

# AIT/LIT Consortium

## Eligibility Criteria Sample Process Review - AIT/LIT Consortium



### **Deloitte Ireland LLP**

Deloitte & Touche House  
Charlotte Quay  
Limerick

[www.deloitte.com/ie](http://www.deloitte.com/ie)

**Draft report issued:**

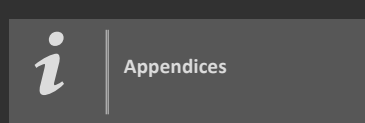
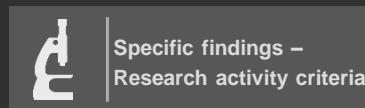
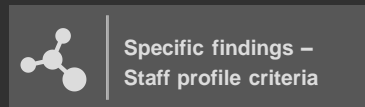
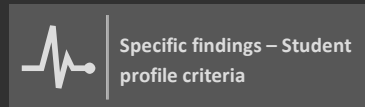
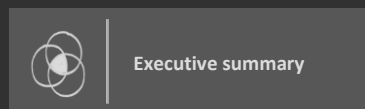
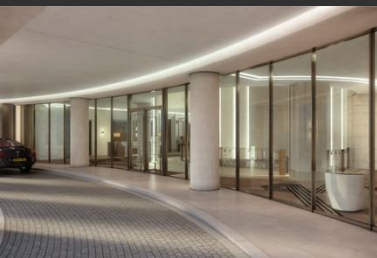
7 October 2020

**Final report issued:**

4 November 2020

### **Report owners:**

Professor Ciarán Ó Catháin, President Athlone Institute of Technology  
Professor Vincent Cunnane, President Limerick Institute of Technology  
Dr. Niall Seery, Technological University Project Director Athlone Institute of Technology  
Mr. Terry Twomey, Technological University Project Director Limerick Institute of Technology



# Contents

	Page
1. Executive summary	3
2. Specific Findings - Student Profile Criteria	14
3. Specific Findings- Staff Profile Criteria	23
4. Specific Findings- Research Activity	32
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>35</b>
1. Statement of responsibility	36
2. Technological Universities Act 2018 Extract	37
3. Extracts from HEA Guidance	38
4. Schedule of Meetings	40
5. Sample Programmes	41
6. Programmes with work placement	42
7. Terminal degree sample	43
8. Listing of non teaching staff (involved in the provision of at least level 8 programmes)	45

## Key dates:

Commencement of fieldwork	20 April 2020
Date of draft report	
• Phase 1: 28(1)(a)(i)	05 May 2020
• Phase 2: s.28(1)(a)(ii) (I), (II), and (III)	14 August 2020
• Phase 3: 28(1) (c) (i) (ii) (iii), (e) (i)(ii), (f) (i) (ii), (g) (i)(ii)	7 October 2020
Date of final report	4 November 2020

This report has been prepared on the basis of the limitations set out in **Appendix 1**.

This report and the work connected herewith are subject to the Terms and Conditions of the contract dated 10 April 2020 between the Athlone and Limerick Institutes of Technology on behalf of the Athlone/Limerick Consortium (AIT/LIT Consortium) and Deloitte. This report has been commissioned by the Athlone and Limerick Institutes of Technology on behalf of AIT/LIT Consortium.

# 1. Executive Summary



# 1. Executive summary

## 1.1 Introduction

Chapter 9 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 (the “Act”) sets out the application process for applicant institutes to become a technological university. Section 28 of that Act sets out a number of eligibility criteria (the “Eligibility Criteria”) that needs to be met by the applicant Institutes of Technology. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) issued in 2018, a guidance document called *Technological Universities – Proposed process in respect of an application to become Technological University* (the “HEA Guidance”) to assist applicant institutions with interpretation of the Act and providing additional clarity on the technology university application process.

The Athlone Institute of Technology (“AIT”) and Limerick Institute of Technology (“LIT”) on behalf of the Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology Consortium (hereinafter “AIT/LIT Consortium”) plan to submit their Application (the “Application”) to become a Technological University to the Department of Education & Skills in Q4 2020. The purpose of this assignment is to ascertain if the AIT/LIT Consortium meet the minimum eligibility criteria in certain areas within section 28 of the Act. This engagement will be undertaken over a number of phases as agreed with AIT/LIT Consortium.

### 1.1.1 Scope

The scope of our assignment was to ascertain if the AIT/LIT Consortium meet certain eligibility criteria set out in section 28 of the Act. This review was undertaken in a number of phases. Each phase was limited in its scope to the below eligibility criteria set out in section 28 of the act as set out below:

Phase 1: 28(1)(a)(i) of the Act commenced from 20 April 2020

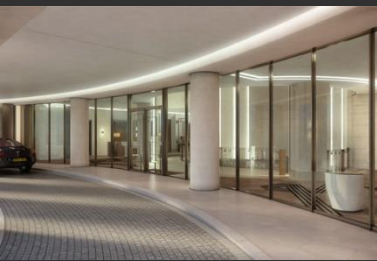
- The number of students (in the AIT/LIT Consortium) registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level [s.28.(1)(a) refers]; and
- From the base number identified above, ascertain the number/percentage of research students registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level [s.28.(1)(a)(i) refers].

Phase 2: 28(1)(a)(ii)(I),(II) and (III) of the Act commenced from 18 May 2020

- From the base number identified in phase 1 above, ascertain that at least 30% of students are either [s.28.(1)(a)(ii) refers]:
  - I. Registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning;
  - II. Registered on a programme that has been designed, and is being delivered, with the involvement of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located;
  - III. students who are not less than 23 years of age.

Phase 3: 28(1)(c)(i)(ii)(I)(II)(iii),(e)(i)(ii),(f)(i)(ii) and (g)(i)(ii) of the Act commenced from 14 September 2020

- From the base number identified ascertained the number of full-time academic staff from AIT/LIT engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level-
- From the base number identified the number of full-time academic staff from AIT/LIT engaged in both the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and the conduct of research.
- From the base number identified the number of full-time academic staff of AIT/LIT engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





# 1. Executive summary

## 1.1.2 Approach

Our approach to this review was:

- Through discussion with key staff, establish the processes applied to identify the student numbers provided by the AIT/LIT Consortium;
- Evaluate the process applied by AIT/LIT Consortium by checking sample data and reviewing the assumptions underlying same.

The Eligibility Criteria requested to be reviewed is set out in **Appendix 2**. Further, HEA have released a proposed process in respect of an application to become Technological University, 2018 as set out in **Appendix 3**.

It should be noted that Deloitte did not undertake testing of full data population. As part of our review we identified the approach and process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium and selected a sample of each relevant data population in order to ascertain the process undertaken. Refer to section 2 for further details. Our work was conducted in accordance with the limitations set out in **Appendix 1**.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices

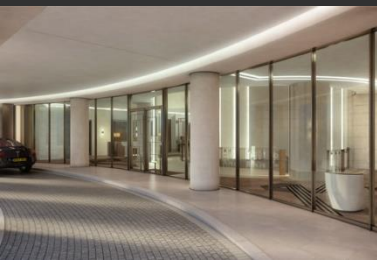


# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 1</b>		
<p>S. 28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelors degree level:</p>	<p>From the information provided by the AIT/LIT Consortium, they indicated the total number of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelors degree level is <b>7,434</b>.</p>	<p>The data used to analyse the student base numbers was the March 2020 Student Records System (SRS) return, covering the 2019/2020 academic year, submitted to the HEA by both AIT and LIT. Deloitte received the SRS data from AIT and LIT separately. We then consolidated the dataset and from this consolidated dataset, we reviewed and the student numbers applying the methodology agreed by the AIT/LIT Consortium. Please refer to section 2.1.2 for details of the review conducted.</p>
<p>(i) at least 4 per cent are research students registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level, and</p>	<p>Of the above students, 318, i.e. <b>4.28%</b> are research students.</p>	<p>Our review of the methodology identified that both incoming and outgoing exchange students were included in the base student numbers. As exchange students, they should only be counted one way (incoming or outgoing) and we would suggest that only the AIT/LIT Consortium students be included in the base student numbers. By excluding the incoming exchange students (54), the total number of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelors degree level is <b>7,380</b>. This contradicts the figures provided by AIT/LIT Consortium, due to their inclusion of incoming exchange students (54). Please refer to section 2.1.2 (page 11) for details.</p> <p>No issue came to our attention with respect to the process followed by the AIT/LIT consortium to determine that 318 students were registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level. The 318 research students represents:</p> <p><b>4.31%</b> of the <b>7,380</b> students are research students.</p> <p>Please refer to section 2.1.3 for details.</p>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 2</b>		
(ii) at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:	<p>Following findings in phase 1, AIT/LIT Consortium amended its methodology and reduced its base student number from 7,434 to 7,380. The base number of 7,380 was used by the AIT/LIT Consortium to ascertain the per cent under conditions I, II, and III.</p> <p>From the information provided by the AIT/LIT Consortium, they indicated that they have not met condition I, while conditions II and II have been met.</p>	<p>AIT/LIT consortium is only required to meet one condition on this criteria. Our review identified that condition I was not achieved and nothing came to our attention in the process reviewed to indicate that conditions II and III were not attained. The results for all 3 conditions are summarised as follows:</p>
(I) students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning;	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium indicated that of the 7,380 students, 733 students or <b>10%</b> are students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis.</p>	<p>No issue came to our attention with respect to the process followed by the AIT/LIT Consortium to determine the number of students who were registered on a programme leading to an award to at least honours bachelors degree that was being delivered on a flexible basis.</p> <p>Based on the work performed, 733 students are registered on programmes that are being delivered on a flexible basis, this reflects <b>9.93%</b> of the <b>7,380</b> students registered on a programme leading to an award to at least honours bachelors degree. Therefore this criterion was not achieved.</p> <p>Refer to section 2.1.4 for further details.</p>

Phase 2 – Continued →

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
Phase 2 . . . . Continued		
(II) students who are registered on a programme that has been designed, and is being delivered, with the involvement (which shall be construed in accordance with subsection (2)(b)), of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located;	<p>All programmes are designed and developed in conjunction with industry contact(s) relevant to the programme.</p> <p>All programmes require involvement of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders to contribute to the assessment of learners.</p> <p>AIT/LIT Consortium indicated that of the 7,380 students, 3,835 students or <b>52%</b> are students are registered on programmes containing a mandatory work placement module as part of the programme.</p>	<p>The approach undertaken by AIT/LIT Consortium in determining the design of programmes that would address the legislative criteria was in line with expectations. In respect to the delivery of programmes, they adopted the interpretation set out in section 28 (2)(b)(iii) (student placement) of the TU Act 2018.</p> <p>The AIT/LIT Consortium have 74 programmes with a mandatory work placement element and we identified that a total of 3,835 students were enrolled and attending all years of the programmes in Ireland.</p> <p>Our review identified that an average of 97.52% (1,328) students attending their programme of study in Ireland took their work placement within the region in 2019/2020. We extrapolated this number across all years and identified that 3,740 students are expected to take their work placement within the region, the region being Ireland.</p> <p>From a sample of 20 workplace students, we identified one variance or a 5% error rate where one student was not accounted in the international office placement record in that they did not attend their work placement within the region.</p> <p>The error identified above, changes marginally the number of students placed within the region from 3,740 to 3,739. The error taken in isolation, does not impact on the AIT/LIT consortium achieving this eligibility criteria. Should the error rate be extrapolated across the 3,740 students placed within the region, it would mean a further 187 students could take their work placement internationally, leaving <b>3,553</b> or <b>48.14%</b> of the 7,380 are students on a programme designed, delivered with involvement of industry within the region, the number being well within the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Refer to section 2.1.5 for further details.</p>
(III) students who are not less than 23 years of age.	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium indicated that of the 7,380 students, <b>2,639</b> students or <b>36%</b> are students who are not less than 23 years of age.</p>	<p>On calculating the age of students in the consolidated SRS file, we identified 2,639 students who are not less than 23 years of age. Based on the work performed, <b>2,639</b> or <b>35.76%</b> of the 7,380 students are not less than 23 years of age as of 1 March 2020.</p> <p>Refer to section 2.1.6 for further details.</p>

