred approach. Practical activities and projects are widely used throughout the curriculum to enable students to apply their knowledge to, and take more control of, their learning.

Developing and implementing teaching, learning and assessment strategies is a standard feature of the work of Programme Boards. Ongoing monitoring means that issues which may negatively affect retention can be identified and actioned at an early point in the academic cycle. Programme Boards report to the Academic Council on an annual basis.

There has been a focus on the first year experience for a number of years. A significant induction process, which is reviewed annually helps new students to move more easily into their programme and offers a comprehensive introduction to the Institute and its available support services. First year convenors and student ambassadors support first year students throughout the academic year and are both a visible point of contact and a significant source of advice and guidance.

In terms of Undergraduate Awards (UA), the School of Engineering has had considerable success in the past year. A DkIT Civil Engineering graduate was among the top 50 Highly Commended entrants in the world for 2015 and overall winner of his section of the competition. The UA is the world's only pan-discipline academic awards programme that identifies leading creative thinkers through their undergraduate coursework. In 2015 the programme attracted 5,117 submissions from students in 255 HEIs across 39 countries. In 2015 a graduate of DkIT's B.Eng in Mechanical Engineering and BSc (Hons) in Engineering Entrepreneurship was runner-up in the Engineers Ireland Innovative Student Engineer of the Year Awards sponsored by Siemens. The award was established to highlight excellence in engineering degrees across Ireland. Graduates of the BSc Veterinary Nursing Programme have won the IVNA Student Nurse of the Year award in 4 out of the last 5 years.

Research-informed T&L and Links with Industry

During 2015, DkIT remained committed to ensuring that learning and teaching remained research informed. All of the research centres were engaged in this process through teaching on undergraduate programmes, supervising postgraduate students and/or engaging with students through undergraduate research projects. The Institute is also engaged in development of industry relevant programmes, particularly at Level 9 and now in the part-time space. The Regulated Software Research Centre in the School of Informatics and Creative Arts has developed a Masters in Medical Devices Software, which has been informed by the on-going research and engagement with relevant industry partners. The School of Health and Science has developed a MSc in Agricultural Biotechnology in partnership with Monaghan Biosciences and Alltech, both key industry partners in the region. The MSc Ageing Health and Environment developed by the School of Health and Science in partnership with the Netwell CASALA Research Centre is currently being reviewed to include recent research developments in this area.

Progression Rates

Progression figures are monitored at programme and Institute level. In 2012/2013 progression rates for DkIT across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 72%, 76% and 87% respectively and were higher than the sectoral averages for Level 7 and 8 (74% for Level 6; 72% for Level 7 and 83% for Level 8) (A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education 2012/13 - 2013/14). For Levels 7 and 8 these figures were higher than the sectoral average with the exception of Level 6. In 2013/2014 progression rates for DkIT across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 63%, 77% and 86% for all students. It might be noted in this context that in 2015/2016 DkIT offered only 4 programmes at Level 6. For 2014/2015 progression rates at DkIT for all students across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 70%, 74% and 85% respectively. The first year progression rates for 2014/2015 were 64%, 68% and 84% respectively. The overall progression rate for the Institute in 2014/2015 was 79% with 1st year progression rate of 74%. Sectoral averages for 2014/2015 have not yet been published.

Retention was adopted as an enhancement theme by the Institute's Academic Council in September 2015. Retention is a complex issue impacted by a number of factors to include the field of learning, NFQ levels and individual students' characteristics e.g. gender, age, socio-economic background and prior educational attainment (HEA, 2016). Evidence shows that a sense of belonging is crucial (Thomas, 2012). Key to improving retention rates is to ensure that proactive mainstream academic activities foster engagement and a sense of belonging and that the Institute continues its learner-centred teaching and learning approaches. The work of the Centre for Learning and Teaching and the Student Learning Development Centre are key enablers in supporting the improvement in these rates.

Table 13 DkIT ISSE Survey results benchmarked against all IoT and all HEI Index Scores

Engagement Indices	All Students DkIT	All Students IoT	All Students ISSE
Academic Challenge	45.2	45.4	47.8
Active Learning	43.9	42.6	40.8
Student and Staff Interactions	27.0	24.3	22.8
Enriching Educational Experiences	27.4	26.2	28.1
Supportive Learning Environment	55.4	54.9	54.9
Work Integrated Learning	47.6	46.9	46.7
Outcome Indices			
Higher Order Thinking	57.9	59.0	62.0
General Learning Outcomes	62.6	61.0	60.8
General Development Outcomes	46.5	43.7	44.7
Career Readiness	43.8	45.0	42.8
Overall Satisfaction	66.5	65.6	67.1

Student Feedback and Supports and Capacity Building

Evidence, from ISSE, QA3 and Programme Board Reports for 2015, indicates that overall the student experience at DkIT is positive. DkIT students value the friendly campus and applied focus. They particularly value and learn from practical and interactive activities and want to see more of these. The Institute performed well on the overall ISSE survey against sectoral benchmarks and overall HEI indices as shown in Table 13. The Institute achieved higher performance scores in 8 out of the 11 indices compared to the rest of the IoT sector and 7 out of the 11 indices across the entire ISSE student survey.

DkIT offers a range of learning support services however ISSE data suggests that take-up of these services is lower than elsewhere. The Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) (which offers support in academic writing, IT and study skills) identified awareness as an issue and, in the first half of 2015, offered a range of tutorials across different sites on campus. While the target of SLDC visits was met, usage and impact are not necessarily the same. In the second half of 2015 the Institute began planning a review of the impact of the Centre, to be undertaken in 2016.

DkIT continued to prioritise continuing professional development for teaching staff and achieved its target of 49 graduates from the Master and Certificate programmes in Learning and Teaching. During 2015, for the first time, the Institute welcomed an additional 20 external participants to the Certificate programme, attracting colleagues from local Further Education providers, post-primary schools and the HSE. This development has been mutually enriching, facilitating dialogue and learning between educators in different educational sectors within the region. In 2015 the impact of these programmes was nationally recognised as three members of the MALT teaching team received the Team Teaching Expert Award from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. The MALT team was one of only seven 'Teaching Experts' selected for a special commendation, in their case for 'Facilitating Systemic Cultural Change'. A further significant development in 2015 was DkIT's participation in Learning and Teaching projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's Enhancement Fund. DkIT was/is a partner in the following projects:

- *Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies* (January 2015 to December 2016)
- *Student Success Toolbox for Flexible Learners: Supporting transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks* (January 2015 to June 2016)
- *Assessment for Learning Resources for First Year Undergraduate Mathematics* Modules (January 2015 to December 2016).

These projects have facilitated considerable innovation and development in key areas and have also allowed the Institute to build capacity. They have enabled DkIT to further develop collaboration within its Regional Cluster. DkIT was able to build on the skills and relationships developed to bid successfully, at the end of 2015, for the 2016 Enhancement Fund. The School of Health and Science is leading a multi-institutional project (Technology Enhanced Assessment Methods (TEAM) in Science and Health Practicals) and CELT is a partner in another (What works and Why).

CELT also offers a wide ranging programme of unaccredited learning and teaching CPD and, for the first-time in 2015 offered training to external examiners. Targets were exceeded in terms of the number of events run. Building on the positive results of the Institute's 2014 Technology-Enhanced Learning staff survey in which 93% of respondents indicated that they were making use of the Moodle VLE, the usage of Moodle continued to grow. The overall usage data indicates that, in Semester 1 2015-16, the number of visits was 321,000, an increase of 9.6% when compared to the same semester in 2014-15. In 2015, 12 part-time programmes at undergraduate, post-graduate and minor award levels, across three schools, were offered in blended mode. The flexibility offered by this mode is attractive to part-time students who, in attempting to balance work and study, report that while they appreciate online access to learning resources and activities, they also particularly value face-to-face classes which provide opportunities to interact with teachers and peers.

External and Internal Factors

Under the auspices of the Landsdowne Road Agreement, the review and reallocation of the 2 hours additional productivity from teaching to non-teaching for all IoT academic staff in 2017 will impact on learning and teaching.

Notwithstanding external endorsements, the students are being taught within a poor physical environment (labs and teaching facilities) that requires urgent upgrades.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of the Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 14. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 15.

Table 14 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience

Key Strategic Goal	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015:
Highly-skilled and creative graduates	The development of part-time, flexible programmes, and the TEL capacity necessary to do this, contributed to ensuring access and participation for a diverse group of learners; The provision of good quality student services and learning support played an important role in supporting diverse participation; The prioritisation of CPD for staff in the learning and teaching domain promoted high quality practice and increased the capacity of staff to meet the learning needs of a diverse cohort.
Academic and Research Excellence	Continuing professional development of teaching staff promoted and maintained a learner-centred environment.
Regional Engagement	The delivery of Certificate in Learning and Teaching to external organisations promoted dialogue between the educational sectors.
Underpinning Financial Goal	Sustained fee income through retention strategies and progression of students.

Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of the Student Experience: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 15 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 15 Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	Continue to enhance learning through the development and implementation of learner-centred strategies in all programmes (including learner-centred assessment strategies); Ensure that curriculum development embeds the core strategic themes and fosters graduate qualities identified in the DkIT Strategy.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Annual Programme Board Reports.	Embedded learner-centred and assessment strategies in all programmes in all Schools where Programmatic Review is complete. All Schools underwent programmatic review in 2013.	Oversight and monitoring of embedded learner-centred and assessment strategies in all programmes.	**Target Achieved** Programme Boards continue to monitor and report on the effectiveness of learning, teaching and assessment strategies.	Implement recommendations in relation to assessment strategies, where required.
Core themes and graduate qualities addressed in curricula documents.	The core strategic themes and graduate qualities are currently embedded in the programmes.	Make recommendations, if necessary.	**Target Achieved** There is now greater emphasis on learner-centred strategies across all programmes within the Schools, with much clearer assessment strategies being written into new programmes at the proposal/pre-validation stage.	Conduct HEInnovate Survey in relation to entrepreneurship.

Institution Objective 2	Promote Excellence in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of staff members completed MA in Learning and Teaching.	28 staff members completed MA in Learning and Teaching in 2011/12.	49 staff members completed MA in Learning and Teaching to date.	**Target Achieved** 49 staff members have graduated from the MA in Learning and Teaching and the Certificate in Learning and Teaching.	59 staff members completed MA in Learning and Teaching to date.
		Offer MA and Certificate in Learning and Teaching to colleagues in other educational institutions, eg NEFHEA partners.	**Target Achieved** The Certificate in Learning and Teaching attracted 20 external participants in January 2015.	
Number of Master classes and workshops offered.	2 Master classes and 10 Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching organised.	2 Master classes and 10 Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching organised.	**Target Achieved** 4 Master classes, 21 Professional Development events.	2 Master classes and 10 Professional Development events in Learning and Teaching organised.
Number of staff who have participated in TEL activities.	TEL Policy in place.	75 staff participating in TEL activities (2015/16).	**Target Almost Achieved** 73 staff participating in TEL activities.	75 staff participating in TEL activities (2016/17).
Number of programmes utilising blended learning delivery modes.		11 programmes offered in blended learning delivery modes (2015/16).	**Target Achieved** 12 Programmes offered in blended learning delivery modes.	12 programmes offered in blended learning delivery modes (2016/17); Report on the review of Approved Programme Schedules.

Institution Objective 3	Embed activity aimed at enhancing student retention			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Monitor progression rates annually and implement focussed activities to respond to findings.	Overall Progression Rate: 2013/2014 = 81%; Year 1 Progression Rate: 2013/2014 = 78%.	Monitor Progression Rate for 2015/2016.	**Target Partially Achieved** Monitoring ongoing with final 2015/2016 progression rate to be published following Autumn examinations in 2016.	Monitor Progression Rate for 2016/2017.
		Identify and implement activities to support student retention.	**Target Partially Achieved** Activities to support student retention have been identified and implemented but are ongoing.	Identify and implement activities to support student retention.

Institution Objective 4	Support the personal and academic development of learners through our support services.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Feedback from Student Services survey and annual report; % awareness level of students of at least 1 support service available to them.	Student Learning and Development Centre (SLDC) established; 92% awareness level of first year students of at least one support service available to them at the end of the 2012 academic year.	97% awareness level of students of a least one support service available to them.	**Target Achieved**  99% awareness.	Conduct and report on the impact of the Student Learning and Development Centre service.
Number of students using the Student Learning and Development Centre.	1159 students used the services of the Student Learning and Development Centre in 2012/13.	1140 students to use the Student Learning and Development Centre.	**Target Achieved**  1141 students used the Student Learning and Development Centre.	

What the Students Say . . .

Where technology was kicked into practice

More emphasis on practical and useful modules based directly on your area of study. More support in moving on to employment at the end of the programme.
More feedback from lecturers around CA and exam results

Work placement is very effective in applying theory to practice

I love the experience of college, the people that we interact with on a daily basis. The atmosphere in the college is like no other!

The course is project based

By providing classwork or work experience that can help us deal with situations in the real world and help us gain employment.

