

Self-Evaluation Report 2025 Template

Template Guidance Note

- All sections of this template should be completed in full.
- The format of the template should not be altered.
- The template has been pre-populated with the agreed Performance Objectives, indicators and targets. Pre-populated elements of the template reflect the Performance Agreement and these entries should not be amended. Queries relating to pre-populated information should be submitted to systemperformance@hea.ie.
- Where word count limits apply, these limits should not be exceeded.
- Appendices are not permitted.
- Reporting should be clear, concise, and evidence based.
- Narrative or bullet point formats may be used, and the use of plain English is encouraged.
- Reporting should be cognisant of the information provided in the [System Performance Framework 2023–2028](#) and [System Performance Framework Glossary](#).
- Where institutional strategies, policies, or other institutional documents are referenced, these should be hyperlinked where possible.
- Data presented in the report should be the most recent data available to the institution (timeframe should be specified).
- It is the responsibility of higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure that the information provided in the report is accurate.
- Redaction may be agreed with the HEA prior to publication, as appropriate.
- The report must be signed by the head of the institution prior to submission.
- The report should be submitted to systemperformance@hea.ie by the stated deadline.

Data Protection

The HEA as data controller will process personal data received via this form in compliance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. We will only process the data received via this form for the purposes of reviewing, evaluating, and reporting on the System Performance Framework 2023–2028 and data will be retained in line with our Records Management Policy only as long as is necessary to meet this purpose. For more information, please see the HEA's [Data Privacy Notice](#).

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South East Technological University Self-Evaluation Report 2025

Introduction

This Self-Evaluation Report will form the basis of the HEA’s assessment of the strategic performance of the institution with respect to the objectives and targets set in the Performance Agreement established between the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and South East Technological University (SETU) in accordance with the System Performance Framework 2023–2028.

In line with the HEA’s mandate to measure and assess institutions’ strategic performance with a view to strengthening the performance of the higher education system and of designated institutions, and to ensure institutions’ accountability, this Self-Evaluation Report will be published on the HEA website. The HEA will engage with institutions regarding any required redactions prior to publication.

It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that the information presented in the submitted report (including qualitative and quantitative data) is accurate.

Part A: Performance Indicators

Text should be added to the white boxes in each of the tables below. Text in the shaded boxes reflects entries in the Performance Agreement and should not be amended.

The most up-to-date data available should be reported in the '**Benchmark data**' and '**2024/25 result**' columns.

The year or range of years to which the reported data relates should be added after the data source in the '**Data source and timeframe**' column.

Pillar: Teaching & Learning

Performance Objective 1

To reshape the curriculum to take account of changing patterns of employment and civic and social needs, especially in relation to sustainability and EDI, and to enhance learner support infrastructure and the learning environment.

Transversal areas of impact: Student Success; Flexibility, Upskilling & Lifelong Learning; Climate & Sustainable Development; Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
1.1	% of programmes with SDGs embedded in the curriculum	SETU curriculum (2025)/ SETU Student Survey (Feb/Mar 2025)	2024/25: Not yet available; TBC	National and European education for sustainable development policy	N/A	—	47%	50%	75%	100%	100% of programmes

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
1.2	Quality of student-faculty interaction	Student Survey.ie & SETU Student Survey Feb/Mar 2025	2023: 16.1	Average for all HEIs (14.0 in 2023)	14.0	—	15.1	>16.1	>16.1	>16.1	>16.1
1.3	Supportive learning environment	Student Survey.ie & SETU Student Survey Feb/Mar 2025	2023: 28.8	Traditional university score of 30.0	30.0	—	29	29.0	29.5	30.0	30.0 1.2 increase on baseline score
1.4	Progression Rate (%) new entrants	SETU SRS (new entrants 2022-23)	2021: 81%	Attain national average, all HEIs	N/A	82%	75.3%	83%	84%	85%	85% 4 p.p. increase on baseline
1.5	Provision of university student accommodation to meet outstanding demand (# beds)	University records (2025)	2023: 9.7% of demand (425 beds)	Not available	N/A	—	9.7% No change	—	—	23% (1,100)	23% of demand 13.3 p.p. increase on baseline

Technical note on indicator data for PO 1:

1.1 This percentage has been arrived at via our Student Survey and is the percentage of students who indicated partial or full awareness of the SDGs. This methodology is consistent with that described in the Performance Agreement but needs further nuance. SETU would welcome a discussion on this KPI.

Benchmark data is unavailable.