Executive summary

Specific findings – Student profile criteria

Specific findings – Staff profile criteria

Specific findings – Research activity criteria

Appendices





# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 3</b>		
S. 28 (1) (c) Of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—	From the information provided by the AIT/LIT Consortium, they indicated that the total number of staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level is <b>642</b> .	The base data used for this analysis was the AIT and LIT Employment Control Framework (ECF) of as of June 2020 returned to the HEA. Deloitte reviewed and re-calculated the ECF to determine the 642 base number of staff.
(i) at least 90 per cent hold a masters degree or doctoral degree,	Of the above staff, <b>600</b> , or <b>93%</b> staff hold a master's, doctoral or doctoral equivalent degree.	<p>Nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify the full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level was not satisfactory.</p> <p>When calculating this eligibility, AIT/LIT Consortium have included staff with masters, doctoral degree or equivalent to a doctoral degree in accordance with the definition of terminal degrees set out in the HEA guidance document (refer to Appendix 3 for extract) in order to meet the legislative criteria in S.28(1)(c)(i).</p> <p>Our review identified that of the 642 staff, <b>600</b> or <b>93.45%</b> staff hold a masters degree, doctoral degree or terminal degree.</p> <p>Please refer to section 3.1.2 for details.</p>

Phase 3 – Continued →

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 3 . . . Continued</b>		
<p>(ii) at least 45 per cent hold—</p> <p>(I) a doctoral degree, or</p> <p>(II) subject to subparagraph (iii), a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,</p> <p>And</p> <p>(iii) not more than 10 per cent hold only the qualifications referred to in <i>subparagraph (ii)(II)</i>;</p>	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium indicated that of the 642 staff, <b>291</b> or <b>45%</b> of staff hold a doctoral or terminal degree.</p> <p>This is broken to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>227</b> or <b>35.36%</b> of staff holds a doctoral degree.</li> <li>• <b>64</b> or <b>9.96%</b> of staff holds a terminal degree (qualification to at least honours degree within the framework together with a professional membership or a qualification that is the highest achievable in their profession deemed equivalent)</li> </ul> <p>As indicated above, of the 642 staff, 64 or 9.96% of staff holds a terminal degree (qualification to at least honours degree within the framework together with a professional membership or a qualification that is the highest achievable in their profession deemed equivalent)</p>	<p>For the purpose of the Application, the Consortium have included a variety of terminal degrees where they believe the awarded degree held by staff combined with the staff experience could reasonably be viewed by an Advisory Panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree.</p> <p>Our review identified that of the 642 staff, <b>291</b> or <b>45.33%</b> staff hold a doctoral degree or a terminal degree.</p> <p>AIT/LIT Consortium have indicated that they have more than 64 full-time academic staff holding a level 10 equivalent or terminal degree, and engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level. However, for purposes of the application process, this was capped to a maximum of 64 staff, the surplus staff have been recorded as holding their highest awarded qualification e.g. honours bachelor degree or masters degree. Deloitte have not performed a review to determine this.</p> <p>Our review identified that of the 642 staff, <b>64</b> or <b>9.96%</b> staff hold a level 10 equivalent or a terminal degree.</p> <p>Please refer to section 3.1.3 for details.</p>

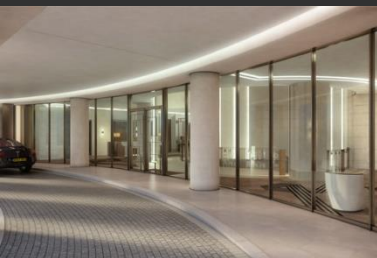
Phase 3 – Continued →

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 3 . . . . Continued</b>		
<p>S. 28 (1) (e) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both of the following, at least 80 per cent hold a doctoral degree—</p> <p>(i) the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and</p> <p>(ii) the conduct of research;</p>	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium indicated a total of 87 full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and the conduct of research. Of the 87, <b>80 or 91.95%</b> holds a doctoral degree.</p>	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium have interpreted S.28(1)(e)(i) as a full-time academic staff engaged in the teaching or supervision of students registered on a Programme Type 27 (Doctoral degree). Through the Programme Type 27 students, the supervisors were then identified through records held by the AIT Graduate School and the LIT Graduate Research Office (GRO).</p> <p>Furthermore, AIT/LIT Consortium interpreted the conduct of research as full-time academic staff who are engaged in teaching or supervision of a research student in addition to at least one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Research outputs (publications, products, services);</li> <li>ii. Industry Live Research project;</li> <li>iii. Research Income – Funding External or Internal.</li> </ul> <p>AIT/LIT Consortium identified research active staff through review of research funding, commercialisation, consultation activity from the Research/Finance Office and through review of Institutional repository and/or ORCID profiles.</p> <p>Nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify that the full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award of a doctoral degree holds a doctoral degree, and the conduct of research was not satisfactory.</p> <p>Our review identified that of the 87 full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and the conduct of research <b>80 or 91.95%</b> hold a doctoral degree.</p> <p>Please refer to section 3.1.4 for details.</p>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 3 . . . Continued</b>		
<p>S. 28 (1) (f) each of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level—</p> <p>(i) holds—</p> <p>(I) a doctoral degree, or</p> <p>(II) a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree, And</p>	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium reported that <b>80</b> or <b>91.95%</b> of the 87 supervisors hold a doctoral degree.</p> <p>Of the 87 supervisors <b>52</b> are principal supervisors and all hold a doctoral degree.</p>	<p>AIT/LIT Consortium interpreted S.28 (1)(f) as principal supervisors of students registered on Programme Type 27. Our interpretation of the legislation is that all PhD supervisors, should hold a doctoral or a terminal degree. However, the Consortium may choose to make a case in the TU application, that there is sufficient mitigation where the Principal Supervisor has a L10, thereby providing adequate supervision of the student.</p> <p>AIT/LIT Consortium used the March 2020 SRS return to identify the number of students (120) registered on a Level 10 PhD (Programme Type 27). Through the SRS, AIT/LIT Consortium identified the students and then identified the supervisors through the PhD Student datasets held by the AIT Graduate School and the LIT Graduate Research Office (GRO).</p> <p>Nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify that the full-time academic staff engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award of a doctoral degree holds a doctoral degree, or a terminal degree was not satisfactory.</p> <p>We ascertained from our review of the datasets that <b>80</b> or <b>91.95%</b> of the 87 supervisors hold a doctoral degree. We also ascertained from our review of the datasets that <b>52</b> of the 87 supervisors were principal supervisors, and <b>100%</b> of the principal supervisors hold a doctoral degree. We tested a sample of principal supervisors and no issues has come to our attention. Please refer to section 3.1.5 for details.</p>
<p>(ii) has a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme;</p>	<p>Currently <b>87</b> or <b>100%</b> of full-time academic staff engaged in the supervision of Programme Type 27 students have a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme.</p>	<p>Having defined the conduct of research, and identified the research active in S. 28 (1) (e) in the previous page.</p> <p>Our review identified that of the 87 staff engage in either the principal supervision or co-supervision of 120 Programme Type 27 students, <b>87</b> or <b>100%</b> of staff engage in the conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme.</p> <p>Please refer to section 3.1.5 for details.</p>

Executive summary

Specific findings – Student profile criteria

Specific findings – Staff profile criteria

Specific findings – Research activity criteria

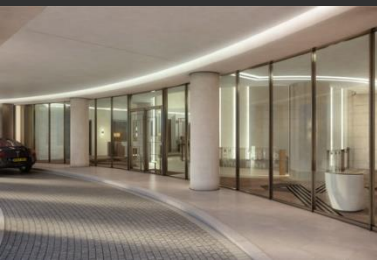
Appendices

# 1. Executive summary

## 1.2 Summary of findings

We set out below a high level outcome of our review by eligibility criteria.

Legislative criteria	How AIT/LIT Consortium plans to meet the criteria:	Outcome of Deloitte review
<b>Phase 3 . . . . Continued</b>		
S. 28 (1) (g) in respect of not less than 3 fields of education—	Programmes leading to doctoral degree level are provided in the following broad ISCED fields of education:	AIT/LIT Consortium through review of the Graduate school applications/registrations, which references the programmes ISCED code, AIT/LIT identified students registered on Programme Type 27 and their corresponding ISCED code.
(i) the applicant institutes provide programmes that lead to awards to doctoral degree level, and	02 – Arts and humanities 03 – Social sciences, journalism and information 04 – Business, administration and law 05 – Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics 06 – Information and Communication Technologies 07 – Engineering, manufacturing and construction 09 – Health and welfare 10 – Services	Nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify the number of fields of education that the applicant institutes provide programmes that lead to awards to doctoral degree level and that the academic staff and students conduct research in was not satisfactory. Our review identified that AIT/LIT Consortium provide programmes that leads to the award of a doctoral degree in <b>seven</b> fields of education. Please refer to section 4.1.2 for details
(ii) the academic staff and students of the applicant institutes conduct research;		



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria

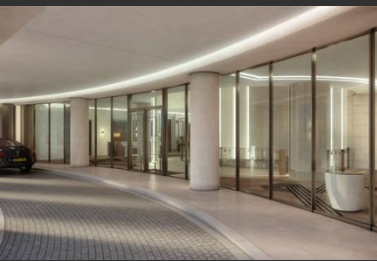


Appendices



## 2. Specific Findings – Student Profile Criteria





Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

An overview of the process to collate student profile information applied by AIT/LIT Consortium together with details of the independent outcome of the review is outlined below.

### 2.1 Overview - Student Profile Criteria

#### 2.1.1. Overview:

The AIT/LIT Consortium plan to use the March 2020 Student Records System (SRS) returns that they have separately submitted to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) when calculating its student profile to be included in its Technological University application.

We were informed by the LIT Data Analytics & Contracts Manager that both Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT), and Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) rely on their internal controls to ensure the data integrity of the SRS returns. In addition, the two institutes investigate the SRS for anomalies, and prior to submitting the SRS returns, the Registrar of each institute signs the SRS return confirming its accuracy. Upon submission, the HEA conducts a sense check over the SRS returns submitted by each institution. We have not performed any testing on the controls nor process outlined above. Please refer to Appendix 1 for the limitations associated with using this data.

The SRS return is submitted bi-annually to the HEA by HEIs in March, and November of each year. There are two streams to the data submitted:

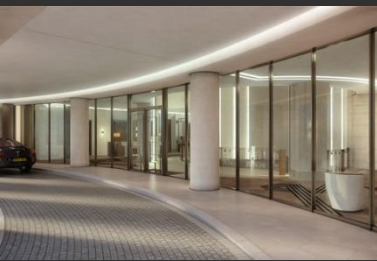
- Data for current students - those who are actively in the process of completing a programme in the current academic year.
- Data for graduates - those who have successfully completed a programme in the preceding academic year.