By providing classwork or work experience that can help us deal with situations in the real world and help us gain employment

The practical side is very exiting, allowing us to practice what we have been studying in the class room

Other modules 'slip' due to group work projects

The lecturers strive to help their students to work to the best of their ability

Group work - Single mark for all unfair

More usage of the Moodle system within the last year

DkIT welcomes you and different cultures

What the External Examiners Say . . .

Distribution of final honours grades compare well with work I have reviewed in Irish, UK and German Universities.

Level to or exceeding national and international standard.

The best individual projects were as good as I have seen at any university

The standard of exam papers and staff engagement has been excellent.

The modules are well taught by the lecturers who are committed and highly motivated.

The diversity in assessment types was impressive.

Very good evidence of innovative and creative assessment strategies.

A significant amount of thought needs to be done to find a way of assessing group work on individual basis

Concerns about English language competency among international students.

The programme caters for stronger students but should continue to provide support earlier on in year 1 for the weaker students in analytical subjects in the form of tutorials.

The reflection and implementation of reflection on the joint assessments with appropriately measured outcomes demonstrate good practice.

The proportion of 1st and 2(i) degrees is very high. I examined the standard of student work carefully at this level and was satisfied that it was, indeed, of high standard and had not been marked generously.

The standard of student writing skills overall in terms of using evidence, application and originality was impressive.

The modules examined are of a high standard and in my view provide a model of the standards and approaches suitable for this programme both nationally and internationally . . . Through the 4 years, there is a clear trend in terms of positive student achievement.

Some excellent examples of innovative teaching and learning approaches.

Staff should provide typewritten feedback to students. Most of the feedback is too brief in comparison with the HE Sector I am familiar with. (UK) Feedback should inform students how they can improve further, e.g., from a student perspective, what would they need to do to move from a high 60 to a 70+. Having a section of 'Areas for Improvement' might be useful to afford students to engage in feedback more deeply. Some universities go one step further and in a subsequent assignment ask students to comment on how they took the feedback into consideration. This might not be possible in all assessments, but where applicable this usually results in students using feedback more effectively.

6

High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

DkIT's Vision and Strategy to 2016 expresses a commitment to drive research excellence in a number of prioritised areas (i) to ensure that learning and teaching remains research informed, and (ii) delivering real societal and economic impacts regionally, nationally and internationally. Through an internal strategic prioritisation exercise and in line with the National Research Prioritisation exercise and the ambitions set out in Innovation 2020, the Institute has consolidated and concentrated its research into key thematic established areas through the formation of "Research Clusters", in which the Institute possesses a real international reputation namely: (i) ICT, Health and Ageing; (ii) Energy and the Environment and (iii) Creative Arts.

External research awards for the calendar year 2015 totalled €2.61M from national and international sources with 35.3% coming from EU sources. Whilst this is slightly lower than anticipated (target €3M) the total funding for 2014 and 2015 totalled €6.4M with the combined target for these years standing at €6M. DkIT has performed well against its peers in the IoT sector in respect of contract research income. In 2011/2012, DkIT's total contract research income per academic staff was €17,811 compared to the sectoral average of €13,740. Likewise, in the same period, the EU contract research income per academic staff was €4,316 compared to the sectoral average of €2,996. In 2014/2015 DkIT was among the top three IoTs (including DIT) in terms of the ratio of research income

available to each academic staff member (Sunday Times University League Table, 2015). In addition in terms of Horizon 2020 the EU body ECorda ranks DkIT at 13th across the national HEI sector including RCSI. DkIT is ranked as the third IoT in terms of securing H2020 funding.

However, the levels of research awards have reduced somewhat given the national reduction in research funding as a result of the financial crisis. At DkIT it became necessary to rely on the recurrent grant to cover on-going costs within some research areas. In response, the Institute is in its final stages of completion of a review of all research in order to prioritise its research activities. It also seeks to secure additional research funding from alternative sources to include EU Horizon 2020, thus aiming to reduce the research cost burden to the Institute. The review of these research funding strategies has also identified internal cost savings.

DkIT continues to build its research supervision capacity through staff development to PhD qualification level. Standing at 33% DkIT exceeded the sectoral average of 29% of the proportion of full-time academic staff with Level 10 qualifications in 2014/2015. This supports the strategic goal of achieving academic and research excellence (Source: HEA Key Facts and Figures, Higher Education 2014/2015) and exceeds the stated target of >28% for the end of 2015. The number of staff who successfully completed the Institute's formal structured research supervisory programme was 34 thereby exceeding the stated target of 30 for 2015. In excess of 80 staff were supported through the Institute's formal research skills programme for 2015, well exceeding the stated target of 45. In October 2015 DkIT was awarded the HR Excellence in Research Logo in recognition of its commitment to aligning its HR policies and practices with the European Commission's European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, one of only 4 IoTs to receive such an award.

The primary benchmark employed for research dissemination was the Scopus database (**https://www.scopus.com**). For 2015, in comparison with other Institutes of Technology, excluding DIT, the Institute was:

- Ranked 5th for citations attained in 2015;
- Ranked 4th for peer reviewed research articles published in 2015.

The curriculum continues to be research-informed particularly in discipline areas where the Institute has a growing research capability. All research active academics deliver on undergraduate research programmes. This ensures that the curriculum is research informed and that undergraduate students have the opportunity to work on research projects which are aligned to the individual lecturers' research agenda. For example the Centre for Freshwater and Environmental Studies led out on the development of a BSc (Hons) Environmental Science and an MSc Agricultural Biotechnology in partnership with the Department of Applied Science. Staff from the Smooth Muscle Research Centre and the Centre for Freshwater and Environmental Studies input into the undergraduate programmes in Health and Science in particular through undergraduate project supervision. Netwell CASALA collaborated with the Department of Nursing Midwifery and Health Studies in the development of the MSc Ageing, Health and the Environment. CREDIT has been instrumental in developing and delivering the Masters in Renewable Energy on a full-time and part-time basis. In this regard the research activities of the Institute have informed programme development.

DkIT research activities also continue to undertake translational research which has a real societal and economic impact regionally, nationally and internationally. For example, strategic research projects of note include:

- Fujitsu Laboratories Limited and Fujitsu Ireland Ltd. are funding and working with the CASALA research team at DkIT, in partnership with the TRIL and Clarity research teams on the KIDUKU Project, a research initiative that aims to provide monitoring services and assisted independent living for senior citizens and patients who live in smart houses;
- COLLAGE, Collaboration on Ageing, is Ireland's 3 Star Reference Site for the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, involving the Netwell and CASALA research teams at DkIT;
- SFI LERO Centre - is funded by Science Foundation Ireland through the SFI Research Centre programme involving an academic – industry partnership within the field of software engineering with an emphasis on Evolving Critical Systems.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 16. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 17.

Table 16 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation

Key Strategic Goal	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015:
Highly-skilled and creative graduates	Ensured teaching and learning was research informed with active researchers in the research centres teaching on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes; Provided postgraduate opportunities through DkIT research centres.
Academic and Research Excellence	Continued professional development of staff to ensure quality teaching and learning experience for the learners.
Regional Engagement	Met the needs of industry through joint academia-industry research projects and knowledge transfer activities.
Underpinning Financial Goal	Maintained research income and effected internal efficiencies to reducing the need to subsidise research areas from recurrent grant.

High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 17 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 17 High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	**Ensure the learning and teaching agenda remains research informed.**			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of Staff with Level 10 qualifications.	26% of FTE Academics with Level 10 qualifications.	>28% of FTE Academics with Level 10 qualifications.	**Target Achieved** 33% of staff with Level 10 qualifications.	>30% of FTE Academics with Level 10 qualifications.
Staff formally trained through the Institute's formal structured supervisory programme.	20 formally trained supervisors.	30 formally trained supervisors.	**Target Achieved** 34 formally trained supervisors.	35 formally trained supervisors.
Staff supported through formal research skills programme.	35 Staff supported through formal research skills programmes.	45 Staff supported through formal research skills programme.	**Target Exceeded** 80 staff supported through formal research skills programme.	55 Staff supported through formal research skills programme; All targets remain unchanged for 2016 pending the report on the review of prioritisation of research.

Institution Objective 2	Drive Research Excellence in our prioritised areas concentrating on translational research which has societal and economic impact.			
Performance Indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of postgraduate supervisors.	42 postgraduate research supervisors.	50 postgraduate research supervisors.	**Target Almost Achieved** 47 postgraduate research supervisors from across the four academic schools.	55 postgraduate research supervisors.
Number of Level 9 and 10 postgraduate research students.	53 Level 9 and 10 postgraduate research students.	60 Level 9 and 10 postgraduate research students.	**Target Almost Achieved** 59 postgraduate research students.	60 Level 9 and 10 postgraduate research students.
External research awards.	€3.2M (2012) in external research awards.	€3.0M in external research awards.	**Target Achieved** €2.61M in external research awards for the 2015. (Total funding for 2014 and 2015 totalled €6.4M with the combined target for these years being €6M).	€3.2M in external research awards.
President's Research Excellence Award.	No President's Research Excellence Award.	1 President's Research Excellence Award.	**Target Exceeded** 2 President's Research Excellence Awards.	2 President's Research Excellence Awards.
Number of citations.	255 citations (2012 figure though Scopus).	340 citations.	**Target Exceeded** 493 citations.	350 citations.
Number of peer reviewed publications.	45 peer reviewed publications (2012 figure through Scopus).	45 peer reviewed publications.	**Target Achieved** 42 peer reviewed publications (Data taken from Scopus which does not capture all research domains accurately (i.e. Creative Arts).	50 peer reviewed publications.

7 Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

Engagement with industry and the wider community is a central part of DkIT's Strategy. The Regional Development Centre (RDC) at DkIT acting as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industrial, commercial and business life of the region has been an engine for regional economic growth and development since 1989.

During 2015, the RDC exceeded its target with an average occupancy rate of 82% against a target of 80%, and against average occupancy rates of 76% and 78% respectively against USA and EU international benchmarks. International best practice also highlights the need to survey incubation clients. Such client satisfaction surveys are conducted annually at the RDC. For 2015, survey results were very positive with the RDC rated as 'excellent' across all categories to include staff, supports available and facilities.

The RDC supported 82 entrepreneurs/start-ups during 2015, against a target of 60. These included (a) regional 'spin-in' entrepreneurs from across the North East region via the Enterprise Ireland funded New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme, (b) general incubation clients from the region, (c) student entrepreneurs via the DkIT 'Ideas Foundry' programme, (d) students from the DkIT Engineering Entrepreneurship Level 8 programme, (e) "virtual incubation" and (f) 3 academic spin-out companies that were founded on intellectual property commercialised from the DkIT research knowledge base.

The primary enterprise development programme offered is Enterprise Ireland's New Frontiers Entrepreneur Development Programme (NFP). The RDC is a member of the NFP Programme Managers' Network which meets regularly to ensure knowledge and best practice sharing

across the network. International benchmarking is carried out by Enterprise Ireland, the programme funders, who also set the programme's target metrics. The next planned International Study visit will take place in July 2016. The RDC has exceeded its funder's targeted metrics in 2015, with 43 entrepreneurs supported across the various phases of the New Frontiers programme.

The RDC has also developed an in-house entrepreneur support programme called the "Ideas Foundry" which is based on "So what? who cares? why you?®" - a proven, systematic methodology to explore the value proposition for business ideas. The methodology is based on more than 20 years of academic and entrepreneurial expertise; and is used by researchers, scientists, entrepreneurs and organisations across 17 countries - including use as a proposal assessment tool by the European Space Agency. The RDC's Ideas Foundry programme can be tailored for one-to-one or group workshops, and 8 entrepreneurs were supported through this internationally benchmarked initiative during 2015.

In relation to the institution's objective to "encourage entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours among students to enhance their generic life skills", the RDC again exceeded all target metrics for 2015. The work of the RDC supports the development of the student learner and the quality of the student experience. The RDC engages with the academic community in supporting formal learning processes with extra-curricular activities for students aimed at the development of their entrepreneurial traits and behaviours, as discussed in Section 5. Unique to the sector and in collaboration with faculty, the RDC runs the Student Enterprise Internship Programme which sees cross-faculty student interns promoting enterprising and creative activities to the student body. This provides both top-down and bottom-up approaches to entrepreneurial educational provision aimed at enhancing students' employability, as articulated in the Action Plan for Jobs and the National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship. This policy cites the work of ACE – Accelerating Campus Entrepreneurship Initiative, which was led out by DkIT, positioning the Institute as a best in practice exemplar for embedding entrepreneurship within Higher Education.

Specific achievements under this objective included support / funding for 5 student enterprise interns; a President's Award for Enterprising Students; conducting student-led extra-curricular activities that support the development of an enterprise culture among students and the delivery of enterprise initiatives that are directly promoted to students across all Schools. The above initiatives for 2015 reflect the broader Studententerprise@DkIT programme that has run since 2007 to help foster entrepreneurial behaviours among students and to support student start-ups - based on the Scottish Institute of Enterprise model. Recent International benchmarks suggest a movement towards Student-Led Enterprise Societies as a model of support - such as NACUE or FACE Entrepreneurship - a project financed by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 programme. These benchmark findings in relation to Student-Led Enterprise Societies suggest that an enterprise society model be adopted as the next evolutionary stage to promote campus entrepreneurship among students. This will be explored in 2016. The Institute has taken the decision to reduce the number of SEIs due to budgetary constraints. As as result it is prudent to reduce the targets to reflect this new reality.

In the context of the RDC, the HEA compact objectives to "support established industry through increased engagement with academia through applied research projects" and to "achieve the commercialisation and knowledge targets agreed with Enterprise Ireland under the TTSI2 programme for Knowledge Transfer Services" were achieved. The RDC performed very well, exceeding cumulative targets for LOAs (licenses, options, assignments) of technology to industry partners; creating 3 new spin-out companies from the DkIT research base; and meeting and exceeding targets for research agreements and invention disclosures. DkIT is a partner with DCU in the DCU-led consortium under the national TTSI2 programme (Cycle 2). TTSI2 is a 4 year programme running from 2013-2016, and so the results and targets are cumulative in nature as shown in Table 18.

Table 18 DkIT's Cumulative Performance to the end of 2015

	Cumulative Target to 2015	Cumulative Actual to 2015
LOA	6	7
Spinouts	1	3
Research Agreements	105	95**
Invention Disclosures	5	10
Priority Patent	2	1
PCT Patent	1	1

**Includes 9 Research Agreements completed in December 2015 but officially signed contracts received in January 2016.

As can been seen from Table 19, DkIT performed well during 2015 relative to the IoT sector benchmarked against the 2014 data.

Table 19 DkIT's Knowledge Transfer Performance Benchmarked Against IoT Average 2014 Data

	IoT Total	Average per IoT	2015 DkIT Actual Output
LOA	35	3	7
Patents (Priority Applications)	17	1.2	1
Spin-outs	6	0.4	3
Collaborative research agreements	191	14	34

Source: Knowledge Transfer Ireland, Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2014

Currently there are no externally-funded TTO human resources in DkIT to help drive the commercialisation of research and collaborative RDI activities with industry partners. Instead, DkIT has provided 100% of the funding for this resource, while other university HEIs have directly funded human resources for TT funded under the TTSI programme.

The Institute has sought support from KTI (via the planned TTSI3 programme, from 2017) to support direct TTO in a sustainable manner. If such funding is not forthcoming, DkIT would have to reassign some of its planned TT resource to other income generation activities - given institutional financial constraints. In parallel, DkIT will also have to reduce its TTSI3 target metrics in line with this reduced and reallocated DkIT TT resource so as to focus on income generation activities to help ensure financial sustainability.

The Institute is involved in a number of community engagement projects in Undergraduate Programmes, linking in with a number of community and voluntary organisations.

The RDC links with the Placement Office to facilitate placements and project work with industry for a broad range of student disciplines both at Masters and Undergraduate level. During the reporting period, the RDC facilitated engagement through the participation of guest speakers to enhance student learning. The Institute also leveraged off its strong engagement with industry through the hosting of its Industry Day and Careers Fair on campus. This provided opportunities for industry to meet with students and potential graduate recruits and for academics to meet with industry to discuss future skills needs and thus provided an additional mechanism to feed into programme development[5].

Building on the achievements of the formal student placement programme at DkIT, the academic year 2015/2016 saw a total of 761 students from 21

5 All DkIT Schools host Industry Advisory Boards who collaborate with faculty to ensure programmes remain relevant to industry requirements. Industry partners are also involved in programme design and validation.

undergraduate programmes participate in work placements. This is a growth of 24.2% (577 students) on 2013/2014 and 10.2% (761 students) on 2014/2015 figures. This growth marks the trend in undergraduate programme development to include formal work placement modules. The Placement Office works with industry and communities across a range of sectors and disciplines, from Prometric in Dundalk (IT & Software) to Meade Potatoes in Meath (Agri-Food) to Drogheda Homeless Aid (Social Care) as examples. Placements at DkIT reflect the social, cultural and economic landscape of the north east and border region and as such have a reciprocal benefit for region and DkIT learners alike.

External and Internal Factors

Outputs in this key area, including meeting future TTSI 2 & 3 targets, are a function of a number of external factors - including the level of external research funding secured by DkIT research centres. The heavy teaching load of academic staff does not assist in achieving the targets set. The cost of patents and patent applications can be high, and requires case-by-case cost-benefit analysis, rather than forcing patent applications to meet predefined KPI targets.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 20. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 21.

Table 20 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange

Key Strategic Goal	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015:
Highly-skilled and creative graduates	■ Delivered graduates with the necessary entrepreneurial skills and attributes to meet the needs of employers; ■ Enhanced the student learning experience through student placements, industry projects, guest speakers etc; ■ Enhanced student experience through enterprise and community engagement projects.
Academic and Research Excellence	■ Delivered knowledge co-exchange between academics and industry for their mutual benefit; ■ Enhanced the student learning experience through industry guest lecturer, programme boards; ■ Developed academic expertise in research and innovation.
Regional Engagement	■ Addressed the regional remit in contributing to the economic, social and cultural life of the region; ■ Met the needs of industry through applied research projects and knowledge transfer activities.
Underpinning Financial Goal	■ Continued to operate as a self-funding Centre within the Institute; ■ Generated income through incubation facility and research and innovation projects.

Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 21 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 21 Enhanced Engagement with Enterprise and the Community and Embedded Knowledge Exchange: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	Further strengthen the impact of the work of the Regional Development Centre as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and business community by encouraging and supporting new venture creation			
Performance indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of entrepreneurs/ start-ups supported.	45 entrepreneurs/ start-ups supported.	60 entrepreneurs /start-ups supported.	**Target Achieved** 82 entrepreneurs or start-ups supported.	60 entrepreneurs /start-ups supported.
Number of incubation companies located in the RDC.	75% occupancy in incubator facilities.	80% occupancy in incubator facilities.	**Target Achieved:** 82% (average).	80% occupancy in incubator facilities.

<table>
<tr><th>Institution Objective 2</th><td colspan="4">Support established industry through increased engagement with academia through applied research projects.

Achieve the commercialisation and knowledge targets agreed with Enterprise Ireland under the TTSI2 programme for Knowledge Transfer Services.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Performance indicator</th><th>Baseline</th><th>Interim target, end 2015</th><th>Progress against 2015 target and commentary</th><th>Final target, end 2016</th></tr>
<tr><td>Number of research projects with Industry.</td><td>18 research projects with Industry.</td><td>25 research projects with Industry.</td><td>Target Achieved
25 research projects with industry.</td><td>30 research projects with Industry.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Meet the targets set out in the EI TTSI2 Programme.</td><td>Targets set out in the EI TTSI2 Programme.</td><td>Targets set out in the EI TTSI2 Programme for 2015.</td><td>Target Almost Achieved
<table><tr><th></th><th>2015 Target</th><th>2015 Actual</th></tr><tr><td>LOA*</td><td>3</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>Spinouts</td><td>0</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Research Agreements</td><td>40</td><td>34**</td></tr><tr><td>Invention Disclosures</td><td>2</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Priority Patent</td><td>0</td><td>1</td></tr></table></td><td>Targets set out in the EI TTSI2 Programme for 2016.</td></tr>
</table>

**Includes 9 Research Agreements completed in December 2015 but officially signed contracts received in January 2016.

Institution Objective 3	Encourage entrepreneurial attitudes and behaviours among students to enhance their generic life skills.			
Performance indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of Student work based placements (academic year).	577 student work based placements.	720 student work based placements.	**Target Achieved** 761 student work based placements.	750 student work based placements.
Number of Student Enterprise Interns.	5 Student Enterprise Interns.	5 Student Enterprise Interns.	**Target Achieved** 5 Student Enterprise Interns in semester 1 and 4 in semester 2.	2 Student Enterprise Interns.
Number of President's Awards for Enterprising Students.	1 President's Award for Enterprising Students.	1 President's Award for Enterprising Students.	**Target Achieved** 1 President's Award for Enterprising Students.	1 President's Award for Enterprising Students.
Number of Student-led extra-curriculum activities that support the development of enterprise cultures among students.	5 Student-led extra-curriculum activities that support the development of enterprise cultures among students.	12 Student-led extra-curriculum activities that support the development of enterprise cultures among students.	**Target Achieved** 21 Student-led extra-curriculum activities.	10 Student-led extra-curriculum activities that support the development of enterprise cultures among students.
Number of Student participants on an enterprise programme.	10 Student participants on an enterprise programme.	Deliver at least 1 enterprise programme that is promoted to students.	**Target Achieved** 3 enterprise programmes delivered that are promoted to students.	Deliver at least 1 enterprise programme that is promoted to students.

What the Companies Say . . .

Overall this has been a very valuable exercise for SalesSense, if (named student) is indicative of the calibre of candidates on the course then both the faculty and staff should be congratulated on the structure of the course and the preparation of the students for their future careers.

SalesSense

Exceptional student demonstrating excellent high level of skill to work in our busy work environment . . . demonstrated excellent ability to research and become familiar with resources.

Early Learning Initiative,
National College of Ireland

Great asset to the service and in particular made a positive impact on the development of a child with additional needs. We would welcome students from DkIT.

Ozanam House

Student Feedback on Work Placement

I was well prepared and felt I had the support of my placement officer whenever I felt troubled and needed advice.
The placement preparation classes were helpful as I learned all the information necessary before going on placement and could get helpful advice from the placement officers during this time.

Event Management

I felt placement was valuable to learning about the industry I hope to pursue a career in, with events, you need to know to be involved to gain knowledge and this was achieved with placement . . .

Event Management Student

. . . it was a great opportunity for me to gain experience in the hospitality industry and learn how to deal with the public in a variety of different situations. I felt I grew substantially as an individual and learned how to stand up for myself, be confident and resolve problems as it was not easy going into a completely new environment. I felt like the college were 100% behind me, regarding any issues I had during placement and that you encouraged me to stick at it. I thought the placement classes were definitely necessary and really helped us to understand what needed to be done for our placement to be 100% valid . . . Thank you for all your help and guidance through out my placement.

Hospitality Studies Student

My 18 week placement . . . was challenging, rewarding and exciting. The experience highlighted the wide breath of knowledge I developed from my studies in Dundalk Institute of Technology. My key skill-sets have greatly developed and I'm now more confident in myself. This experience has solidified Public Relations as a career for me and has motivated me to work harder to achieve my goals.

Public Relations Student

Placement has without a doubt prepared me for employment now that I am finished my studies, I am more aware of the long hours and hard work that has to go into the job for it to be successful.

Hospitality Studies Student

8 Enhanced Internationalisation: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

Following its successful European University Charter Application in 2014 for eligibility to participate in the ERASMUS+ programme, the Institute's commitment to the development of international relations remained strong in 2015. A review of all the Institute's EU bilateral agreements was undertaken on the inception of the new Erasmus+ programme (2014 – 2020). All agreements were retained, but recalibrated in an effort to redress the significant imbalance in inbound/ outbound student exchange flows. Additional inter-institutional exchange agreements were established for the purpose of developing exchange capacity within some additional academic disciplines; notably, University College of Northern Denmark (Civil Engineering), University of Lillebaelt, Denmark (Nursing Studies), Edinburgh Napier University (Nursing) and the Fondation La Mache, France (Business Studies).

In keeping with the Institute's goal of producing graduates, who are internationally engaged, are inter-culturally competent, and excellent academically (and in research), internationalisation is a strategic theme embedded in the curriculum. In addition to the commitment to ensure a global perspective within the curriculum itself, teaching and learning strategies are employed in the classroom to ensure Irish and international students collaborate, thus enhancing their inter-cultural competencies.

The International Office promotes international mobility opportunities to all learners. 76 incoming Erasmus students and 28 DkIT students studied, or completed traineeships through the Institute's network of EU partner universities and enterprises for periods of 8 weeks to 10 months in 2015 as part of their studies. Returning students were required to reflect on their study abroad experience at an Erasmus Recall Day in September 2015.

The development of international networks through DkIT faculty and non-teaching staff was promoted through the participation of 14 staff exchanges on short, guest-lecturing exchanges and job-shadowing opportunities (for non-teaching staff) at partner universities. Staff mobilities ranged from the leading of an intercultural Business Studies student exchange programme to IUT Le Havre, France, through to undertaking clinical audits in UK partner-university hospitals; an MBS Residency at Hochschule Heilbronn, Germany, and a tandem-learning Telecollaboration exchange project with IUT Bethune, France.

The fostering of academic and research excellence among learners was further evidenced by the international collaboration of DkIT students in 10-day Erasmus Intensive Programmes dealing with Mobile Gaming Technologies (hosted at the University of Lodz, Poland) and also Sustainable Energy Development (hosted at Hochschule Joanneum, Graz, Austria).

The Institute successfully hosted a number of international visits from partner university faculties in Spain, Croatia, Germany and France, sharing best practice and knowledge transfer in the fields of entrepreneurship, sustainable energy and intercultural communication. Students and staff preparing to go on study, or traineeship abroad were closely supported by DkIT International Office through the facilitation of a pre-departure Workshop, student support while abroad, development of international linkages through visits to partner colleges, the deployment of returning Erasmus student as Ambassadors at DkIT, International Welcome Days, promotion of international opportunities by students via social media, and student-led development of the Erasmus Study Network (ESN) society on campus.