As part of this assignment, information from three files within the SRS return were utilised, namely:

- **Programme file** – contains information on the general area of study that a course belongs to e.g. Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Arts, Diploma in Business Studies. The programme file contains descriptors such as programme name, faculty, and programme type (i.e. Undergraduate Degree).
- **Course file** – a course is a denominated area of study within a programme, for instance, Bachelor of Engineering in Electronic & Electrical Engineering. The student has enrolled on the programme Bachelor of Engineering but is pursuing a more specific area of study. The course file contains descriptors such as course name, course code, awarding body etc.
- **Student survey** - contains the individual student or graduate records. A broad range of data is collected: student details such as age; gender; country of origin; course details such as course being pursued; mode of study (full-time/part-time); and subject data (where further breakdown is required e.g. BA Arts, BSc Science).

In compiling the data for the planned AIT/LIT Consortium Application, the AIT Banner Development Officer, and the LIT Management Information Systems Office was responsible for compiling the data required for the SRS returns. This data was then checked by the AIT Management Information Systems (MIS) Business Intelligence & Development Unit Manager, and the LIT Data Analytics & Contracts Manager, prior to submitting it to the Registrar for his review and sign-off.

One consolidated SRS file collated and reviewed by the above mentioned, containing the three SRS data files (Programme file, Course File, and Student Survey) was used by AIT/LIT Consortium project team to determine if they met the criteria *S.28 (1) (a) (i)* as set out below in the Technological Universities Act 2018. For confidentiality purposes, most of the identifiable student data (name, address, contact number) from the consolidated dataset was removed. No other alterations were made to the SRS dataset prior to submitting it to Deloitte.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

### AIT/LIT Methodology applied to the Student Profile Criteria

#### 2.1.2. Student Numbers:

Eligibility Criteria – The Act states:

*S.28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.*

*(i) At least 4 per cent are research students registered on a programme, which leads to an award to at least master's degree level.*

To establish the percentage of research students, the total population of students registered on programmes leading to at least an honours bachelor degree had to be first identified. Below is the methodology applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium.

**AIT/LIT Consortium Methodology:** Using March 2020 SRS datasets for AIT and LIT, returned to the HEA, the AIT/LIT Consortium identified that the combined student number is **17,673**. The AIT/LIT Consortium identified the relevant students as set out by the criteria (*students . . . registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level*) and the following inclusions and exclusions were applied in the SRS dataset:

#### I. Types of Students

1. Enrolment status – All students that were considered as “Graduates” who completed the program on the previous academic year (**2018/2019**) were excluded.
2. Exchange Students – Both incoming exchange students (e.g. from France to Ireland) and outgoing exchange students (e.g. from Ireland to France) were included.
3. Dummy Record – One dummy record under programme type 11 identified in the SRS was excluded.

#### II. Programmes that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level

- NFQ Level – The Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) provides guidelines as to what level of qualification would merit at least an honours bachelor's degree (or at least level 8). All students who are not enrolled in NFQ level 8, 9, and 10 were excluded.
- Programme Type - these were programmes identified that would merit at least an honours bachelor's degree:
  - All students enrolled under programmes 11, 23, 25, 26, 27 and 30 were included; and
  - All students enrolled under programmes 15 (Special Purpose Award) and Programme 29 (Higher Diploma / level 8) were excluded.

Figure 1.0

NFQ	Programme Type	Programme Name	No. of Students
8	11	Undergraduate Honours Degree	6,497
9	23	Postgraduate Certificate	94
	25	Masters Taught (Postgraduate)	418
	26	Masters Research (Postgraduate)	198
	30	Postgraduate Diploma	107
10	27	PhD (Postgraduate)	120
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>7,434</b>

Figure 1.0 above illustrates AIT/LIT Consortium's final number of students (**7,434**) who are registered in a programme that would lead to an award to at least honours bachelors degree level and used by AIT/LIT Consortium to evaluate against the legislative criteria.





## 2. Student Profile Criteria

### Deloitte Evaluation of Process applied to the Student Profile Criteria

#### Continued . . . / 2.1.2. Student Numbers:

**Deloitte Evaluation of Process:** For confidentiality purposes, most of the identifiable student data (name, address, contact number) from the AIT and the LIT SRS Return dataset was removed. AIT/LIT made a representation to us that no other alterations were made to the SRS dataset prior to it being submitted to Deloitte.

On receipt of the March 2020 SRS data from both AIT and LIT, we consolidated the data into a single database. We calculated the dataset shared by AIT/LIT Consortium to evaluate if they have achieved the Eligibility Criteria set-out on Section 28 (1) (a) of the Technological Universities Act 2018. We noted from our calculation that the AIT/LIT Consortium included both the incoming and outgoing exchange students, however, as exchange students, they should only be counted one way (incoming or outgoing) and we would suggest that only the consortium students be included in the base number. Therefore, we excluded the incoming exchange students from our calculation. Figure 1.1 below demonstrate our calculation and how we arrived at the student base number.

#### Data Review:

We identified the number of students from AIT and LIT per the SRS dataset returned to the HEA in March 2020 (17,673). We excluded the following:

1. All students with an enrolment status as “Graduates”;
2. All students on NFQ programmes level 6, 7 and 99; and
3. All incoming exchange students (e.g. from France to Ireland);
4. All students on programme Types 15 (Certificate) and 29 (Higher Diploma).
5. One (1) ‘dummy’ student record on Programme Type 11 (refer to prior page)

This left a total of **7,380 students . . . . registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.**

**Figure 1.1**

Details	AIT	LIT	Total
No. of students per SRS Dataset Return:	8,041	9,632	17,673
Less students graduated per SRS Dataset:	-2,023	-1,910	-3,933
Less students on L6, 7, 99:	-2,882	-2,812	-5,694
Less incoming exchange students:	-8	-46	-54
Less students on Programme Type 15 and 29:	-286	-325	-611
Less Dummy Student on Programme Type 11:	-	-1	-1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,842</b>	<b>4,538</b>	<b>7,380</b>

We also checked the calculation by identifying the number of enrolled students in AIT and LIT on the following programmes:

- Level 11 – Undergraduate Honours Degree;
- Level 23 – Postgraduate Certificate;
- Level 25 – Masters Taught;
- Level 26 – Masters Research;
- Level 27 – Post doctorate Degree; and
- Level 30 – Postgraduate Diploma.

Figure 1.2 provides the breakdown by programme type by institute and the reconciles to the calculation figure 1.1 above.

**Figure 1.2**

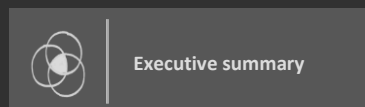
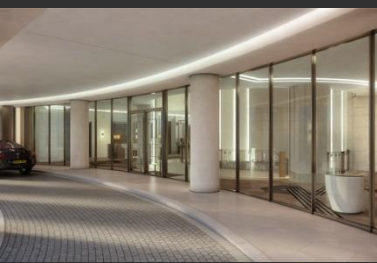
NFQ	Programme	AIT	LIT	Total
8	11	2,194	4,249	6,443
9	23	94	-	94
	25	289	129	418
	26	64	134	198
	30	107	-	107
10	27	94	26	120
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,842</b>	<b>4,538</b>	<b>7,380</b>

We noted that AIT/LIT Consortium calculated 6,497 students registered on Programme 11, while we have calculated 6,443 which is a difference of 54 students, the 54 students being the incoming exchange students mentioned above.

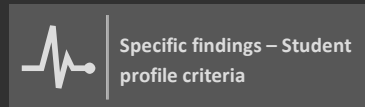
Our calculation of **7,380** students differs to the figure provided by AIT/LIT Consortium. The difference relating to the inclusion of 54 incoming exchange students.

We performed limited sample testing (total sample of 20 students) from the consolidated SRS return to ascertain that the students are currently enrolled and active students. For the sample of 20 students, we sought and were provided with a screen shot of the student’s record from the Banner system to ascertain that the student took the last exam (held December 2019), and that the students were registered in the programme as reported in the SRS return. In the event that a student had not taken an exam during the current academic year (i.e. Research Students), we reviewed the fee payment records to ascertain that the student’s fees were paid. No issues came to our attention to indicate that the process to collate the student numbers applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium was not in accordance with expectations.

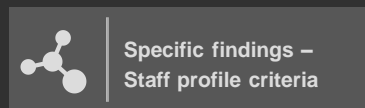
We also selected a sample of 15 Programmes from the consolidated SRS return. For the sample of 15 programmes, we reviewed the credits assigned to each programme and compared them to the criteria set out by the Irish National Framework of Qualification (NFQ) for Level 8, 9 and 10 programmes. No issues have come to our attention to indicate that the process to collate the student numbers applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium was not in accordance with expectations.



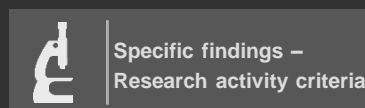
Executive summary



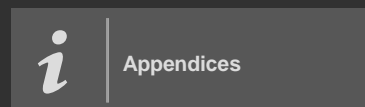
Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria

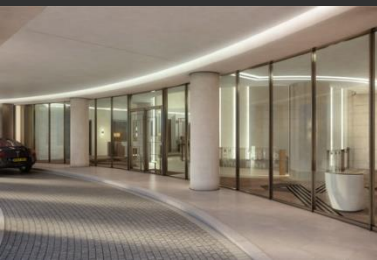


Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

### Overview - Student Profile Criteria – Research Students

#### 2.1.3. Research Students:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S.28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.*

*(i) At least 4 per cent are research students registered on a programme, which leads to an award to at least master's degree level.*

Technological Universities Act 2018 provides a specific criteria in order for a student to be considered as a research student. Per the Act, “research student is a student who is registered on a programme of education and training where not less than 60% of the available credits are assigned in respect of a thesis or theses prepared by the student based on research conducted by him or her”.

**AIT/LIT Consortium Methodology:** Based on the definition of a ‘research student’, ‘research’, and ‘thesis or theses’, AIT/LIT Consortium identified the programmes leading to an award to at least master’s degree level that have research components as part of the required credits to be completed by a student. The programme codes considered by AIT/LIT Consortium for this criteria are depicted in Figure 1.3.

As set in section 2.1.2, AIT/LIT Consortium identified programme codes 26, and 27 as research based programmes. These programmes have **318** research students registered and from the base number (**7,434**) calculated by the AIT/LIT Consortium, they calculated the percentage of research students as **4.28%**.

Figure 1.3

Programme Type	Programme Name	No Of Students
26	Masters Research (Postgraduate)	198
27	PhD (Postgraduate)	120
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>318</b>

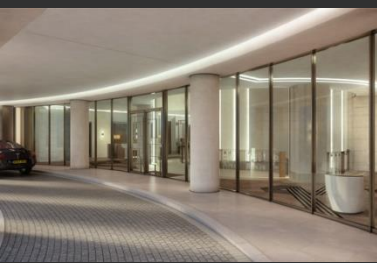
**Deloitte Review:** During our review, nothing came to our attention to indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify programmes which leads to an award to at least master’s degree level and have the minimum research component as required by the Act is not satisfactory.

The number of students registered on these programmes were ascertained using the SRS dataset reviewed under section 2.1.2 and no variance was identified.

We ascertained that there are 318 research students registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level, the 318 research students represents **4.31%** of the **7,380** students who are registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.