While the Institute remains committed to the maintenance and promotion of international exchange activities, like other Irish HEIs it faces continued challenges in growing the numbers of DkIT students undertaking study (or traineeships) abroad. Reasons cited by students for non-participation in international exchange activities include cultural, linguistic, financial and academic issues. Nonetheless, the Institute continues to promote study abroad, and to give indigenous students an international experience at home, through increased international diversity on campus.

The Institute had the highest proportion of registered international students of any IoT in 2015, with 494 students registered from 12 countries: China, Malaysia, India, Korea, Brazil, Nigeria, Japan, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Indonesia and Vietnam. Key recruitment markets continued to be China and Malaysia, followed in that year by equal numbers of students recruited from India and Saudi Arabia. DkIT has been particularly successful at attracting fee paying Non EU students to study in DkIT. In 2012/13 this amounted to 263 students or 6% of the student body. This is significantly more than the IoT average of 3% for that year. (HEA Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/2013).

A decrease in the number of incoming students from China posed a fiscal challenge to DkIT in 2015, which was partly compensated for by the increase in Saudi Arabian registrations, and the government-sponsored Brazilian students at DkIT under the *Science Without Borders* programme. Other challenges for DkIT included vulnerability in the Indian and Nepalese markets. Students from these markets often face financial pressures and so commit to part-time work which can impact negatively in some instances on their progression.

Visa issues remain a barrier in many markets (with the notable exception of Malaysia) as the waiting time for a response to a study-visa application for Ireland can take up to 12 weeks in some regions in contrast to a 7 day turnaround for similar applicants to the UK.

One of the main recruitment challenges Dundalk faced in 2015 was availability of quality, well-managed, hall-of-residence accommodation. The DkIT International Office worked to increase its homestay availability in 2015 to counter the shortage elsewhere. A linked accommodation challenge is that of integration, with international students often selecting to stay within their cultural grouping outside of DkIT, resulting in risk of social (and linguistic) isolation. As a countermeasure, the Institute redoubled its efforts to track monitoring and attendance of international students and to offer enhanced pastoral care through DkIT International Office.

DkIT was successful in achieving ACELS accreditation in 2015, marking it out as a quality education provider to international students, and the sole Institute of Technology thus far to have achieved such accreditation.

In a bid to enhance international integration, the Institute engaged with local employers such as PayPal and National Pen regarding career opportunities for international students. Other initiatives in 2015 included participation by Louth Volunteering at International Welcome Days to encourage international students to engage in volunteering roles so as to engage in and integrate with the local community. As part of its services to International students, the International Office's annual student feedback reviews informed its continual improvement of services to students in 2015.

External and Internal Factors

The decision by the Saudi Arabian government to fund only those students going to the top international universities is likely to impact on DkIT's international student numbers. A similar threat is the reduction in government funding for Malaysian students. These are two of the Institute's largest markets. These issues will have a substantial impact on the Institute's recruitment efforts. The Institute will aim to seek new market opportunities in Indonesia and Vietnam, but this will take time.

Coherence and Integration of Strategies

During this reporting period, DkIT's institution objectives in respect of Enhanced Internationalisation met the strategic goals of the Institute in a coherent and integrated manner across its learning and teaching, research and engagement strategies as shown in Table 22. The quantitative outputs, where relevant, are reported in the outputs for 2015 in Table 23.

Table 22 Coherence and Integration of Strategies in respect of Enhanced Internationalisation

Key Strategic Goal	How the institution objectives met the strategic goals of the Institute in 2015:
Highly-skilled and creative graduates	■ Delivered graduates with the necessary awareness of globalisation and internationalisation to meet the needs of employers; ■ Enhanced the student learning experience through exposure to diverse student learners.
Academic and Research Excellence	■ Enhanced the student learning experience through internationalisation via staff exchange.
Regional Engagement	■ Enhanced engagement with industry through international linkages.
Underpinning Financial Goal	■ Sustained fee income through international student recruitment.

Enhanced Internationalisation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 23 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 23 Enhanced Internationalisation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	Widen learner experience and global awareness by sustained efforts in international student markets.			
Performance indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Incoming number of non-EU students.	429 non-EU students.	490 non-EU students.	**Target Achieved** 494 non-EU students (2014/15).	440 non-EU students. **Change of Target** 420 non-EU students.
Incoming number of (full-year equivalent) EU students (non-fee paying/ERASMUS).	117 (full-year equivalent) EU students (non-fee paying/ ERASMUS).	76 (full-year equivalent) EU students (non-fee paying/ ERASMUS).	**Target Achieved** 76.	71 (full-year equivalent) EU students (non-fee paying/ ERASMUS).
Incoming number of EU students (fee-paying).	5 EU students (fee-paying).	7 EU students (fee-paying).	**Target Achieved** 7.	13 EU students (fee-paying).

Institution Objective 2	Sustained efforts in international student placements			
Performance indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, end 2015**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Number of placements secured at partner colleges for out-bound staff, students and researchers.	16 ERASMUS placements secured at partner colleges and host consortia.	14 student work placements abroad.	**Target Achieved:** 14 students traineeships abroad.	22 student work placements abroad.
	13 students going on study abroad through ERASMUS.	11 teaching staff exchanges; 3 non-teaching staff exchanges; 14 students on study abroad.	**Target Achieved:** 11 teaching staff exchanges; 3 non-teaching staff exchanges; 14 students on study abroad.	2 teaching staff exchanges; 2 non-teaching staff exchanges; 15 students on study abroad.


PTION

9 Institutional Consolidation: Critical Self-Reflection on Performance

DkIT confronted significant financial challenges in 2015. The Institute's draft financial results for the year ended 31st August 2015 showed a deficit of €1.3m which when added to the previously accumulated deficit of €1.9m meant the accumulated deficit stood at €3.2m. The key contributing factors included:

- Some underlying fixed pay and non-pay cost drivers at DkIT, within academic schools and within specified research areas, which were not attracting sufficient income;
- The HSE has decreased the amount available for each nursing place and also reduced the number of places available;
- Funding for apprenticeship blocks declined;
- A further weakness in DkITs structures became more apparent as HEA RGAM funding extended to part-time as well as full-time accredited programmes.

In response, the Institute developed its financial plan for 2015-2018 to return the Institute to a break-even position by 31st August 2018. These adjustments address some key strategic reform and development issues for DkIT so as to identify not just the immediate causes of the current difficulties but major structural and provision issues which drive cost and absorb or limit income generation and include:

- Improving performance in non full-time accredited provision thus increasing educational opportunities for part-time and flexible learners;
- Reviewing Approved Programme Schedules to ensure efficiency;
- Developing a strategic plan for the School of Engineering to grow student numbers to meet future skills needs;
- Restoring research projects to a self-funding position;
- Review of pay and non-pay costs.

A detailed analysis of the Institute's financial position was carried out in 2015 and reflected in the Financial Plan 2015-2018. This was approved by the HEA in January 2016 and is therefore not reproduced in this report.

It is estimated that a financial year end 31st August 2015, DkIT will report a breakeven position, when accounting for the inclusion of the devolved grant. **This represents a significant achievement in moving from a €1.2 million deficit to breakeven in the academic year ending August 2015**. This has been achieved through a combination of stringent pay and non-pay cost savings and sustained focus on income generation coupled with rigorous financial management. The challenge going forward is to maintain this position and report a surplus in 2015/16. This requires on-going monitoring and adjustments.

However, these continuing funding and resourcing issues will continue to strain the Institute's ability to maintain current levels of performance. So whilst DkIT has performed well and in line with the targets set out, the fine balance between stretch performance and returning to financial stability and sustainability for the medium term cannot be over-stated. DkIT has an excellent staff profile capable of developing and delivering programmes to meet the above needs. However as the Institute strives to continue to develop and deliver high quality programmes to serve the region and its students and to address the skills shortages in the economy, the lack of capital investment is seriously hampering DkIT's ability to respond appropriately to these needs.

At the time of writing in June 2016, the Institute has no funding for capital investment, but requires urgent funding to upgrade its ICT infrastructure and to refurbish science and engineering laboratories, so as to respond appropriately to the skills shortages and demographic demands described above. All institution objectives, whilst outcomes focused in the delivery of the Institute's core goals, are financially proofed. Clearly articulated in the preceding sections, is how each has contributed in a coherent and integrated manner to the financial sustainability of the Institute. In this way, the Institute has prioritised its objectives with due consideration to the financial implications.

External and Internal Factors

Reduced income levels from international fee paying students could negatively impact on the Institute's financial position. This risk needs to be factored into on-going financial projections and planning.

Institutional Consolidation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Table 24 demonstrates the Institute's performance against targets for 2015 as detailed in the Draft Mission-based Performance Compact March 2016.

Table 24 Institutional Consolidation: Progress Against 2015 Targets

Institution Objective 1	Return the Institute to financial stability and sustainability by 31st August, 2018			
Performance indicator	**Baseline**	**Interim target, academic year end 2015/2016**	**Progress against 2015 target and commentary**	**Final target, end 2016**
Operating Surplus/ Deficit (€'000)	-583	-333	Breakeven (estimate based on May 2015 Management Accounts)	614

10 Signed Submission

I hereby submit the Dundalk Institute of Technology's Self Evaluation Report for Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3

Signed: 

Date: 24th June 2016

Ann Campbell

President

Appendix 1
Data Source, Executive Responsibility and Benchmarks

1 Regional Clusters

Target	Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
DCU Alliance	President; Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar; Head of Research.	■ DCU/DkIT Graduate School Agreement; ■ Quality Assurance Processes Documentation; ■ Governance Agreement; ■ Supporting documentation for the development of structured PhD pathways; ■ Internal documents at DkIT and DCU (i.e. linked provider agreement).	N/A
MEND Cluster - Shared Academic Planning Process and Regional approach to ATP	President; Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar; Vice President for Strategic Planning, Communications and Development.	■ Strategic Innovation Development Fund (SIDF) Progress Report, September 2015; ■ MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016 (Appendix 2); ■ Cluster Board Agenda and Minutes of Meetings.	Regional Clusters are benchmarked within the HEI sector in Ireland as a whole. The MEND Cluster is considered a best practice exemplar for the sector by the HEA.

NEFHEA Alliance.	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.	■ Validation Reports; ■ Curriculum Documents; ■ Minutes of Programme Board Meetings Department/ Programme records; ■ Admission records; ■ Exam result broadsheets; ■ Minutes of NEFHEA meetings; ■ Advanced entry application files (in School Office); ■ MOUs with FE colleges.	N/A

2 Participation, Equal Access and Lifelong Learning

Target	Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
Increase student numbers.	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar; Heads of School.	■ SRS Returns March 2016; ■ Banner Registrations.	Higher Education System Performance Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/2013;
Widen participation from underrepresented groups.	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar; Heads of School.		HEA Key Facts and Figures Higher Education 2014/2015.
Increase number of flexible learners.	Vice President for Strategic Planning, Communications and Development.		

3 Excellent Teaching and Learning and Quality of Student Experience

Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar;
 	
Heads of School;
 	
Head of Teaching and Learning.
	■ www.heinnovate.eu – self assessment report;
	■ External Examiner Reports;
	■ Curriculum Documents;
	■ Programme Validation Reports;
	■ Assessment records;
	■ Minutes of Department meetings;
	■ Programme Board Meetings' Minutes;
	  ■ Programme Board Reports;
	  ■ Assessment schedules;
	  ■ Annual student surveys;
	■ Programmatic reviews involving industry and academic peer reviews;
	■ Academic Council and PEC Minutes of Meetings;
	■ Graduate surveys by discipline;
	■ DkIT Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2015;
	■ National employers survey;
	■ Cyclical institutional reviews under QQI;
	■ Banner System;
	■ CPD Events.
		European Commission - HEInnovate Self-Assessment Tool;
		
		National Forum for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching Expert Awards;
		
		The Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) 2015.