Figure 1.4

Base Student Number	Research Students	%Research Students
7,380	318	4.31%



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## Overview - Student Profile Criteria – Flexible Students

### 2.1.4. Students on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S. 28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—*

*(ii) at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:*

*(I) Students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning*

Following discussion with the AIT/LIT Consortium in relation to the previous sections (2.1.1 – 2.1.3), the AIT/LIT Consortium amended their methodology in respect of exchange students which changed their base student number from 7,434 to 7,380.

**AIT/LIT Consortium Methodology:** AIT/LIT Consortium have interpreted “flexible” in this criterion as:

1. Students who are registered on a programme as a part-time student;
2. Students who are registered on a distance education programme;
3. Students who are registered on an e-learning programme; and
4. Students who are registered on an in-service education programme

The study mode considered by AIT/LIT Consortium for this criteria are depicted in Figure 1.5.

Based on the above interpretation, there are **733** students who are registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level that is provided on a flexible basis. AIT/LIT Consortium calculated the percentage of flexible students as **10%**.

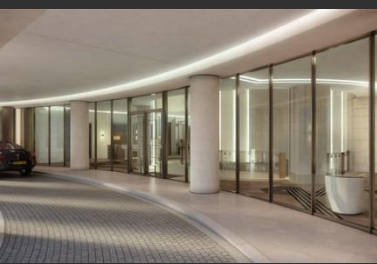
**Deloitte Review:** As part of our review of the part-time students, we took a sample of 15 part-time students to ascertain that they were taking less credits a year than that of a full-time student. For the 15 sample part-time students, we compared the number of credits taken by the part-time student against the number of credits taken by a full-time student on the same programme through the ‘Course’ file submitted as part of the SRS returns. Of the 15 samples, 3 part-time students had more credits than that of a full-time student on the same programme. However, all 3 part-time students were taking less than 60 credits, and based on HEA definition of a full-time student, can still be classified as a part-time student. Although there is no HEA formal definition of a full-time student, full-time students is generally defined as students who are taking up 60 credits in an Academic year. Based on this definition, AIT/LIT have defined a part-time student as a student who is taking less than 60 credits of new learning per year.

As part of our review of the programmes delivered through e-learning, and in-service education, we took a sample of 3 programmes to ascertain that these programmes were delivered through e-learning, or in-service education. For the 3 sample programmes, we inspected the approved course schedule and ascertained that these programmes were delivered online (e-learning) or through experiential learning (in-service). We also identified, there were no students registered on a programme delivered through distance education.

During our review, nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify the number of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level on a flexible basis was not satisfactory. Our review identified that of the 7,380 students, **733** or **9.93%** students were registered on programmes that are provided on a flexible basis.

Figure 1.5

Study Mode	No of Programmes	No of Students
Part-time student		388
Distance Education programme		-
e-learning programme	10	329
In-service education programme	1	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>733</b>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

### Overview - Student Profile Criteria – Students on a programme with involvement of industry within the region

#### 2.1.5. Students on a programme designed, delivered with involvement of industry within the region:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S. 28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—*

*(ii) at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:*

*(II) Students who are registered on a programme that has been designed, and is being delivered with the involvement (which will be construed in accordance with subsection (2)(b)), of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located;*

(II) Further to the Eligibility Criteria above, subsection (2)(b) states that:

*S. 28 (2) (b) For the purposes of subparagraph (ii)(II) of subsection (1)(a), “involvement” in relation to a programme may include—*

*(iii) providing a work placement for a student registered on the programme.*

**AIT/LIT Consortium Methodology:** AIT/LIT Consortium interpreted this criteria based on section 28 (2)(b)(iii), where students were registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level have work placement as a mandatory module in their programme. Based on this interpretation, AIT/LIT Consortium have formed the following methodology for section 28 (1)(a)(ii)(III):

- Designed: Has a component part that is designed in partnership with industry and professional bodies. This was captured through the Quality Assurance Evaluation and Validation processes.
- Delivered: The programme as a component part that was delivered in collaboration with industry and professional bodies to include a work placement. This was captured through work-based learning placement records.
- Regional placement: The AIT/LIT Consortium defined the ‘Region’ as National due to the spread of activity and the unique nature of some programmes which can attract students from all counties. Although, the Consortium actively place student in international settings to enhance their learning, international student placements are not included in the eligibility criteria.

**Figure 1.6**

Work Placement	Total
Students enrolled on Programme with Work Placement (all years)	4,064
Less: Students based in China enrolled on programme LC_JCVLM_KMY (all years)	229
Total students enrolled on Programme with Work Placement based in Ireland (all years)	3,835
Less: Students based in Ireland not on placement 19/20	2,736
Students based in Ireland on placement 19/20	1,328

AIT/LIT Consortium have identified a total of 74 programmes with a work placement element. A total of 4,064 students are enrolled on all years of the 74 programmes. Of the 4,064 students, 229 students are registered on the Bachelor of Science (Honours) Civil Engineering Management (LC\_JCVLM\_KMY) programme, which is delivered through the Yangtze University in China. These students would have their work placement outside of the region and therefore have been excluded. The remaining 3,835 students are based in Ireland. Of the 3,835 students, 1,328 students were due to be on a work placement in the academic year 2019/2020. Refer to Figure 1.6 for details.

Based on the above, there are **3,835** students registered on a programme with a work placement module. AIT/LIT Consortium calculated the percentage as **52%**.

**Deloitte Review:** Based on the AIT/LIT Consortiums’ interpretation above, we considered this eligibility criteria in three parts as follows:

- Designed – We selected a sample of 10 unique programmes (leading to at least honours bachelor degree level) and inspected the programmatic reviews, panel reports, consultation summaries and industrial input documents to ascertain the involvement of industry in the design of the programmes. Nothing has come to our attention during our inspection to indicate an issue (*refer to Appendix 5 for details*).
- Delivery – Using the same 10 sample programmes as above, we inspected the Approved Course Schedules to ascertain work placement requirements in the programme, again, nothing has come to our attention to indicate any issue (*refer to Appendix 5 for details*).
- Region – We selected a sample of 20 students, and inspected work placement contracts to confirm the sample student was placed in the region.



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

### Overview - Student Profile Criteria – Students on a programme with involvement of industry within the region

#### Continued ... / 2.1.5. Students on a programme designed, delivered with involvement of industry within the region:

From our review, we noted the following:

- AIT/LIT Consortium identified a total of 74 programmes with a work placement element. A total of 4,064 students were enrolled on all years of the 74 programmes, 3,835 of these students were attending their programme in Ireland. Of the 3,835 students, 1,328 were scheduled to be in placement in the academic year 2019/2020. Refer to Appendix 6 for details.
- There is no central database in the applicant institutes of students who are on work placement. We were advised that such a database is being developed. However, we were informed that all students on an international work placement would be registered through the International office.
- By identifying all students on placement (1,328 students on placement) and removing those students on an international placement (33 international students on placement), the remaining students should be based in Ireland (1,295 students on placement within the region). Refer to Figure 1.7. From the 1,295 students on placement within the region, we selected 20 sample students for review and identified:
  - four students due to be placed within the region, were unable to commence their work placement due to COVID-19 (e.g. The business had temporarily shut down and/or the nature of work did not permit remote working). However, we ascertained through email communications that arrangements were in place for the four students to be on work placement prior to COVID-19 and the national lockdown. On enquiry with AIT/LIT Consortium, we were informed that alternative measures were put in place for those students who were not able to take up their work placement; they were tasked to undertake an industry project instead. Given that the students would have been on placement had COVID-19 not occurred, and alternative arrangements were put in place that meet industry involvement, we deemed this to be a reasonable approach given the exceptional circumstances.
  - one student who was on an international work placement was not recorded through the international office placement record. This represents a 5% error rate in our sample.
- Based on our analysis of those students (1,328) on placement in academic year 2019/2020, an average of 97.52% of students took their work placement within Ireland (the “region”). We extrapolated the number of students in a work placement within the region and determined that of the 3,835 students registered on a work programme, an extrapolated number of 3,740 students are expected to take their work placement within the region over the course of their academic programme. The remaining students are likely to take their work placement internationally. Refer to Figure 1.8.

Figure 1.7

Region	AIT	LIT	Total	%
Students on placement in 2019/2020	663	665	1,328	100%
Less: Students on International Placement	16	17	33	2.48%
<b>Students on Regional Placement in 2019/2020</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>97.52%</b>

Figure 1.8

Region	Actual No. of Students	Extrapolated No. of Students	%
Region (within Republic of Ireland)	1,295	3,740	97.52%
International	33	95	2.48%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,328</b>	<b>3,835</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 1.8.1

Region	No of Students
Students enrolled on Programme with Work Placement	3,739
Base Student Number	7,380
<b>%</b>	<b>50.66%</b>

The error identified above, changes marginally the number of students placed within the region from 3,740 to 3,739. The variance identified on the sample above, taken in isolation, does not impact on the AIT/LIT Consortium achieving this eligibility criteria and would indicate that **50.66%** of the 7,380 are students on a programme designed, delivered with involvement of industry within the region (refer to Figure 1.8.1). The error identified would not impact the achievement of the eligibility criteria.

Should the error rate be extrapolated across the 3,740 students placed within the region, it would mean a further 187 students could take their work placement internationally, leaving **3,553** or **48.14%** of the 7,380 are students on a programme designed, delivered with involvement of industry within the region. The variance would not impact the achievement of the eligibility criteria.

Executive summary

Specific findings – Student profile criteria

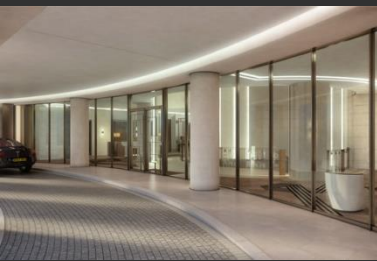
Specific findings – Staff profile criteria

Specific findings – Research activity criteria

Appendices







Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 2. Student Profile Criteria

Overview - Student Profile Criteria – Students who are not less than 23 years of age

### 2.1.6. Students who are not less than 23 years of age:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S. 28 (1) (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to at least honours bachelor degree level—*

*(ii) at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:*

*(III) Students who are not less than 23 years of age.*

**AIT/LIT Consortium Methodology:** AIT/LIT Consortium determined the age of students based on the date of birth in the consolidated SRS as of March 2020 and had set a cut-off date of 1 March of 2020, which was the census date. Students who were 23 years of age as of 1 March 2020 were deemed eligible to be included for this criterion.

Based on the above interpretation, AIT/LIT Consortium calculated that there were **2,640** or **36%** of students who were not less than 23 years of age as of 1 March 2020.

**Deloitte Review:** As part of our review, we independently calculated the age of the students as of 1 March 2020 from the students date of birth recorded in the consolidated SRS file.

On analysis of the student age, we noted that there were 2,639 students who were 23 years or more in age (refer to Figure 1.9). Our review identified that of the 7,380 students, **2,639** or **35.76%** of students were not less than 23 years of age as of 1 of March 2020.

Figure 1.9

Student Age	AIT	LIT	Total
Less than 23	1,584	3,157	4,741
Not less than 23	1,258	1,381	2,639
Grand Total	2,842	4,538	7,380

# 3. Specific Findings – Staff Profile Criteria



An overview of the process to collate staff profile information applied by AIT/LIT Consortium together with details of the independent outcome of the review is outlined below.