	Data Source Continued
	■ SLDC use – SLDC database; ■ TEL Survey: E-learning Unit; ■ Moodle Usage data – Piwik analytics on DkIT website; ■ Student Services Survey – Student Services; ■ DkIT case study in http://www.aishe.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/5-Writing-in-the-Disciplines.pdf ■ Award: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMxMKrWhFj8&list=PLhJYW28cw2ebFoqivYpxNmCD_axLuTWnp&-index=5) ■ Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies (January 2015 to December 2016) http://y1feedback.ie/ ■ Student Success Toolbox for flexible learners: Supporting transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks (January 2015 to June 2016) http://studentsuccess.ie/project-partners/ ■ Assessment for Learning Resources for First Year Undergraduate Mathematics Modules (January 2015 to December 2016). http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/assessment-for-learning-resources-for-first-year-undergraduate-mathematics-modules/

4 High Quality, Internationally Competitive Research and Innovation

Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar; Head of Research.	■ Scopus database; ■ EU Ecorda data from EI; ■ DkIT Research Office shared drive.	Scopus Database; Sunday Times University League Table, 2015;

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

Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
Vice President for Strategic Planning, Communications and Development; Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar.	■ DkIT internal share drive, under: S:\RDC_ISO\; ■ Thorn, R (2016) HEInnovate Case Study. Entrepreneurial Behaviours and Organisation Culture – A Case Study. OECD, Paris. 12pp. https://heinnovate.eu/sites/default/files/entrepreneurial_behaviours_and_organisation_culture_-_a_case_study.pdf ■ Shared Drive(S) / Placement/ Office Administration/ Stats; ■ Banner System.	EU Horizon 2020 FACE programme: http://www.face-entrepreneurship.eu/en/ http://www.cses.co.uk/upl/File/Benchmarking-Business-Incubators-main-report-Part-1.pdf http://www2.nbia.org/resource_library/peer/benchmark/resource_library/facilities_management.php AKTS 2014 Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey report. http://www.knowledgetransferireland.com/About_KTI/Reports-Publications/KTI-Annual-Report-and-Annual-Knowledge-Transfer-Survey-2014.pdf European Commission (2002). *Benchmarking of Business Incubators Report*, Centre for Strategy and Evaluation http://www.cses.co.uk/upl/File/Benchmarking-Business-Incubators-appendices.pdf NESTA (2011). *Incubation for Growth: A review of the impact of business incubation on new ventures with high growth potential* https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/incubation_for_growth.pdf

	Data Source Continued
	NBIA (2006). *2006 State of the Business Incubation Industry* http://www2.nbia.org/resource_library/review_archive/0807_02.php European Business and Innovation Centre Network (2009). BIC OBSERVATORY *The BIC Network in 2008 Facts and Figures*. http://ebn.be/downloads/bic%20observatory%202009.pdf http://wendykennedy.com/results/case-study/esa/ New Frontiers Programme. https://www.enterprise-ireland.com/en/Start-a-Business-in-Ireland/Supports-for-High-Potential-Start-Ups/New-Frontiers-Entrepreneur-Development-Programme.html The National Association of College & University Entrepreneurs http://www.nacue.com/about/

6 Enhanced Internationalisation

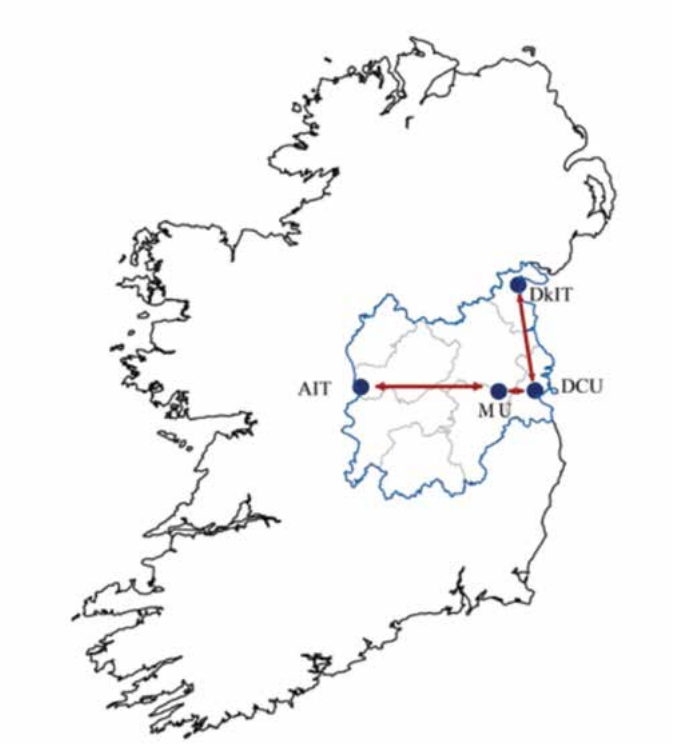
Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar	■ Shared drive International Office	Higher Education System Performance Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2012/2013

7 Institutional Consolidation

Executive Responsibility	Data Source	Benchmark
President Vice President for Financial and Corporate Affairs	■ Shared drive Finance Office	NA

Appendix 2

MEND Cluster Project Plan 2016



Project Plan 2016

Middle-East North Dublin (MEND) Cluster

Dublin City University (DCU)

with St Patrick's College Drumcondra (SPD) and Mater Dei Institute (MDI)

Maynooth University

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT)

Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Bhaile Átha Luain
Athlone Institute of Technology

Institiúid teicneolaíochta dhún dealgan
DUNDALK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

DCU

Introduction

Context

The Higher Education Authority undertook to assess the regional clusters in respect of their initial activity against the Authority's stated goals and reported accordingly to the institution presidents on same in November 2015. With respect to the MEND cluster, or what has been termed the Dublin II (i) cluster, comprising Athlone Institute of Technology, Dublin City University, Dundalk Institute of Technology, and Maynooth University, the report noted that considerable progress was made during 2014. The report proceeded to find that the cluster has both achieved the minimum outcomes and has moved beyond that to deliver more ambitious outcomes.

In subsequent dialogue, the cluster partners had proposed to the Authority that the strands that had informed the initial phase of activity – namely those concerning access, transfer, and progression, the building of a FET HET network, the mapping portal for FET provision and progression within the region, the agreement on SRS protocols to facilitate collaborative programme development and potential for enhanced transfer within the region, and the demographic study and mapping of existing provision – constituted a significant basis for increasing collaboration and that modest additional funding should be considered to allow the partners to exploit further the secure basis that had already been realised. In the formal response dated 05 November 2015, the HEA identified a sum of €287,000 that was made available to support a specific project to be developed by the MEND cluster in respect of student pathways and academic planning. This project had four specific elements:

1. Maintenance and development of the FE/HE network;
2. Maintenance and extension nationally, if feasible, of the portal;
3. Continuance of the academic planning process and its role as exemplar for the sector;
4. The mapping of SMEs regionally and institution of a systematic engagement with enterprise.

The MEND partners were invited by the HEA to submit a project plan setting out the proposed approach to the project which was enabled by the investment mentioned above.

Cluster Response

The MEND cluster appreciates the comments from the HEA and the confidence that is invested in the prospect of continued collaboration with a defined focus. The four partners acknowledge the input from the Authority and are committed to building upon the recognised achievements to date in the interests of continuing regional development. The cluster also records appreciation to the many partners - educational, agency, and enterprise - who have generously supported, and continue to support, the work to date.

The roadmap that is set out here has clear deliverables and accountabilities. The partners will utilize this project to embed further their collaboration while continuing to respect the autonomy of each institution. While this document is presented in the form of a project plan, it should be noted that work is underway on each of the project components. The workgroups for each strand have been established and have already made significant progress.

It is noted that the question of the scale of clusters, including the notion of an extended cluster for the greater Dublin region, remains a topic for consideration; the experience from the MEND cluster is that the effectiveness to date and the positive build in relationships, internal and external, has benefited from the current scale and our sense is that while there is merit in broader collaboration on specific projects or themes, the governance of a permanently-extended construct would be challenging and would likely result in an entity with a decrease in flexibility and responsiveness.

Concerning the second element within the work plan identified by the HEA, that dealing with the maintenance of the FET-HET portal and the prospect

of establishing a national portal, the cluster is working with others to specify and request the data necessary and anticipates being able to report on the feasibility of such a facility. However, the cluster does not propose itself, or any of its constituent members, as the appropriate home for such a national portal. Given that the investigation requested may deliver a positive outcome, there would be merit at this stage in affording some consideration to the future permanent location of such a national portal and the manner in which it can be maintained and enhanced.

A similar logic may well inform the fourth element of the project, dealing with SME engagement, in time. However, as below, this is only at the outset of development and the focus in the first instance is on the region. Furthermore, some of the initial outcomes from the engagement with enterprise might suggest a sectoral or thematic approach rather than one that is determined solely by geography.

Policy

It is clear that with respect to policy the current strong focus on the build of Regional Skills Fora is influencing significantly the work of the regional clusters. Within the MEND region, the addition of the fourth element above reflects this influence and represents a strand that is new to the work stream of the cluster. In the initial SIDF application, the cluster had identified enterprise engagement as a desirable component but this was not funded at that stage. That this is a new and dynamic addition means that it will necessarily take some time to address; and the work needs to align with the emerging Regional Skills Fora. Similarly, while the HEA's paper on Regional Clusters: Maximising Collective Impact 2015-2020 notes the strong associations between the geography of Regional Clusters and the EU NUTS-III regions, in practice the fact that the geographies don't align and that a number of Fora are comprehended within the MEND area, necessarily adds to the challenge. This work plan is thus clearly indicating that the four elements of the project are not at equal stages of development and that the fourth stream will require significant investment and time. The final measure of that investment will be contingent on the input from the Regional Skills Fora project managers and thus the report in respect of this element is necessarily an interim statement.

Project Proposal

The MEND partners support the Authority's view that the cluster concept can deliver mutual benefit to the learners, the region, to the sector, and to society. The shared work to date has strengthened inter-institutional collaboration and the current specific project is being addressed collectively by the partners in a manner that attests the shared vision of the cluster. The strands identified by the HEA involve a number of regional stakeholders and the plan here attached sets out the manner in which these relationships are to be facilitated. The ultimate goals from the specific project are consonant with the characteristics proposed by the HEA as signifying a successful regional cluster: they include close coordination between the partners; maximisation of collective capacity; a statement of confidence and leadership with respect to the region's social, economic, and cultural sustainability; the prospect of a more coordinated approach to engagement, in the first instance, with enterprise; and, in the medium term, the promise of delivering outcomes that can strengthen the competitiveness of the region.

The four strands of the project are viewed by the cluster as interlinking. Thus, while the governance of the project is fashioned to take a holistic view, the elements are each managed by a senior officer and each has a working group which comprises members from the four institutions. The overall plan is set out below and for ease of access is described in respect of the four strands.

Strand 1: Higher Education & Further Education and Training Network

A network of higher education institutions and further education and training providers has been established as part of a regional initiative within the Leinster Pillar 2 Cluster. During 2016 the Network, which is underpinned by an MOU, will advance its ultimate aim which is to collaborate on the enhancement of access, transfer and progression pathways (ATP) across the region by means of a number of specific activities that will be progressed by Network Working Groups. The network is meeting approximately every 5 weeks – the steering group will meet a week before each Network meeting.

Activities

Research: A working paper will be produced which identifies issues of concern to Network members in relation to Access, Transfer and Progression from Further Education to Higher Education. Specifically, the paper will identify the barriers to progression, review progression and retention data and achievement in HE, in addition to other relevant research in the area. The paper will reflect both current research and the experience of Network members. It is proposed that each institution will support themed focus groups with current students to support further research. This work will be carried out under the aegis of the Network's Research Working Group.

Communications: The Network has established a Communications Working Group, to disseminate its work, to seek strategic linkages with others working in the area, to highlight key issues and barriers to progression, and to share good practice. To this end, the Working Group will organise a regional conference which will take place in November 2016. The conference theme is Pathways and Progression from FET to HE: Making it Happen. The conference will:

- Provide an opportunity to highlight what the regional Network has achieved to date and promote the Network as a collaborative partnership model;
- Highlight key issues in the area of learner progression from FET to HE;
- Share and highlight good practice with respect to ATP;
- Facilitate thematic collaboration;
- Engage attendees to share information that will further advance ATP within the region.

Pathways and Progression: The Network has established a Pathways and Progression Working Group that will be responsible for the following:

- Development and circulation to member Education and Training Boards of a template to gather data on formal and informal links between relevant bodies;
- Liaison with CAO, UCAS and other relevant agencies with a view to collating statistics on offers to FE students;
- Linking with colleagues working on the FE/HE portal and with QQI and other relevant agencies with a view to dovetailing with and/or leveraging work already happening in this area;
- Explore the provision of CPD opportunities across all four HE Institutions, perhaps in area of STEM, Quality Assurance and so forth, with a view to a proposal in relation to same being developed by the Network in conjunction with QQI.

Output

Outputs resulting from these activities will be:

a A working paper on access, transfer and progression (ATP) which is intended to be the first in a series produced by the Network, its dissemination within the Network and beyond the Network by means of its presentation at a number of conferences;

b A Network regional conference which will be held in November 2016;

c Collation and dissemination within the Network of regional data relating to formal and informal links between relevant bodies;

d CPD delivery across the four HE institutions targeted in specific areas, including but not necessarily restricted to STEM.

Implementation

The implementation of this task is overseen by the Registrars' group. The coordinator for the task is Pauline Mooney, (pauline.mooney@dcu.ie).

The working group responsible for this activity comprises:

Professor Eithne Guilfoyle (Chair)	DCU
Dr Justin Rami	DCU
Ita Tobin	DCU
Eileen Lynch	DkIT
Shane Hill	DkIT
Peter Melinn	AIT
Theresa Ryan	AIT
Rosario Ryan	MU
Dr John McGinnity	MU

Estimated costs

In instances where the cost below relates to the buyout of staff time, the cost provided is the cost of replacement.

HE and FE network	**Euro**
Conference attendance (other than Network conference)	4,000
Network regional conference (November 2016)	4,700
Coordinator (release and back fill half time EA)	15,000
Staff Costs (release and backfill half time AO)	30,000
Pathways Working Group (equivalent sum – not costed)	4,000
Network running costs, (including travel and meetings)	4,000
Total	**61,700**

Strand 2: 'Pathways to Higher Education' – PHASE II

In early 2015, the MEND Cluster worked with a project team at the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) in NUI Maynooth and developed a pilot portal that was designed to improve knowledge on access routes from further education (FE) to higher education (HE) in the Mid-East and Dublin-North (MEND) cluster area.

The portal addressed two main questions:

1. What can I do with my FE qualification?
2. What are the access routes to HE in the MEND cluster (leaving cert, mature students and further education)?

The existing portal is operational and has been successfully developed as a proof of concept. It can be viewed at http://pathways.maynoothuniversity.ie/

The second phase of development will focus on the following aspects:

1. Updating the existing MEND portal with the latest data;
2. Scoping out the development of this portal on a national scale.

Activities

The core aspect of the project plan involve the following:

a. Carrying out a technical examination of information in SOLAS PLSS database to determine compatibility with existing information;

b. Obtaining agreement with SOLAS for use of their PLSS database (database still under construction);

c. Present to the Registrar's Steering Group, design of the data and identify/clarify the information needed from each HEI;

d. Import data and build a new portal (minimum 6 weeks – start date depends on agreement of data access from SOLAS), the output will provide a working prototype of a national portal. This site will initially be hosted on an existing AIRO web server;

e. Testing of the portal by the Cluster Project Management Team;

f. Identify if SOLAS would consider hosting the national portal site in the future;

g. FE sector to provide specific details on the location for the delivery of programmes rather than centralised administrative centre;

h. Obtain agreement from all 27 HEIs, on their input of data into a national portal (perhaps HEA could facilitate this step). Admissions Officers will need to support this phase providing attribute information on ISCED categorisation, admissions website link, and relevant FE course code links;

i. Ensure the HEIs identify the number of places reserved for FE students per programme and the points required the previous year for entry;

j. Potentially launch the portal for use in late August, for students who have not obtained their preferred options on programme of choice. The portal will show alternative routes to chosen career paths.

Output

The core output of this activity will be a working prototype of a national portal hosted on the AIRO server.

Implementation

The implementation of this task is overseen by the Registrars' group. The coordinator for the task is Dr. Paul MacArtain, (Paul.MacArtain@dkit.ie)

The working group responsible for this activity comprises:

(Chair)	DkIT
Brianain Erraught	DkIT
Dr. Paul MacArtain	DkIT
Dr. Ray Byrne	DkIT
Dr. John McGinnity	MU
Dr. Justin Gleeson	AIRO at MU
Norrie O'Callaghan	AIT
To be confirmed	DCU

Estimated Costs

The main costs are the cost of buyout of staff time. In each case the buyout is costed as the cost of replacement.

FE HE portal	**Euro**
Coordinator (release & back fill half time)	30,000
Ray Byrne (release & back fill 25% time)	15,000
Brianain Erraught (release & back fill 15% time)	10,500
AIRO database importing and template	21,480
portal prototype development	
Front End Web design	5,000
Launch Event	2,000
Total	**83,980**

Strand 3: Academic Planning

The cluster partners are working together to develop a medium term academic plan for the cluster. This plan is intended to ensure that provision of programmes across the cluster is coherent, and meets the needs of the students in its catchment area in the most efficient manner possible. Planning as a cluster, will enhance the ability of the institutions to engage with and respond to the future skills needs of the region.

Activities

Updating the mapping of provision

In the initial phase of the SIDF funding, the cluster partners developed a shared mapping of provision, based on enrolment data for the academic year 2013-14. This data provided information about the numbers of students enrolled by disciplines and ISCED code, across the cluster. As a first step, this analysis of provision will be updated to 2014-15 data and ideally 2015-16.

Analysis of intake

The partners will also develop an intake analysis, based on the CAO entry routes, and the intake, application and points information for each route. This will provide a picture of the overall demand for courses in the cluster, and an indication of the extent of unmet demand.

Projected intake

The partners have agreed to share, on a confidential basis, their intake plans for each entry route for the coming three years (2016-2018), for full time undergraduate courses in Level 6, 7 and 8. This data will be used to develop a projection of intake for the cluster as a whole, and to identify trends in capacity by discipline.

Analysis of entry routes
The partners will undertake an analysis of the entry routes, and examine the rationale for each of the small entry routes, with a view to ensuring optimisation consistent with the national strategy.

Projected student numbers
Using the existing student flow data and the intake projections, the cluster will develop projections of student numbers for the cluster.

Demand projections
Using the DES figures for school age population, and CSO population data, the trends in student demand for entry to higher education will be projected.

Postgraduate projections
The partners will extend the mapping task to include postgraduate courses, and develop a shared understanding of postgraduate student numbers in each discipline.

Output

The core output of this activity will be an academic plan for the cluster for full time undergraduate courses of level 6, 7 and 8, showing:

- e Existing enrolment;
- f Planned intake;
- g Planned entry routes;
- h Projected demand;
- i Projected changes in disciplinary mix.

As supplementary outputs, the cluster will produce:

- i An analysis of postgraduate enrolment across the cluster;
- ii An analysis of available information on future skills needs in the cluster catchment area;
- iii A mapping of transfer and progression options within the cluster.

Implementation

The implementation of this task is overseen by the Registrars' group. The coordinator for the task is Dr Adrienne Hobbs, (Adrienne.M.Hobbs@nuim.ie).

The working group responsible for this activity comprises.

Professor Jim Walsh (Chair)	MU
Dr. John McGinnity	MU
Norrie O'Callaghan	AIT
John McKenna	AIT
Dr. Brendan Ryder	DkIT
Dr. Billy Kelly	DCU

Estimated costs

The main costs are the cost of buyout of staff time. In each case the buyout is costed as the cost of replacement.

Academic planning	**Euro**
Coordinator (release and back fill half time EA)	15,000
Jim Walsh (release and backfill half time AO)	30,000
Data analyst (contract appointment)	15,000
Publication and graphics	4,000
Travel and meetings	1,000
Total	**65,000**

Strand 4: MEND Cluster: the mapping of small and medium enterprise across the region and developing systematic engagement with SMEs

Context

The fourth component within the specific project to be developed by the Dublin II cluster in respect of student pathways and academic planning concerns the mapping of small and medium enterprise across the region and developing systematic engagement with these SMEs. While this represents a new addition to the original architecture, it rhymes with the separate Regional Skills initiative launched by the DoES in 2015. The cluster understands this component of the project is to provide a basis for enhanced dialogue with enterprise within the region and for more focused academic planning that is informed by the requirements of enterprise. It is also consistent with the transition and progression objectives that underpin the central linkage between FE and HE that lies at the heart of this specific project. It is anticipated that a fruit of this strand will be a more coordinated and consistent dialogue between the world of work and that of education and training and that this conversation will influence the shaping and coordination of offerings by all providers within the MEND region. It has also the potential to be of significant advantage to the agencies and enterprise in affording them a single, maintained, and current information resource concerning skills availability and development.

Activities

Scoping the requirements under this element. The cluster partners will deliver on this element in a phased manner: the first undertaking will be to work with representative enterprise bodies and with the national agencies to build a database of SMEs within the cluster region. In so doing, the cluster will work closely with the newly appointed project managers of the Regional Skills Fora within the four regions covering the North East, Dublin, Mid East, and Midlands. The stated focus of the Regional Skills Fora is to foster better engagement between the public education and training system, employers, and other regional stakeholders, in order to build skills in regions across the country. In realising this initial objective, it is envisaged that the cluster will utilise a portal to map the SMEs. This portal is likely to be constructed along the lines of the existing FE/HE portal already developed by the cluster but, for clarity, this will be, at least initially, a separate instrument and will have a dedicated focus on SMEs and skills availability.

While the mapping is being addressed, the cluster will move to the next phase which will be to work with key stakeholders including enterprise to identify and establish the optimum vehicle for systematic engagement between academia and enterprise. It is envisaged that this phase of the work will involve the project managers of the Regional Skills Fora and will also involve the FE partners within the cluster's established Higher Education and Further Education Network.

Workplan

The working group charged with the design and delivery of this project (please see below for full information) has set out a detailed high level work plan with indicative timelines which works on a logical, phased basis. In brief, the phases can be outlined as follows:

1. Develop Industry Database
   - a Define Industry Parameters;
   - b Obtain Industry Dataset;
   - c Develop Base Structure.
2. Administration
   - a Define Budget Requirement;
   - b Approve Budget Spend.
3. Develop User-Interface
   - a Defined User-Interface;
   - b Programme Interface;
   - c Trial User-Interface;
   - d Portal Live.

4 Institutions Engagement Mapping
   a Define/agree engagement categorisations;
   b Obtain Industry mapping;
   c Map institution engagement to Industry map;
   d Upload Institution engagement to database.
5 Pilot Trials
   a Evaluate portal effectiveness;
   b Feedback /review discussions;
   c Update Portal;
6 Operate Portal

Building the database

There is merit in building a portal consistent with the successful progression pathways example already delivered by All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) and this is being actively explored by the working group established to oversee this module of the project. The scoping being undertaken currently comprises:

- the type of information that should be captured;
- the best option to obtain enterprise information;
- the structure of information required to be captured by internal surveys;
- the cost to obtain the enterprise information;
- the type of analysis which may be possible.

With respect to capturing the data, the working group is considering a range of sources and supports including EI, IDA, Kompass, LEOs, Solas, VisionNet, and CRO.

Output

The predicted outputs from this activity are ultimately envisaged to be:

a The development of a sub network of Regional Skills Fora project managers within the four regions covered by the cluster;
b The mapping of SMEs across the MEND region;
c The build of a portal providing access to the SME network;
d The establishment of an SME/agency/HE & FE forum to identify and develop the optimal mode of systematic engagement between enterprise and the academy within the MEND region.

As a supplementary outputs, the cluster will:

e Assist in the initial work to be undertaken by the Regional Skills Fora program managers;
f Will necessarily interact with the remaining three elements within this project.

Timeline

This will be a phased process. Systematic engagement is contingent on the build of a reliable database and the construction of a portal that is of benefit to both academia (FE & HE) and enterprise. Realistically, it is envisaged that this element of the project will run to the close of the academic year 2016/17.

Implementation

As for the other strands, the implementation of this task is overseen by the Registrars' group. The coordinator for the task has yet to be finalised. The working group established to oversee the strand is led by Irene McCausland, DkIT.

The working group responsible for this activity:

Irene McCausland (Chair)	DkIT
Richard Stokes	DCU
Lorraine Danaher *Regional Skills Project Manager*	Midlands region
Michael Lonegan	AIT
Neil McLoughlin	DkIT
Aidan Browne	DkIT
John Scanlan	MU

Estimated costs

The costings here are necessarily speculative at this stage and will be informed better by AIRO once the scope of the project has been better defined through

the scoping and information-gathering stage. The draft budget here is based on information available at time of writing.

There is also the cost of buyout of staff time. The buyout is recorded as the cost of replacement.

SME mapping	Euro
Coordinator (release and back fill half time EA)	30,000
AIRO dataset acquisition	15,000
AIRO development cost	20,000
Institution mapping/upload	30,000
AIRO trial/host (12mth)	10,000
Travel and meetings	3,000
Total	**108,000**

Conclusion

The MEND partners would like to thank the HEA for its continued support for the cluster, and for its appreciation of the value of these activities. We recognise that this project plan is produced, rather unusually, during the activity. This was made necessary by the practicalities of working as a cluster, and with a range of external partners. The working groups were formed and initially tasked to agree the optimal approach and realistic targets. In all four strands, considerable work has already been done, and staffing and workload arrangements have been made, in order to ensure that the objectives set out here are attainable.

The cluster partners are reflecting on the recommendation within the HEA's discussion paper Regional Clusters: Maximising Collective Impact 2015-2020 which states that more regular interaction between the HEA and Regional Clusters is appropriate. The transaction time that the partners within the MEND cluster are dedicating to this project is significant and identifying the space and most appropriate channel to facilitate communication is a matter under consideration. Given the dynamic nature of the consolidated project being addressed currently by the cluster, there would be merit in agreeing a communication protocol that is fit for purpose and sensitive to the pressures upon all parties involved.

The costs presented here are estimates. Staff costs are based on the cost of backfill for those staff for whom backfill is needed. For other staff members, this work will be an addition to existing responsibilities. The cost of external services, particularly for the two portals, is more difficult to determine until the scope of the work is defined accurately, and the figures here are based on preliminary specifications.

The costs presented for the mapping of, and engagement with SMEs in the region are the least certain. This is a new joint activity for the cluster (although each institution has existing SME activities), and the scale of the task is not yet clear. The current estimate for this task is €108,000, which exceeds the available resources by €31,680. However the partners plan to proceed with this work, and as soon as possible to return with more accurate costings for this component, which will define clearly (i) what can be achieved within the available resources, and (ii) what additional work could be achieved if additional resources were available.