## 3.1 Overview - Staff Profile Criteria

### 3.1.1 Overview:

Under the TU Legislation, the Consortium is required to meet certain eligibility criteria around staff qualification, these eligibility criteria are based on *“the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level”*. Therefore it is essential to collate the *“full-time academic staff”* who are *“engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level”* first to determine the base number on which to calculate the eligibility criteria.

An overview of the methodology applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to ascertain the staff numbers is set out below.

To collate its staff number, AIT/LIT Consortium used the June 2020 Employment Control Framework (“ECF” or also known as the Public Sector Numbers (PSN)) that was submitted to the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The ECF return is submitted by each institute on a quarterly basis in March, June, September and December to the HEA. The returns include all staff employed in an institution (including all permanent staff, all contract staff and all staff on secondment from other bodies) who are members of public sector pension schemes. The staff profile was collated for each institution separately.

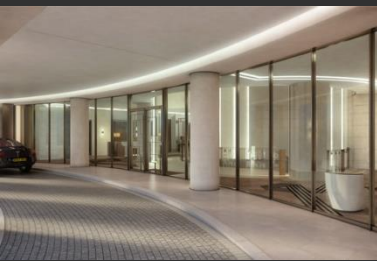
To determine the staff base number as set out in the Act sections 28.1(c), AIT/LIT Consortium calculated the number of staff who meet all the following criteria:

- Staff with an employment status of permanent whole-time, temporary whole-time, or contract of indefinite duration where their whole-time equivalent is equal to 1; and
- Staff who are engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level (NFQL 8).

Further to above, AIT/LIT Consortium have excluded non-academic staff, and research staff not engaged in research supervision in order to arrive at the base number.

To identify staff qualifications, the HR Departments of each applicant institution maintain personnel files which include staff contracts, and details of their qualifications including parchments and/or other relevant documentation in order to determine their highest qualification. Additionally, each institution put in place a process to identify terminal degree which included a survey that was circulated to all Academic and Research active staff in May 2020. The feedback from the survey was analysed and certain staff were identified for further review. Staff Curriculum Vitae (CV) were then completed based on responses from the surveys. Deans co-ordinated the process of gathering and reviewing staff CVs. The CV’s were then forwarded to the TU Project team for further review and they identified those staff deemed to have terminal degrees.

Following the above, the dataset of each institute was used to calculate their staff eligibility criteria as set out in the Technological Universities Act 2018.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





### 3.1.2 Staff Numbers:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

- S. 28 (1) (c) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—
- (i) at least 90 per cent hold a masters degree or doctoral degree,

**Methodology applied by the LIT/AIT Consortium:** To collate the number of “of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level”, the AIT/LIT Consortium used the June 2020 ECF that was submitted to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) for AIT and LIT. The ECF includes all staff and for casual part-time staff it includes the whole-time equivalent.

AIT/LIT Consortium have interpreted S.28 (1)(c) as all full-time Academic and Research Staff who are member of faculty employed on a full-Time equivalent Contract of Employment engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelors degree level. Furthermore, AIT/LIT Consortium defined full-time contractually as either, permanent whole-time, temporary whole-time or contract of indefinite duration whole time. In addition, AIT/LIT Consortium have included the President and Registrar of both Institutes as they lead the academic council of their institution.

Based on the above interpretation, to determine the base number of staff for each institute, AIT/LIT Consortium identified the following inclusions and exclusions applied to the ECF return:

- Academic Staff** – the first objective of AIT/LIT Consortium was to determine the total number of full-time academic staff for each institute. The process followed by both institutes is as follows (refer to Figure 2.1 for details):

The ECF return of AIT & LIT identified 1,237 staff.

- All non-academic staff were excluded from the ECF return which included staff under administration, executive, library, maintenance-caretakers, cleaners and stores, research support, student services, support, and technical which amounted to 502 staff between the two institutes.
- Duplicate staff who were in the ECF return were excluded. Duplicates in the ECF return exists as some staff funding were split between springboard and core. A total of 1 duplicate staff was identified.

Figure 2.1

Staff Profile	AIT	LIT	Total
June 2020 ECF Return	566	671	1237
Less: Non-Academic Staff	-265	-237	-502
Less: Duplicate Record	-1	0	-1
<b>Total Full-Time Academic Staff</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>734</b>

- Full-time engaged in the provision of at least an Honours Bachelor Degree level** – the second objective of AIT/LIT Consortium was to determine the full-time staff engaged in the provision of at least an Honours Bachelor Degree from the total academic staff identified. The process followed by both institutes was as follows (refer to Figure 2.2 for details):

Identify the full-time academic staff engaged in at least honours bachelor degree level through:

- Exclusion of non-teaching staff and non-supervising staff; These are academic staff that are in a non-teaching/supervising role: 10 staff were identified.
- Inclusion of non-teaching, non-academic staff who are engaged in the provision of at least level 8 programmes; these are research staff or institute management who are were classified as non-academic staff in the ECF but are engaged in the delivery of programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level: 34 staff were identified (refer to Appendix 8 for more details).
- Exclusion of staff where their whole-time equivalent (WTE) is not equal to “1”: A total of 61 staff were identified.
- Exclusion of staff not engaged in the provision of a programme leading to at least an honours bachelor degree level: A total of 55 staff were identified.

Figure 2.2

Staff Profile	AIT	LIT	Total
Full-time Academic Staff	300	434	734
Less: Non Teaching (non-supervising)	-9	-1	-10
Plus: Non Teaching (involved in provision of at least level 8 programmes)	32	2	34
Less: WTE < 1	-23	-38	-61
Less: Staff not engaged in at least an Honours Bachelor Degree Level	-25	-30	-55
<b>Total Full-Time Academic Staff engaged in at least an Honours Bachelor Degree Level</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>642</b>

### Continued . . . / 3.1.2 Staff Numbers:

Following the process in the previous page, AIT and LIT then aggregated the staff numbers and identified **642 full-time academic staff . . engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.**

From the 642 staff identified, AIT/LIT Consortium identified the highest awarded qualification of each staff. Based on this process, AIT/LIT Consortium have determined that of the 642 *full-time academic staff . . engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level*, a total of **600 or 93%** of staff were holding a masters or doctoral degree.

**Deloitte review:** Through the ECF June 2020 return from both AIT & LIT, we performed a walkthrough of the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to calculate their staff profile figures. We performed the methodology applied by the Consortium on the ECF returns. During our review, nothing came to our attention that would indicate that the process applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium to identify the full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level was not satisfactory.

As part of our review, from the **642** full-time academic staff engaged in at least an Honours Bachelor Degree, we selected a random sample of 35 on a pro-rata basis between AIT & LIT. For each of the samples selected, we reviewed:

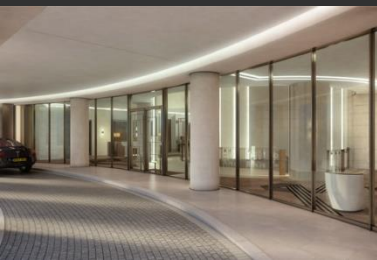
1. the contract of employment to confirm their employment status e.g. full-time, or has a whole-time equivalent; and
2. evidence to ascertain their highest qualifications (masters, doctoral) per the dataset.

In addition to the above, we selected 14 students undertaking a Level 10 degree and identified their supervisor where we inspected the student registration forms to determine that the staff member is engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level.

On analysis of the full-time academic staff listing, we noted that there were 309 staff holding a masters degree (level 9), and 291 staff hold a doctoral degree, level 10 equivalent or terminal degree (refer to figure 2.2.1). Our review identified that of the 642 staff, **600 or 93.46%** of staff were holding a masters or doctoral degree or terminal degree.

Figure 2.2.1

Staff Profile	AIT	LIT	Total	%
Total Full-Time Academic Staff engaged in at least an Honours Bachelor Degree Level	275	367	642	100.00%
L9	119	190	309	48.13%
L10/Equivalent/Terminal	146	145	291	45.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>93.46%</b>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



### 3.1.3 Full-time academic staff holding a doctoral degree or terminal degree:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

- S. 28 (1) (c) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—
- (ii) at least 45 per cent hold—
    - (I) a doctoral degree, or
    - (II) subject to subparagraph (iii), a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree, and
  - (iii) not more than 10 per cent hold only the qualifications referred to in subparagraph (ii) (II);

**Methodology applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium:** In relation to the above criteria, additional guidance was provided in respect of terminal degrees as follows:

- Section 28 (2)(c)(ii) of the Technological Universities Act 2018 refer to Appendix 2 for extract; and
- the HEA Guidelines, refer to Appendix 3 for relevant extracts.

For the purpose of the Application, the Consortium have included a variety of terminal degrees where they believe the awarded degree held by staff combined with the staff experience could reasonably be viewed by an Advisory Panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree. AIT/LIT Consortium defined a staff member deemed to hold an equivalent degree where they meet the following criteria:

- a) Achieved Fellowship status in the relevant profession/discipline (where available).
- b) Where Fellowship is not achieved/available in the relevant profession/discipline, equivalence is considered on the following framework: In line with the principles of professional recognition and Doctoral education, staff are considered equivalent provided they:
  1. Hold the highest qualification in the relevant discipline/profession.
  2. Have a minimum of 10 years practical experience
  3. Demonstrate a track record of professional development and have evidence of one of the following:
    - I. Recognition - Active professional participation or membership
    - II. High achievement – publication, performance or contribution

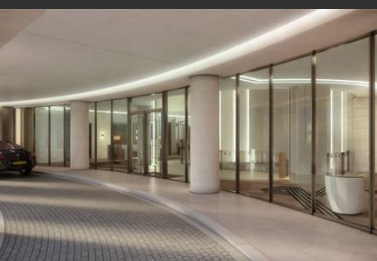
As depicted in Figure 2.3, AIT/LIT Consortium identified that of their full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level, **291** or **45.32%** hold either a doctoral degree or a level 10 equivalent/terminal degree, broken down as follows:

- 227 or 35.36% hold a doctoral degree; and
- 64 or 9.96% hold a level 10 equivalent or terminal degree.

AIT/LIT Consortium have indicated that they have more than 64 full-time academic staff holding a level 10 equivalent or terminal degree, who are engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level. However, for purposes of the application process, they capped the number to a maximum of 64 staff (10%), the remaining staff have been recorded as holding their highest awarded qualification e.g. honours bachelor degree or masters degree.

Figure 2.3

Staff Profile	AIT	LIT	Total	%
L8	10	32	42	6.54%
L9	119	190	309	48.13%
L10	122	105	227	35.36%
L10 Equivalent	19	20	39	6.07%
Terminal	5	20	25	3.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 3. Staff Profile Criteria

### AIT/LIT Methodology applied to the Staff Profile Criteria

#### Continued ... / 3.1.3 Full-time academic staff holding a doctoral degree or terminal degree:

**Deloitte Review:** Our analysis of the staff profile datasets provided by the Consortium, identified the split of staff qualifications as set out in Figure 2.3.

Per the dataset, there are **227 (35.36%)** staff holding a doctoral degree and **64 (9.96%)** staff holding a terminal degree.