Strand	Estimated Euro costs
HE and FE network	61,700
FE HE portal	83,980
Academic planning	65,000
SME mapping	108,000
Total	**318,680**

Appendix 3

DkIT's Part-time Accredited Programmes 2016/2017

Business

BBS (L6, 7 & 8) *NEW*

Accounting Technician (L6)

Certificate in Digital Marketing and Digital Media Management (L7)

Certificate in Lean Six Sigma (Green Belt) (L7)

Certificate in Employment Law (L7) *NEW*

Certificate in Entrepreneurship & Innovation (Level 9) *NEW*

Certificate in Strategic Planning & Branding (Level 9) *NEW*

Certificate in Innovation & New Product Development (Level 9) *NEW*

Certificate in Strategic Business Planning (Level 9) *NEW***

Certified Payroll Technician

Certified VAT Technician

Humanities, Languages and Physical Activity

BA (Hons) in Social Care (L8)

Issues in Social Care (Module from BA (Hons) in Social Care)

Certificate in Learning and Teaching (L9)

Engineering

Certificate in Renewable Energy (L6) *Available Online*

Certificate in Building Information Modelling (L6) *NEW*

Certificate in Building Energy Management (L6) *NEW*

Higher Certificate in Property and Facilities Management (L6) *NEW*

B.Sc. in Civil Engineering (Add-on L8)

Informatics and Creative Arts

Cert in Programming (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Computer Hardware (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Web Development (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Database Development (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Computer Networking (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Systems Administration (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Computer Service Management (L7) *NEW*

Cert in Object Oriented (OO) Development (L8) *NEW*

Cert in Universal Design (L8) *NEW*

Cert in 2D & 3D Digital Animation Production (L7) *NEW*

Cert in 3D for Games (L7) *NEW*

Diploma in Composing for Games (L8) *NEW*

Health and Science

BA in Applied Early Childhood Studies (Advanced Entry into Year 2 only)

BA (Hons) in Applied Early Childhood Studies (Add-on L8) *NEW*

Certificate in Assessment and Mgt of the Acutely Ill Adult

Certificate in Assessment and Mgt of the Acutely Ill Woman in Maternity Services

Certificate in Assessment and Mgt of the Acutely Ill Adult in the Emergency Department

Certificate in Fundamentals of Understanding and Responding to Domestic Abuse (L8) *NEW*

Certificate in Contemporary Palliative Care Practice (L8 - 10 credits) (for nurses/midwives only) *NEW*

Certificate in Psychosocial Interventions (L8 - 20 credits) (for psychiatric nurses only) *NEW*

M.Sc. in Agricultural Biotechnology *NEW*

Postgraduate Diploma in Agricultural Biotechnology *NEW*

Certificate in Animal Biotechnology *NEW**

Certificate in Food and Feed Biotechnology *NEW*

Certificate in Environmental Biotechnology *NEW*

Certificate in Food Supply Chain Operations (L7)

Certificate in Food and Agri-Business (L7)

Appendix 4

DkIT Institutional Profile 2016/2017

DkIT Institutional Profile 2017/2018

Institutional Profile: Dundalk Institute of Technology
Profile 2016/17 (updated June 2016)

STUDENT NUMBERS

Entrants

	No.
New Entrants (Year 1 and 2 Full-time Undergraduate)	1,578

Graduates

	No.	%
Undergraduate Graduates	1,355	98%
Postgraduate Graduates	33	2%

Enrolments

		Full-time WTE	Part-time WTE	Remote	Total
Other Enrolments (IoTs only)	**No.**	**321**	0	0	**321**
Foundation	No.				0
FETAC Cert	No.				0
FETAC Advanced Cert	No.	321			321
of which are apprenticeships	No.	321			321
Undergraduate	***No.***	***4,501***	***295***	***0***	***4,796***
Diploma	No.				0
Certificate	No.				0
Higher Certificate	No.	211			211
Ordinary Degree (L7)	No.	1,824			1,824
Honours Degree (L8)	No.	2,466			2,466
Occasional	No.				0
Postgraduate	***No.***	***93***	***0***	***0***	***93***
Postgrad Diploma	No.				0
Postgrad Higher Diploma	No.				0
Postgrad Certificate	No.				0
Masters Taught (L9)	No.	61			61
Masters Research (L9)	No.	25			25
Doctorate (L10)	No.	7			7
Occasional	No.				0
Total UG and PG Enrolments	**No.**	**4,594**	**295**	0	**4,889**
Research & Taught (L9/10)	FTE				93
Research (L9/10)	FTE				32
Research (L10)	FTE				7

		Full-time	Part-time	Remote	Total
Other Enrolments (IoTs only)	**%**	**100%**	0%	0%	**100%**
Foundation	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FETAC Cert	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FETAC Advanced Cert	%	100%	0%	0%	100%
of which are apprenticeships	%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Undergraduate	***%***	***94%***	***6%***	***0%***	***98%***
Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Certificate	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Higher Certificate	%	100%	0%	0%	4%
Ordinary Degree (L7)	%	100%	0%	0%	38%
Honours Degree (L8)	%	100%	0%	0%	51%
Occasional	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgraduate	***%***	***100%***	***0%***	***0%***	***2%***
Postgrad Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgrad Higher Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgrad Certificate	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Masters Taught (L9)	%	100%	0%	0%	66%
Masters Research (L9)	%	100%	0%	0%	27%
Doctorate (L10)	%	100%	0%	0%	8%
Occasional	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total UG and PG Enrolments	**%**	**94%**	**6%**	**0%**	**100%**
Research & Taught (L9/10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				3.6%
Research (L9/10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				1.3%
Research (L10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				0.3%

DISCIPLINARY MIX

First Year Full-time Undergraduate New Entrants

	No.	%
General Programmes		0%
Education Science		0%
Humanities & Arts	207	13%
Social Science, Business & Law	407	26%
Science	162	10%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	192	12%
Agriculture & Veterinary	32	2%
Health & Welfare	175	11%
Computing and Creative Arts	403	26%
Combined		0%
Total	**1,578**	100%

Doctorate (All modes)

	No.	%
General Programmes		0%
Education Science		0%
Humanities & Arts		0%
Social Science, Business & Law	1	14%
Science	3	43%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction		0%
Agriculture & Veterinary		0%
Health & Welfare	2	29%
Computing and Creative Arts	1	14%
Combined		0%
Total	**7**	100%

PARTICIPATION

(% of Total Enrolments incl. Flexible Learning)		No.	%
Flexible Learners (PT, Distance, E-Learning, In-Service)	WTE	295	6%

	No.
Participants in Labour Market Activation (Springboard/LMA)	120

Regional Intake *(% of Full-time Enrolments)*	No.	%
from the institution's county (Louth)	2,160	47%
from the institution's county and bordering counties	4,364	95%

(% of New Entrants)	No.	%
Mature Entrants (Full-time Undergraduate)	253	16%
Estimate: Entrants with Disability (EAS)	79	5%
Estimate: Entrants from Non-Manual, Semi- and Unskilled Socio-economic Backgrounds (EAS)	395	25%

INTERNATIONALISATION

International Students (Full-time)*	No.	%
(% of Full-time Enrolments)	420	9%
EU	10	0%
Non-EU	410	9%

International Students (Part-time)*	No.	%
(% of Part-time Enrolments)	0	0%
EU		0%
Non-EU		0%

	No.
Erasmus Students Outgoing (excl. work placements)	15
Erasmus Students Incoming (excl. work placements)	71
Other Exchange Students	

* Note: international enrolments *exclude* exchange students

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Non-Progression Rate from 1st to 2nd Year: Using 2012/13 - 2013/2014 Data

	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
	%	%	%
General Programmes and Qualifications	N/A	N/A	N/A
Healthcare	N/A	3%	8%
Combined & Other Disciplines	N/A	N/A	N/A
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, Humanities	N/A	23%	16%
Science & Agriculture & Veterinary	3%	21%	N/A

	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
	%	%	%
Engineering (excl. Civil)	N/A	36%	N/A
Construction & related	N/A	46%	8%
Services	40%	17%	N/A
Computer Science	N/A	22%	23%
Total	28%	24%	13%

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

	No.
No. of Doctorate Graduates per 10 Academic Staff	0.2

	No.
Priority Patent Applications	1
Total Patents Granted	0
Invention Disclosures	2

	No.
Licence agreements (institution - private industry)	4
Spin-out companies created	1

STAFF

	No.	%
Core Staff	**408**	**100%**
Academic Staff	260	64%
Support staff	148	36%
Contract Research & Specialist Staff	**75**	**100%**
Academic Staff	26	35%
Support staff	49	65%
Total Staff	**483**	**100%**
Total Academic	286	59%
Total Support	197	41%

FINANCIAL DATA

	€ 000	%
Total Income	**43,694**	**100%**
State Grants	16,362	37%
Fees	19,434	44%
Exchequer		0%
Non-Exchequer		0%
Research Grants & Contracts	5,248	12%
Other Income	2,650	6%
Total Expenditure	**43,080**	**100%**
Core - Pay	30,831	72%
Core - Non-Pay	7,001	16%
Research Grants & Contracts - Pay	2,748	6%
Research Grants & Contracts - Non-Pay	2,500	6%

Institutional Profile: Dundalk Institute of Technolgy
Profile 2017/18

STUDENT NUMBERS

Entrants

	No.
New Entrants Year 1 (Full-time Undergraduate)	1,626
New Entrants Year 2+ (Full-time Undergraduate)	

Graduates

	No.	%
Undergraduate Graduates	1,359	97%
Postgraduate Graduates	35	3%

Enrolments

		Full-time	Part-time	Remote	Total
Other Enrolments (IoTs only)	**No.**	**336**	0	0	**336**
FETAC Cert	No.				0
FETAC Advanced Cert	No.	336			336
of which are apprenticeships	No.	336			336
Undergraduate	***No.***	***4,576***	***268***	***0***	***4,844***
Foundation/Access	No.				0
Diploma	No.				0
Certificate	No.				0
Higher Certificate	No.	223			223
Ordinary Degree (L7)	No.	1,798			1,798
Honours Degree (L8)	No.	2,555			2,555
Occasional	No.				0
Postgraduate	***No.***	***113***	***0***	***0***	***113***
Postgrad Diploma	No.				0
Postgrad Higher Diploma	No.				0
Postgrad Certificate	No.				0
Masters Taught (L9)	No.	73			73
Masters Research (L9)	No.	31			31
Doctorate (L10)	No.	9			9
Occasional	No.				0
Total UG and PG Enrolments	**No.**	**4,689**	**268**	**0**	**4,957**
Research & Taught (L9/10)	FTE				113
Research (L9/10)	FTE				40
Research (L10)	FTE				9

		Full-time	Part-time	Remote	Total
Other Enrolments (IoTs only)	**%**	**100%**	0%	0%	**100%**
FETAC Cert	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FETAC Advanced Cert	%	100%	0%	0%	100%
of which are apprenticeships	%	100%	0%	0%	100%
Undergraduate	***%***	***94%***	***6%***	***0%***	***98%***
Foundation/Access	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Certificate	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Higher Certificate	%	100%	0%	0%	5%
Ordinary Degree (L7)	%	100%	0%	0%	37%
Honours Degree (L8)	%	100%	0%	0%	53%
Occasional	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgraduate	***%***	***100%***	***0%***	***0%***	***2%***
Postgrad Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgrad Higher Diploma	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Postgrad Certificate	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Masters Taught (L9)	%	100%	0%	0%	65%
Masters Research (L9)	%	100%	0%	0%	27%
Doctorate (L10)	%	100%	0%	0%	8%
Occasional	%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total UG and PG Enrolments	**%**	**95%**	**5%**	**0%**	**100%**
Research & Taught (L9/10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				4.2%
Research (L9/10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				1.5%
Research (L10)	% FTE Honours Bach Degree L8 and All PG				0.3%

DISCIPLINARY MIX

First Year Full-time Undergraduate New Entrants

	No.	%
General Programmes and Qualifications		
Education		
Arts and Humanities	212	
Social Science, Journalism and Information		
Business, Administration and Law	417	
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	156	
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	407	
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction	222	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary	32	
Health and Welfare	180	
Services		
Total	**1,626**	0%

Doctorate (All modes)

	No.	%
General Programmes and Qualifications		
Education		
Arts and Humanities		
Social Science, Journalism and Information		
Business, Administration and Law	1	
Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics	4	
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	1	
Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Veterinary		
Health and Welfare	3	
Services		
Total	**9**	0%

PARTICIPATION

(% of Total Enrolments incl. Flexible Learning)	No.	%
Flexible Learners (PT, Distance, E-Learning, In-Service)	439	9%

(% of New Entrants)	No.	%
Mature Entrants Year 1 (Full-time Undergraduate)	260	16%
Mature Entrants Year 2+ (Full-time Undergraduate)		
Estimate: Entrants with Disability (EAS)	81	5%
Estimate: Entrants from Non-Manual, Semi- and Unskilled Socio-economic Backgrounds (EAS)	407	25%
New Entrants in receipt of Any Grant	1057	65%
New Entrants in receipt of Top-up Grant	276	17%

Regional Intake *(% of Full-time Enrolments)*	No.	%
from the institution's county	2,203	47%
from the institution's county and bordering counties	4,455	95%

Participants in Labour Market Activation (Springboard/LMA)	120
Students in receipt of the Fund for Students with Disabilities *(% of Full-time UG & PG Enrolments)*	141 (3%)

INTERNATIONALISATION

International Students (Full-time)*	No.	%
(% of Full-time Enrolments)	420	9%
EU	10	0%
Non-EU	410	9%

International Students (Part-time)*	No.	%
(% of Part-time Enrolments)	0	0%
EU		0%
Non-EU		0%

	No.
Erasmus Students Incoming (excl. work placements)	71
Erasmus Students Outgoing (excl. work placements)	15
Other Exchange Students	
Total no. of international (FT + PT + Erasmus Incoming) Students	491

* Note: international enrolments *exclude* exchange students

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Non-Progression Rate from 1st to 2nd Year: Using 2012/13 - 2013/2014 Data

	Level 6 %	Level 7 %	Level 8 %
General Programmes and Qualifications	N/A	N/A	N/A
Healthcare	N/A	3%	8%
Combined & Other Disciplines	N/A	N/A	N/A
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, Humanities	N/A	23%	16%
Science & Agriculture & Veterinary	3%	21%	N/A

	Level 6 %	Level 7 %	Level 8 %
Engineering (excl. Civil)	N/A	36%	n
Construction & related	N/A	46%	8%
Services	40%	17%	n
Computer Science	N/A	22%	23%
Total	28%	24%	13%

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

	No.
No. of Doctorate Graduates per 10 Academic Staff	0.3

	No.
Priority Patent Applications	1
Total Patents Granted	0
Invention Disclosures	3

	No.
Licence agreements (institution - private industry)	1
Spin-out companies created	0

STAFF

	No.	%
Core Staff	**402**	**100%**
Academic Staff	254	63%
Support staff	148	37%
Contract Research & Specialist Staff	**75**	**100%**
Academic Staff	28	37%
Support staff	47	63%
Total Staff	**477**	**100%**
Total Academic	282	59%
Total Support	195	41%

FINANCIAL DATA

	€ 000	%
Total Income	**43,748**	**100%**
State Grants	16,382	37%
Fees	19,518	45%
Exchequer		0%
Non-Exchequer		0%
Research Grants & Contracts	5,248	12%
Other Income	2,600	6%
Total Expenditure	**42,969**	**100%**
Core - Pay	30,720	71%
Core - Non-Pay	7,001	16%
Research Grants & Contracts - Pay	2,748	6%
Research Grants & Contracts - Non-Pay	2,500	6%

Appendix 5

DkIT's Report on Implementation of the Transitions agenda

Evidence shows that the student drop-out rates within Higher Education peaks in the first year (HEA, 2016). For the past number of years, DkIT has focussed its resources on the first year experience in an effort to improve retention rates and ensure that students complete their higher education programme. A significant induction process, which is reviewed annually, helps new students to move more easily into their programme and offers a comprehensive introduction to the Institute and its available support services. First year convenors and student mentors support first year students throughout the academic year and are both a visible point of contact and a significant source of advice and guidance.

Learner-centred assessment strategies and the core strategic themes and graduate qualities are embedded in all programmes. Programme assessment employs a diverse and balanced range of student centred assessment methods, both formative and summative. In first year programmes, a reduction in the number of modules was effected through the last cycle of programmatic reviews in 2013, in addition to an increase in the number of modules assessed solely through continuous assessment assignments. This has served to enable ease of transition to higher education for first year students. Group projects help students to get to know their peers, make new friends and improve self-confidence whilst developing team working skills. The curriculum itself and the specific learning and assessment activities within the individual modules are designed to promote active, deep learning and understanding in line with a student–centred approach. Practical activities and projects are widely used throughout the curriculum to enable students to apply their knowledge to, and take more control of, their learning.

Developing and implementation of teaching, learning and assessment strategies is a standard feature of the work of Programme Boards. Ongoing monitoring means that issues which may negatively affect retention can be identified and actioned at an early point in the academic cycle. Programme Boards report to the Academic Council on an annual basis.

A further significant development in 2015 was DkIT participation in Learning and Teaching projects funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning's Enhancement Fund. DkIT was/is a partner in the following projects:

- Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies (January 2015 to December 2016);
- Student Success Toolbox for flexible learners: Supporting transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks (January 2015 to June 2016);
- Assessment for Learning Resources for First Year Undergraduate Mathematics Modules (January 2015 to December 2016).

These projects have facilitated considerable innovation and development in key areas and have also allowed the Institute to further support the transitions agenda.

The aim of the Supporting Transition: Enhancing Feedback in First Year Using Digital Technologies project is to enhance feedback dialogue in first year undergraduate programmes through the use of digital technologies to support student transition. The project identifies and pilots technology supported feedback approaches to facilitate teacher feedback and feed-forward, as well as peer-feedback.

The aim of the Student Success Toolbox is to support transitions from thinking about study to the first weeks to increase retention and completion rates particularly for flexible learners (undergraduate adult, part-time and online/distance students) as this is a significant problem in the Irish Higher Education sector.

The project plans to achieve this aim by providing flexible learners with a suite of digital tools. These digital tools will assist flexible learners by helping them access their own readiness, provide feedback and lay the foundation for successful programme completion. The digital tools will also assist teachers and institutions in providing personalised and strategically targeted feedback to potentially at risk students for learning in the digital world. See **www.teachingandlearning.ie/student-success-toolbox-for-flexible-learners-supporting-transitions-from-thinking-about-study-to-the-first-weeks**. Project website is http://studentsuccess.ie/project-partners/

The project concerns the development of formative assessment techniques in order to improve the teaching and learning experience of first year undergraduate mathematics modules. The work will have two main components: we will develop formative assessment tools for use in the classroom; we will develop interactive tasks which can be used by students to monitor their own progress and support this progress with the identification of relevant existing e-learning material and the provision of new online resources. See **www.teachingandlearning.ie/assessment-for-learning-resources-for-first-year-undergraduate-mathematics-modules/**

In line with the transitions agenda, a number of programmes within the Institute now offer a common first year. For example: in the School of Engineering, two such programmes are the BSc in Construction Technology and the BSc (Hons) in Building Surveying. In the School of Informatics and Creative Arts, the BSc in Computing has been designed to allow students to progress to specialist areas in year 2 following completion of a common first year. In the School of Business and Humanities, business programmes in particular have been designed to allow students to transfer from one programme to another within the first year. In the School of Health and Science a common first year delivery model is employed in most of the Science undergraduate programmes and plans are ongoing to examine common entry with differing options in some of the programmes. In addition, in 2015, the Institute allowed students to transfer internally to an alternative programme after the close of the CAO offer rounds subject to availability and provided applicants have the necessary entry qualifications/points.

Appendix 6

DkIT's Report on Efforts to improve retention rates

In line with the National Plan for Equality of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 and the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, DkIT is committed to ensuring that student progression remains a key priority for the Institute. This is reflected in the Institute's decision to adopt retention as an enhancement theme by the Institute's Academic Council in September 2015.

Retention is a complex issue impacted by a number of factors to include the field of learning, the NFQ levels and the individual students' characteristics e.g. gender, age, socio-economic background and prior educational attainment (HEA, 2016). Evidence shows that a sense of belonging is crucial (Thomas, 2012). Key to improving retention rates is to ensure that proactive mainstream academic activities foster engagement and a sense of belonging and that the Institute adopts learner-centred teaching and learning approaches.

The 2013 cycle of Programmatic Reviews focussed heavily on learning and teaching strategies and how these innovative strategies were to be embedded in all programmes. This has brought about a shift in teaching, learning and assessment practices. More innovative and creative teaching strategies, accompanied with a wider more flexible repertoire of assessment methods are provided on a programme wide basis, so that they are congruent with learning outcomes. This approach has somewhat alleviated the barriers to progression by making greater use of continuous assessment techniques and reducing the number of terminal examinations on each programme.

Progression figures are monitored at programme and Institute level. In 2012/2013 progression rates for DkIT across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 72%, 76% and 87% respectively and were higher than the sectoral averages for Level 7 and 8 (74% for Level 6; 72% for Level 7 and 83% for Level 8) (A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education 2012/13 - 2013/14). For Levels 7 and 8 these figures were higher than the sectoral average with the exception of Level 6. In 2013/2014 progression rates for DkIT across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 63%, 77% and 86% for all students. It might be noted in this context that in 2015/2016 DkIT offered only 4 programmes at Level 6. For 2014/2015 progression rates at DkIT for all students across Levels 6, 7 and 8 stood at 70%, 74% and 85% respectively. The first year progression rates for 2014/2015 were 64%, 68% and 84% respectively. The overall progression rate for the Institute in 2014/2015 was 79% with 1st year progression rate of 74%. Sectoral averages for 2014/2015 have not yet been published.

Research highlights the importance of institutions providing adequate and tailored supports to meet the needs of those students most at risk of disengaging from the learning process (Crowley et al., 2012). DkIT addresses this risk through the work of the Institute's Centre for Learning and Teaching and the Student Learning Development Centre. These centres are key enablers in helping students actively engage in the learning process, not only at first year but throughout the student's academic experience. Through the Student Learning and Development Centre, the Institute has observed that the need for their service has expanded and intensified with demand being driven by 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students requiring support in such areas as academic writing and maths.

DkIT has pioneered new approaches to learning and pedagogical innovation through the work of these centres. Technology enhanced learning (TEL) is now used in most programmes in a range of diverse manners to enhance the student learning experiences.

Appendix 7
DkIT's Report on Systems and Workload Management

DkIT is supportive of the principle of workload management practices. However, more generally, the recommendations from the Review of Workload Allocation Models in Irish Higher Education Systems presents a number of challenges for Institutes of Technology as set out below:

1 The Academic Contract, which sets out the teaching obligations in terms of annual class contact hours, is a major barrier on achieving greater flexibility within the IoT sector. The Institute applies the standard academic workload of 18-20 hours per week for all academic staff. This provides little scope for flexibility;

2 The Contract is based on face to face delivery and thus it fails to recognise that modern learning methodologies make greater use of technology. Traditional approaches are not compatible with blended learning approaches or the delivery of fully online programmes;

3 There can be considerable variation between workloads for academic staff within the same Institution as student enrolments can vary considerably and with this the staff:student ratio. It is also very difficult to move academic staff between departments to reflect enrolment patterns. This is very much dependent on academic staff having compatible skills;

4 Activities such as lecture preparation, attendance at Department, Committee and Board meetings and meetings with students, (which make up the remainder of the working week for the period of 35 weeks per year), are not captured or recorded on any system;

5 The current academic contracts do not give allowance for research or administration activities. As such these hours are not captured or recorded.

Notwithstanding these issues, DkIT has introduced a degree of greater flexibility and transparency into the system through the adoption of a centralised timetabling system for all lecturing staff for managing and recording workload allocation. This is a relatively new system, introduced in the last two years. It has resulted in greater oversight and management of academic staff work plans. The purpose of such a system is to:

1 Ensure that the teaching resource meets teaching requirements;

2 Provide oversight and effective management of the additional 2 hours productivity requirements under the Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements;

3 Allow flexibility within the teaching resource to address research and industry/ community engagement institution objectives under these strategies.

The centralised timetable has also provided greater efficiencies in the use of teaching resources and facilities to include classrooms, lab facilities etc.

There are a number of developments at national level which will impact on workload allocations and hence require greater transparency and flexibility within the system to meet teaching requirements:

1. Under the auspices of the Landsdowne Road Agreement, the review and reallocation of the 2 hours additional productivity from teaching to non-teaching for all IoT academic staff in 2017;

2. The recent publication of the Cush Report on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Lecturing in Third Level Education in Ireland.

These national developments will inform a number on-going reviews on academic planning and provision within the Institute. The Executive Board recently appointed a Working Group to examine timetables against Approved Programme Schedules (APS). A review of teaching hours in each of the four Schools on each programme has been completed and timetabled hours compared to Approved Programme Schedule (APS) hours. The Working Group has also benchmarked teaching hours at DkIT against sector norms and has made a number of recommendations and observations.

In general, there were few excess hours timetabled over those allocated in the APS. Any instance where excess hours have been scheduled to date, will be corrected in September 2016 as there are fewer teaching hours available due to retirements and the non-replacement of retirees.

Going forward, the Institute's practices within workload allocation management will centre on the centralised timetabling system and the on-going review of allocation teaching hours within a finite resource pool.

However the Institute would welcome the introduction of a workload allocation model for the IoT sector similar to that of the IUA sector.

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www.dkit.ie

Dundalk Institute of Technology
Dundalk Co Louth Ireland
A91 K584

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Dhún Dealgan
Dún Dealgan Co Lú Éire
A91 K584

t +353 42 9370 200
f +353 42 9370 201
e info@dkit.ie