Having previously reviewed a sample of doctoral degree qualifications for review in 3.1.2, we selected a sample of 10, level 10 equivalent / terminal degree (see Appendix 7), this was split by 4 staff holding fellowships and 6 terminal degrees. For the sample of 10, we reviewed the CVs and :

- ascertained that they hold the awarded qualification noted in their CV;
- ascertained (where indicated) they hold a fellowship of a professional body by obtaining a copy of their fellowship parchment / details;
- noted that they had set out their work experience to date. Whilst we did not obtain evidence to confirm this, we ascertained from the Consortium, that references are noted that they had set out their work experience to date. Whilst we did not obtain evidence to confirm this, we ascertained from the Consortium, that references are obtained by the recruitment team within Human Resources at appointment confirming their experience and qualifications.

Whilst we have undertaken the above review, the review only provides a level of assurance over the accuracy of the CV from an academic qualification and fellowship of a professional body perspective. We are not in a position to evaluate if the sample selected meet the terminal degree criteria as set out in the legislation. This is a decision that will need to be considered by the advisory panel as part of the application review.

Our review identified that of the 642 staff, **291 or 45.32%** of staff hold a doctoral degree or a terminal degree which includes **9.96%** of staff holding either a level 10 equivalent or terminal degree.

*Figure 2.3*

Staff Profile	AIT	LIT	Total	%
L8	10	32	42	6.54%
L9	119	190	309	48.13%
L10	122	105	227	35.36%
L10 Equivalent	19	20	39	6.07%
Terminal	5	20	25	3.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 3.1.4 Full-time academic staff engaged in the provision of a programme leading to a doctoral degree and the conduct of research:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

- S. 28 (1) (e) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both of the following, at least 80 per cent hold a doctoral degree—
- (i) the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and
  - (ii) the conduct of research;

### Methodology applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium:

AIT/LIT Consortium have interpreted S.28(1)(e)(i) as full-time academic staff engaged in the teaching or supervision of students registered on a doctoral degree, this is Programme Type 27 and S.28(1)(e)(ii) as full-time academic staff who are engaged in teaching or supervision of a PhD student in addition to at least one of the following:

- i. Research outputs (publications, products, services);
- ii. Industry Live Research project;
- iii. Research Income – Funding External or Internal.

Figure 2.4

Data	AIT	LIT	Total
No. of Programme Type 27 students per SRS (March 2020)	94	26	120
No. of academic staff supervising the Programme Type 27 students	60	27	87

AIT/LIT Consortium used the March 2020 SRS return to identify the students registered on a Level 10 PhD (Programme Type 27). Through the Programme Type 27 students, the supervisors were then identified through records held by the AIT Graduate School and the LIT Graduate Research Office (GRO). A total of 87 full-time academic staff were identified as being engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level by the AIT/LIT Consortium.

AIT/LIT Consortium identified that all 87 were research active through review of the Graduate Schools student registration, review of research funding, commercialisation, consultation activity and through a review of Institutional repository and/or ORCID profiles. Of the 87 staff, 80 or **91.95%** were identified as holding a doctoral degree.

**Deloitte Review:** Deloitte, using the March 2020 SRS return as our basis, identified 120 students on Programme Type 27. We then matched these 120 students to those identified by AIT/LIT Consortium. We identified 87 supervisors associated with these PhD students from the PhD Student datasets provided by AIT/LIT Consortium. Of these 87 supervisors, we selected a sample of 10 for review, five from AIT and five from LIT. From these 10 supervisors, through review of the AIT/LIT PhD Student datasets Deloitte identified that these 10 were the principal supervisors' of 14 research students registered on a programme that leads to an award to a doctoral degree. Deloitte noted that of the 14 research students, two AIT students were due to start their PhD on March 2020. However, due to COVID-19, their commencement date was delayed. We have been informed that both students have now commenced their PhD. We ascertained that both students had paid their fees.

To ascertain that the 10 selected staff were research active, Deloitte reviewed the ORCID research profiles of each. Deloitte identified that eight staff had in the last three years issued at least one research output and, from the test above, identified that all 10 are currently supervising a research student.

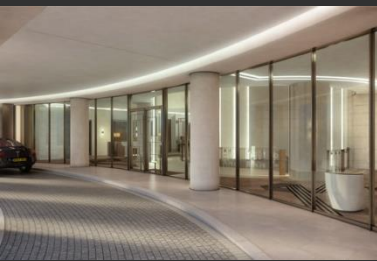
By reviewing the AIT/LIT Consortium staff profile database, Deloitte re-calculated that of the 87 staff, **80** or **91.95%** of the staff hold a doctoral degree. The remaining **7** or **8.05%** staff hold a masters degree and all of these seven are co-supervisors of a Programme Type 27 student.

In order to ascertain the percentage of staff who hold a doctoral degree, we reviewed the parchment of their level 10. As a result of this sample testing we were able to identify that the 10 selected staff all held a doctoral degree. Figure 2.5 provides the analysis from our calculation.

Overall, of the 87 full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and the conduct of research **80** or **91.95%** hold a doctoral degree.

Figure 2.5

Supervisor's Highest Qualification	Count	%
L10	80	91.95%
L9	7	8.05%
Terminal	0	0%
Total	87	100%



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



### AIT/LIT Methodology applied to the Staff Profile Criteria

#### 3.1.5 Supervision of students registered on programmes leading to an award to doctoral degree:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S. 28 (1) (f) each of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level—*

*(i) holds—*

*(I) a doctoral degree, or*

*(II) a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,*

**Methodology applied by the AIT/LIT Consortium:** AIT/LIT Consortium have interpreted (i) above as those staff who are engaged as *Principal Supervisor* of students registered on a doctoral degree/Programme Type 27.

AIT/LIT Consortium used the March 2020 SRS return to identify the number of students (120) registered on a Level 10 PhD (Programme Type 27). Through the SRS, AIT/LIT Consortium identified the students and then identified the supervisors through the PhD Student datasets held by the AIT Graduate School and the LIT Graduate Research Office (GRO). A total of 87 full-time academic staff were identified as being engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level by the AIT/LIT Consortium. Of the 87, 80 (91.95%) were identified as holding a doctoral degree.

AIT/LIT Consortium performed an analysis of this 87 supervisors (principal and/or co-supervisors) who are engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level and identified that:

- 52 are principal supervisors who all hold a L10 qualification The Consortium's requirement is that all primary supervisors must hold a doctoral degree;
- 80 or 91.95% of the supervisors (principal and/or co-supervisor) hold a doctoral degree; and
- 7 or 8.05% of supervisors hold a level 9 degree and are co-supervising under the mentorship of a principle supervisor who holds a L10 qualification.

**Deloitte Review:** Our interpretation of the above legislation is that all PhD supervisors, should hold a doctoral or a terminal degree. However, the Consortium may choose to make a case in the TU application that there is sufficient mitigation where the Principal Supervisor has a L10, thereby providing adequate supervision of the student.

In order to recalculate the numbers identified by the AIT/LIT Consortium, Deloitte using the March 2020 SRS return as our basis, identified 120 students on Programme Type 27. We then matched these 120 students to those in the PhD Student datasets provided by AIT and LIT. From the PhD student datasets, we identified 87 supervisors of which 52 are principal supervisors. We selected a random sample of 10 supervisors for review from the 87 supervisors, five from AIT and five from LIT to ascertain that they held the qualification per the AIT/LIT staff profile database provided. We noted that our sample all happen to be principal supervisors. We ascertained having reviewed the parchments that all of our sample held L10 qualifications.

By reviewing the PhD student datasets and cross referencing the supervisors to the AIT/LIT staff profile database, Deloitte re-calculated that of the 87 supervisors:

- 52 are principal supervisors and 100% of the principal supervisors hold a doctoral degree;
- 80 or 91.95% hold a doctoral degree; and
- 7 or 8.05% hold a masters degree and these seven are co-supervisors of a PhD student.

**Figure 2.5**

Supervisor's Highest Qualification	Count	%
L10	80	91.95%
L9	7	8.05%
Terminal	0	0%
Total	87	100%



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





Continued .../3.1.5 Supervision of students registered on programmes leading to an award to doctoral degree:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

*S. 28 (1) (f) each of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level—*

*(ii) Has a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme.*

As defined in section 3.1.4, ‘the conduct of research’ are full-time academic staff who are engaged in teaching or supervision of a research student in addition to at least one of the following:

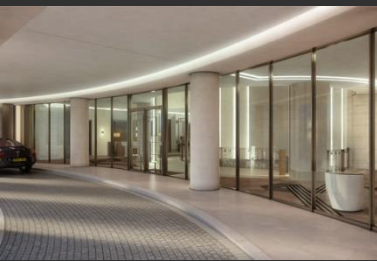
- i. Research outputs (publications, products, services);
- ii. Industry Live Research project;
- iii. Research Income – Funding External or Internal.

As mentioned previously in *S. 28 (1) (f) (i)* AIT/LIT Consortium identified their supervisors of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level through the student SRS return for March 2020 and their Graduate School records. AIT/LIT Consortium then assessed the principal and co-supervisors of each research student to determine those that are research active.

In order to identify the research activity of these supervisors, AIT/LIT Consortium reviewed the Graduate Schools registration, the research funding, commercialisation and consultation activity along with the institutional repository and/or ORCID profiles. These records identified that 87 staff are engaged in the supervision of students on a programme leading to a doctoral degree and that **100%** of the **87** staff have a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme based on their definition of ‘research active’.

**Deloitte Review:** Deloitte set out in the previous page, how it identified the number of supervisors. We selected a sample of 10 supervisors for review, five from AIT and five from LIT. In order to ascertain that the selected supervisors were research active in accordance with AIT/LIT Consortium interpretation, Deloitte reviewed the ORCID research profile of the applicable staff members, data from Agresso showing ledger codes for external research funded projects of the applicable staff members and reviewed the PhD applications of their research students to identify that they are research active. As a result of the testing of the 10 staff we identified that they are all at present actively supervising PhD research students and in addition to meeting at least one more of the research activities set out below:

- Research outputs (publications, products, services); or
- Industry Live Research project; or
- Research Income – Funding External or Internal.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



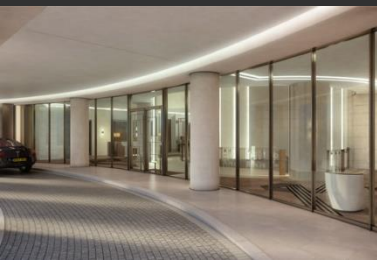
## 4. Specific Findings – Research Activity Criteria





# 4. Research Activity Criteria

An overview of the process to collate research activity criteria information applied by AIT/LIT Consortium together with details of the independent outcome of the review is outlined below.



## Overview – Research Activity Criteria

### 4.1.1 Overview:

AIT/LIT Consortium categorised fields of education in line with the latest version (F2013) of the International Standard Classification of Education Descriptors (ISCED), to meet the research criteria as outlined in the Technological Universities Act 2018. AIT/LIT in consultation with their graduate schools, previously mentioned in section 3.1.4, reviewed the graduate schools applications/registrations.

To determine if the academic staff and students of the applicant institutes conduct research within at least 3 fields of education, AIT/LIT Consortium identified using their March 2020 SRS Return their Programme Type 27 students and from review of their programme applications collated the list of all Programme Type 27 supervisors. In order to ascertain if the supervisors of each student could be deemed research active based upon the applicant institutes definition, AIT/LIT reviewed the research funding, commercialisation and consultation activity along with the institutional repository and/or ORCID profiles of the applicant's supervisors.

AIT/LIT Consortium defined “conduct of research” as full-time academic staff who are engaged in teaching or supervision of a research student and who have at least one of the following:

- i. Research outputs (publications, products, services);
- ii. Industry Live Research project;
- iii. Research Income – Funding External or Internal.



Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria

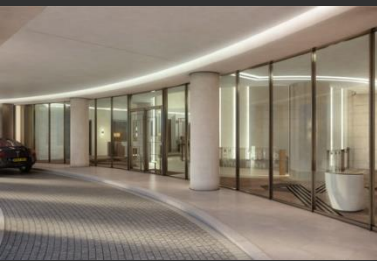


Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices





Executive summary



Specific findings – Student profile criteria



Specific findings – Staff profile criteria



Specific findings – Research activity criteria



Appendices



## 4.1 Overview – Research Activity Criteria

### 4.1.2 Supervisors have a record of continued conduct of research:

Eligibility Criteria (legislative criteria)

S. 28 (1) (g) in respect of not less than 3 fields of education—

- (i) the applicant institutes provide programmes that lead to awards to doctoral degree level, and
- (ii) the academic staff and students of the applicant institutes conduct research;

AIT/LIT Consortium identified that programmes leading to an award at doctoral degree level are provided in seven fields of education, based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), thereby meeting the criteria. Upon initial registration for their doctoral degree programme, each student is categorised into the relevant Central Statistics Office (CSO) Standard Fields of Education Classification, this classification was derived from a joint project with Eurostat and UNESCO and was based on the International Standard Classification of Education - ISCED 1997 (Fields of Education).

For the purpose of identifying whether AIT/LIT Consortium meets this criteria they used the broad ISCED fields of education, rather than the CSO Standard Fields of Education Classification. To determine the number of ISCED broad fields within which doctoral programmes are offered, AIT/LIT Consortium first identified 120 PhD students through review of Graduate Schools application/registration process. The ISCED of each PhD student is recorded on the banner system by both Institutes which is derived from the initial doctoral register application completed by each student. The ISCED code on banner is aligned to the students programme, when a programme is created on banner it is assigned an ISCED Code.

**Deloitte Review:** In order to identify the number of fields of education that the AIT/LIT Consortium are engaged in, in respect of the delivery of a programme which leads to a doctoral degree, Deloitte used the March 2020 SRS Return which records the student's ISCED. Using the SRS, Deloitte identified the students who are currently on a programme that leads to the award of a doctoral degree. Deloitte through this process identified that the applicant institutes offer programmes that lead to the award of a doctoral degree in **seven fields of education**.

Having previously tested a sample of 14 PhD students in section 3.1.5, these sample students were recorded on the March SRS return as being active on a programme that leads to the award of a doctoral degree across four fields of education. In order to test this Deloitte reviewed each student's record on banner which depicts the ISCED code that this student is registered to and then matched this code to the code recorded for each student in the AIT/LIT PhD Student dataset which is aligned to the SRS return. Deloitte identified that all codes in the sample were recorded correctly from banner to the PhD Student dataset. Our review of the PhD Student dataset identifies that AIT/LIT Consortium provide programmes that leads to the award of a doctoral degree in **seven fields of education**.

Figure 3.1

Broad fields of education in ISCED-F 2013	ISCED offered under AIT/LIT
00 – Generic programmes and qualifications	×
01 – Education	×
02 – Arts and humanities	✓
03 – Social sciences, journalism and information	✓
04 – Business, administration and law	✓
05 – Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	✓
06 – Information and Communication Technologies	✓
07 – Engineering, manufacturing and construction	✓
08 – Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	×
09 – Health and welfare	×
10 – Services	✓

# Appendices



WE HEREBY TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS REPORT WHICH IS PREPARED ON THE BASIS OF THE LIMITATIONS SET OUT BELOW.




Eileen Healy  
Partner  
For and on behalf of  
Deloitte Ireland LLP  
Deloitte & Touche House  
Charlotte Quay  
Limerick

Date: 4 November 2020

## Contact persons:

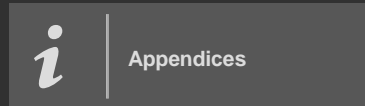
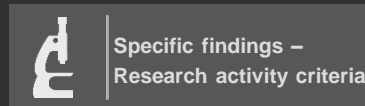
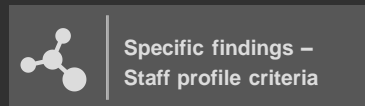
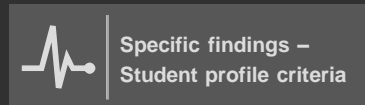
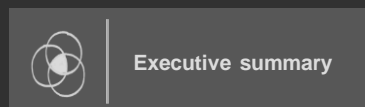
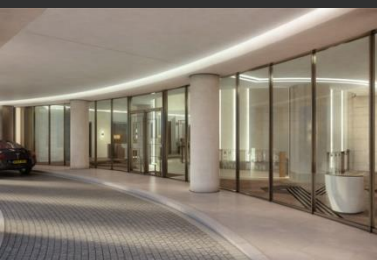
Eileen Healy, Partner	086 1643082
Mary Rose Cremin, Director	087 3531026

This engagement was not an attest engagement, and was conducted on a sample testing basis as agreed with the Athlone/Limerick Consortium (AIT/LIT Consortium) on behalf of Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology. The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during our review and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all weaknesses that exist, or of all improvements that might be made. Should further work have been performed over the course of this engagement, other issues may have come to our attention. The summary of our findings should be evaluated by Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology for their full implications.

We have relied on information provided by Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology. We do not accept responsibility for such information and have not performed any substantiation or external confirmation procedures to establish its accuracy. Examples of information provided included, but is not limited to, the following:

- AIT & LIT March 2020 SRS Return
- Approved Course Schedules
- Programmatic Reviews, Panel Reports, Consultation Summary, Industrial Input Extracts
- Employment Control Framework Return submitted to the HEA in June 2020
- Other Supporting Data – such as staff timetables, Staff Contract of Employment, Membership of professional body, Banner System Information, ORCID Research Profiles, extract from Agresso showing ledger codes for external research funded projects, Qualification Parchments, Student Work Placement Contracts, and students on work placement consolidated by AIT were used to corroborate the integrity of our selected samples.

This report has been prepared solely for Athlone Institute of Technology and Limerick Institute of Technology and should not be quoted or referred to in whole or part without prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared and is not intended, for any other purpose.



## Extracts from section 28 of the Act

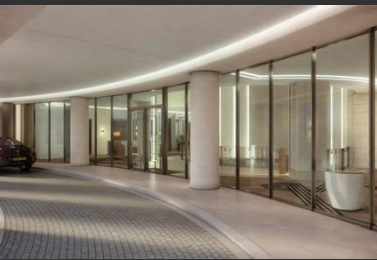
### Eligibility criteria

28. (1) The applicant institutes concerned shall, in relation to an application for an order under *section 36*, jointly comply with the following criteria (in this chapter referred to as “eligibility criteria”):

- (a) of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—
  - (i) at least 4 per cent are research students registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level,
  - (ii) at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:
    - I. Students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning
    - II. Students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning
    - III. students who are not less than 23 years of age;
- (c) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—
  - (i) at least 90 per cent hold a masters degree or doctoral degree,
  - (ii) at least 45 per cent hold—
    - (I) a doctoral degree, or
    - (II) subject to subparagraph (iii), a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,
 and
    - (iii) not more than 10 per cent hold only the qualifications referred to in subparagraph (ii)(II);
- (e) of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both of the following, at least 80 per cent hold a doctoral degree
  - (i) the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and
  - (ii) the conduct of research;
- (f) each of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level—
  - (i) holds—
    - (I) a doctoral degree, or
    - (II) a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,
 and
    - (ii) has a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme;
- (g) in respect of not less than 3 fields of education—
  - (i) the applicant institutes provide programmes that lead to awards to doctoral degree level, and
  - (ii) the academic staff and students of the applicant institutes conduct research;

28. (2) (c) A reference, in paragraph (c), (e) or (f) of subsection (1)—

- (ii) to a terminal degree held by a member of staff of the applicant institutes is a reference to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level within the Framework which, in the view of the advisory panel, was at the time the award was made the highest academic award available in the discipline concerned, and if not so awarded within the Framework is, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel, equivalent to such a degree.



Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria



Appendices



# Appendix 3 – Extracts from HEA Guidance

## Guidance Technological Universities – Proposed process in respect of an application to become Technological University, 2018

### “Appendix 1 Research Student numbers

The legislation defines a research student as ‘a student who is registered on a programme of education and training where not less than 60 per cent of the available credits are assigned in respect of a thesis or theses prepared by the student based on research conducted by him or her’.

For the purposes of an application under the Act the understanding of the term 'research' will be as defined in the Frascati Manual - 2015 Edition:

- o Research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge.
- o The term R&D covers three types of activity:
  - Basic research: experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundation of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view;
  - Applied research: original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge. It is, however, directed primarily towards a specific, practical aim or objective;
  - Experimental development: systematic work, drawing on knowledge gained from research and practical experience and producing additional knowledge, which is directed to producing new products or processes or to improving existing products or processes.

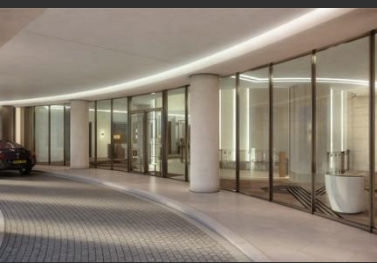
For the purposes of an application under the Act the understanding of the term 'thesis or theses' will be as set out in the Quality and Qualifications Ireland Research Degree Programmes Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines March 2017/QG6-V1:

#### o 8.2 Elements of assessment

Procedures for assessment for research degrees include clarification of research output, most often a thesis (here meaning a coherent body of detailed written work on a specific topic particular to the student) but may also be a written submission with a selection of papers, performance practice or research artefact and, in some cases, performance in a viva voce (oral examination).

#### o 8.2.1 Research theses and contribution

Procedures are clear on the variety of formats for capturing research contribution available to students, consistent with international norms in the disciplines in which programmes are offered. Specific contexts are identified in which formats other than a monograph may be appropriate. All permitted formats facilitate assessment against an equivalent standard. Clear guidelines are available to students, supervisors, examiners and members of an examination board on each format, including considerations to be taken into account in choosing it, at what stage a student can indicate the intended format, who can approve the format, standards, length and presentation and conventions and protocols for student vetting of their draft thesis using appropriate software. Procedures are in place which require acknowledgment of the specific contributions of others, if any, to the research project. Procedures are in place for accessing, disclosure, dissemination and archiving of the thesis, subsequent to award.”



Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria



Appendices





## Appendix 3 – Extracts from HEA Guidance

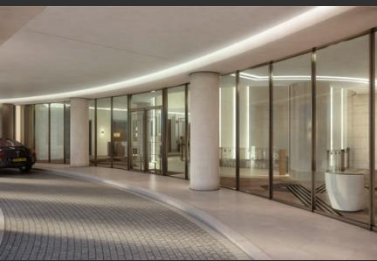
### Guidance Technological Universities – Proposed process in respect of an application to become Technological University, 2018

#### “Appendix 2 Staff numbers, qualifications and equivalences

##### Staff qualifications

- For the purposes of an application under the Act the understanding of the term 'equivalent to a doctoral degree' will be as set out in the 2018 Act as 'a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree'.
- It is likely that the applicant institutions will have a wide range of specialisms as part of their existing offerings and their staff mix reflects the recruitment patterns which sought, to date, to resource these specialisms in an appropriate way. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to derive a fully exhaustive set of guidelines to cover all of these specialisms in a detailed way. It appears that the more practical approach is to set out some broadly common criteria and/or categories which are capable of application across a range of specialisms and which offer reasonable guidance to the institutions as to what might be acceptable by the advisory panel in exercise of its statutory function.
- In making a case for 'equivalent to a doctoral degree' applicant institutes are invited to their consideration of terminal degree and practical experience on an individual / CV-based approach. This approach should evaluate the quality of the individual's experience relative to the particular challenges / demands / forms of recognition of the discipline in question. It may incorporate a time-based dimension without considering the latter to be a qualifier or disqualifier in itself.
- This categorisation would include, individuals distinguished by high achievement in the world of industry, business, science, the professions, the arts or public service who have been recognised by peers as outstanding in their field or those clearly recognised and verifiable eminence and leadership in their chosen field of expertise.
- While a broad range of possible categories exists into which the relevant accomplishments may fall, the following list is intended as an example set and is not likely to be exhaustive:
  - Professional Membership: This category applies in the case of senior practitioners in professional disciplines who have attained the highest level of membership of the professional body concerned. It would include the professional bodies (in whatever jurisdiction) in disciplines (and related sub-disciplines) such as accounting, engineering, law, medicine, veterinary etc. While specific qualification procedures may vary, there would be likely to be a commonality of the requirement on the individual to show a body of professional practical experience which is at the highest level for the discipline and peer evaluation of the individual by accepted experts in the field.
  - Publication / Exhibition: This category would include publications outside of the traditional academic, peer reviewed domain. It could include output designed for mass readership, appreciation or impact across a variety of genres, including the creative arts. While more qualitative than the earlier category it would, nonetheless, involve demonstrable forms of recognition such as critical review, commercial impact or media commentary.
  - Performance: This category would involve demonstrable evidence of regular and ongoing performance in the varying performing arts categories in recognised venues, either nationally or internationally. As with the category above, it would be likely to be supported by critical recognition, media impact and / or commercial success.
  - Built Environment: This category would involve the professional contribution to the creation of significant additions to public space in Ireland or abroad. It could involve any of the wide range of disciplines involved - architecture, engineering, quantity surveying, design etc.
  - Business / Entrepreneurial Achievement: This category would involve recognisable achievement in the development, growth, acquisition of businesses, either newly created or substantially changed and re-configured, creating resulting value either in terms of shareholder value, employment creation, technological innovation and creativity or social/public service.
  - Social / Public Service: This category could include the development of services and modes of delivery of service to various categories of the population. Distinguishing features (to mark the achievement off from “regular” service provision) could include the extent of the impact on a targeted category of population or the level of innovation exhibited in the service so as to establish precedent and replicability in other domains or geographies.
- Some of these categories may overlap and would require further elaboration and exemplification in dialogue between the advisory panel and applicant institutions, to the extent that any of the proposed bids may rely on these examples of professional experience or combinations of them.

This guidance is provided to advise the process. The key elements of any case for equivalence should include recognisable and verifiable evidence of proficiency and clearly, the exemplification of this spans a wider range of possibilities than might be set out here.”



Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



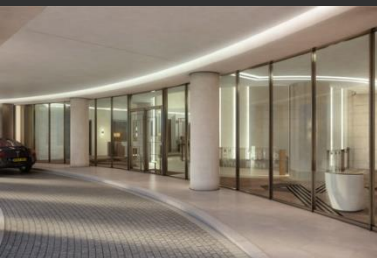
Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria



Appendices



## Schedule of Meetings



Name & Title	Date of meeting*
Mrs. Dympna Fitzgerald, Business Intelligence and Development Unit Manager, AIT	20 April 2020
Mr. Barry Coleman, Data Analytics and Contracts Manager, LIT	20 April 2020
Dr. Niall Seery, TU Project Director, AIT	21 April 2020
Mr. Terry Twomey, TU Project Director, LIT	21 April 2020



Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria

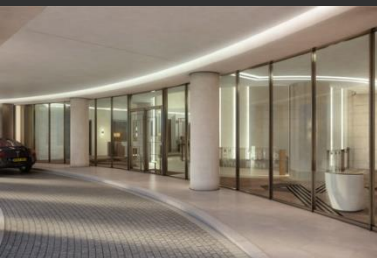


Appendices



\* This date represents the date of first meeting. Subsequent meetings were held and/or follow up communications performed as required.





Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria



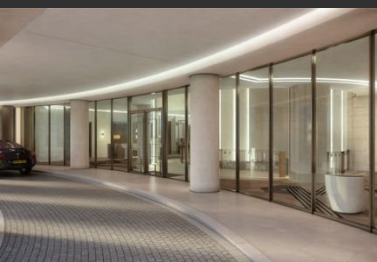
Appendices



## Appendix 5 – Sample Programmes

This Appendix is referenced from section 2.1.5, where we selected a sample of 10 unique academic programmes (leading to at least honours bachelor degree level) and reviewed the programmatic reviews, panel reports, consultation summaries and industrial input documents to ascertain the involvement of industry in the design of the programmes. All 10 programmes below had a work placement module that was mandatory.

Programme Code	Programme Title	Total Students	Sighted evidence of Industry Involvement	Evidence Provided				
				Approved Course Schedule	Programmatic Review	Panel Report	Industrial Input	Consultation Report Summary
AL_BSTUD_B	Bachelor of Business (Honours)	108	P	2019	-	2015	-	-
AL_CCIVL_B	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering	19	P	2019	-	2015	-	-
AL_KGAME_B	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Software Design (Game Development)	25	P	2019	-	-	2020	-
AL_SAPSY_8	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Applied Psychology	40	P	2019	-	-	-	2018
LC_HBTM_MY	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Business Studies Travel and Tourism Management	76	P	2015	2015	-	-	-
LC_HSOCM_KEN	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Social Care Work	11	P	2019	2019	-	-	-
LC_BBBSM_KCL	Bachelor of Business (Honours)	10	P	2016	2015	-	-	-
LC_EEETM_KMY	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electrical Engineering	30	P	2015	2017	-	-	-
LC_AMUTA_KMY	Bachelor of Science (Honours) Music Technology and Production	18	P	2018	2017	-	-	-
LC_SSTCM_KTH	Bachelor of Science (Honours) Sports	88	P	2015	2015	-	-	-



Executive summary



Specific findings –  
Student profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Staff profile criteria



Specific findings –  
Research activity criteria



Appendices



## Appendix 6 – Programmes with work placement

This Appendix is referenced from section 2.1.5. The following are programmes with a work placement element and the corresponding number of eligible students under that programme identified by the AIT/LIT Consortium:

No.	Programme Code	LIT Students enrolled	LIT Students on Placement 19/20
1	LC_HBTM_KMY	76	30
2	LC_HBBEM_KMY	21	0
3	LC_HBSEM_HB8	117	31
4	LC_HBSPM_HB8	162	42
5	LC_HCODM_KMY	27	7
6	LC_HCECM_KEN	6	5
7	LC_HCECM_KMY	50	0
8	LC_HCECM_KTH	32	18
9	LC_JINDM_KMY	11	0
10	LC_HSOCM_KEN	11	0
11	LC_HSOCM_KMY	375	194
12	LC_HSOCM_KTH	69	37
13	LC_BBBSM_KCL	10	0
14	LC_BBBSM_KMY	68	0
15	LC_BBBCM_KMY	17	0
16	LC_BDIMM_KMY	27	0
17	LC_EEETM_KMY	30	8
18	LC_EEERM_KMY	19	1
19	LC_EIARM_KMY	19	0
20	LC_ERENM_KMY	20	0
21	LC_SBBPM_KMY	27	0
22	LC_BBISM_KMY	21	11
23	LC_JCVLM_KMY	50	12
24	LC_SCLIM_KMY	7	0
25	LC_KNSMM_KMY	69	18
26	LC_JCMTM_KMY	83	29
27	LC_ACMDM_KCL	16	7
28	LC_KCRMM_KCL	3	0
29	LC_ADAPM_KCL	45	12
30	LC_TDANM_KCL	18	0
31	LC_SDMEM_KMY	54	20
32	LC_SEGSM_KTH	32	6
33	LC_SEMAM_KTH	16	1
34	LC_SFPHM_KMY	122	32
35	LC_AGADM_KCL	70	16
36	LC_KGDVM_KTH	58	22
37	LC_KIDMM_KMY	60	8
38	LC_KISYM_KMY	19	4
39	LC_AMUTA_KMY	18	0
40	LC_AMUTM_KMY	38	0
41	LC_SPHFR_B	2	2
42	LC_JPPVM_KMY	53	10
43	LC_JQUNM_KMY	138	34
44	LC_KSFDK_KMY	157	32
45	LC_SSTCM_KTH	88	16
<b>LIT Total</b>		<b>2,431</b>	<b>665</b>

No.	Programme Code	AIT Students enrolled	AIT Students on Placement 19/20
1	AL_BACCP_8	6	0
2	AL_BSTUD_B	108	25
3	AL_CCIVL_B	19	6
4	AL_CCNA_8	21	21
5	AL_CQSR_8	43	9
6	AL_DANIM_8	78	19
7	AL_DGRDD_8	3	0
8	AL_EMANU_8	11	11
9	AL_EMEPY_8	71	9
10	AL_FCULI_8	12	12
11	AL_HEYCA_8JN	8	8
12	AL_HEYCE_8	16	16
13	AL_HSOCS_B	119	119
14	AL_HSSCP_8	45	0
15	AL_KCLDC_8	47	16
16	AL_KCLOU_8	8	0
17	AL_KGAME_B	25	7
18	AL_KMOBA_8	6	0
19	AL_KSVRG_8	27	0
20	AL_NGENR_B	159	159
21	AL_NPSYC_B	98	98
22	AL_OHOSP_8	21	11
23	AL_SAPSY_8	40	0
24	AL_SEYCE_8	18	18
25	AL_SMICR_8	54	10
26	AL_SNUTR_8	83	21
27	AL_SPHYS_8	35	6
28	AL_SPTX_8	109	31
29	AL_SREHAB_8	114	31
<b>AIT Total</b>		<b>1,404</b>	<b>663</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>3,835</b>	<b>1,328</b>



At Deloitte, we make an impact that matters for our clients, our people, our profession, and in the wider society by delivering the solutions and insights they need to address their most complex business challenges. As the largest global professional services and consulting network, with over 312,000 professionals in more than 150 countries, we bring world-class capabilities and high-quality services to our clients. In Ireland, Deloitte has over 3,000 people providing audit, tax, consulting, and corporate finance services to public and private clients spanning multiple industries. Our people have the leadership capabilities, experience and insight to collaborate with clients so they can move forward with confidence.

This publication has been written in general terms and we recommend that you obtain professional advice before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this publication. Deloitte Ireland LLP accepts no liability for any loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of any material in this publication.

Deloitte Ireland LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in Northern Ireland with registered number NC1499 and its registered office at 19 Bedford Street, Belfast BT2 7EJ, Northern Ireland.

Deloitte Ireland LLP is the Ireland affiliate of Deloitte NSE LLP, a member firm of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee ("DTTL"). DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL and Deloitte NSE LLP do not provide services to clients. Please see [www.deloitte.com/about](http://www.deloitte.com/about) to learn more about our global network of member firms.

© 2020 Deloitte Ireland LLP. All rights reserved.