1.2 Quality of student–faculty interaction: The Student-Faculty Interaction indicator value for 2024/2025 is calculated using the same methodology as for StudentSurvey.ie, but is based on the results of the SETU Student Survey 2025 conducted in February/March 2025 using many of the same questions as StudentSurvey.ie. We propose the data from 2023 as the most current available benchmark.

Indicator 1.3 Supportive learning environment: The Supportive Environment indicator value for 2024/2025 is calculated using the same methodology as for StudentSurvey.ie, but is based on the results of the SETU Student Survey 2025. We propose the data from 2023 as the most current available benchmark.

1.4 Progression Rate (%) new entrants: The progression rate is calculated using SETU’s methodology, where a new entrant is deemed to have progressed when they are in course year two of any programme in the following academic year (or the following year again if they defer in following year), and only includes new entrants on full-time level 6, 7 and 8 CAO programmes. The HEA’s methodology would deem a student to have progressed if they are present in their own or another HEI in the following academic year and includes new entrant programmes excluded under SETU’s methodology. The national average using *the SETU methodology* is not available. We welcome a discussion on the variance in methodologies and on mechanisms to identify appropriate benchmarks.

1.5 Benchmark data is unavailable.

Pillar: Research & Innovation

Performance Objective 2

To elevate research and innovation, in domains aligned to regional priority, to levels consistent with a top young global university, maximising impact on regional enterprise and society.

Transversal areas of impact: Region; Enterprise; Society; Climate & Sustainable Development.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
2.1	PhD Enrolment as % of overall enrolment Levels 8-10	SETU SRS, 2024/25 HEA Dat, 2024/25	2023/24: 2.41% (250/10,365)	TU Act requirements	2.36% TU sectoral average (2023-24)	2.35% (260)	2.67% in 2025 (275)	2.5% (280)	2.6% (290)	2.75% (320)	2.75% (320/11,950) 40% increase
2.2	PhD Completion rate (%)	SETU records, 2018–19 entrants who have completed within six years	62.5% (2017–18 entrants who have completed within six years)	Not available	N/A	N/A	61.1%	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
2.3	Percentage of PhD projects directly linked	SETU SRS. 2024/25	2022/23: 50%	None available	N/A	50%	71.8%	52%	55%	60%	60% of PhD projects demonstrably related to

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
	to regional priorities¹										regional priorities 10 p.p. increase
2.4	Research expenditure per annum and % of which is supported by industry	University financial records (2024)	5-year average 2018–2022: €23m p.a. 4% from industry (€940,000 p.a.)	Maintain or improve national ranking (TBC) Sectoral % funding from industry (6%)	N/A 6% from industry	€24.1m in 2024 4.5%	€27.2m in 2024 7.26%	€25.5m in 2025 5%	€26.6m in 2026 5.5%	€27.5m in 2027 6.3%	€27.5m p.a. 20% increase 6.3% from industry (€1.7m p.a.)
2.5	Number of research agreements with industry per annum	KTI annual reports and university records (2025)	2023: 109	Targets set by Knowledge Transfer Ireland	120	120 in 2024	120 in 2025	120 in 2025	140 in 2026	150 in 2027	530 cumulative 38% increase in 2027 relative to 2023 baseline
2.6	Number of Licenses, Options and Agreements	KTI annual reports and university records (2024)	2023: 3	Targets set by Knowledge Transfer Ireland	12	12 in 2024	6 in 2024	14 in 2025	16 in 2026	18 in 2027	60 cumulative 600% increase on baseline by 2027

¹ Regional priorities are defined as those identified in Figure 1 of the Performance Agreement.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
2.7	Number of Publications per annum	Scopus (2024 calendar year, retrieved 13 August 2025)	5-year average 2019–2023: 263	TU sectoral average 2019–2023: 322	TU sectoral average 2020–2024: 360	305 in 2024	312 in 2024	320 in 2025	330 in 2026	330 in 2027	325 p.a. (5-year average 2023-2027) 30% increase on 2018–2022
2.8	Percentage (%) of Publications per annum in High Impact Journals	Scopus (2024 calendar year, retrieved 13 August 2025)	5-year average 2019–2023: 61% (160)	TU sector average 2019–2023: 62% (995/1613)	TU sector average 2020–2024: 62% (1111/1800)	63% 192 in 2024	58.3% 182 in 2024	65% 208 in 2025	68% 224 in 2026	70% 231 in 2027	70% of publications in high impact journals 9 p.p. increase relative to 2019–2023 average
2.9	Number research grant applications	University records (2024)	2022/23: 283	Not available	N/A	285	307	300	350	400	1,335 over 4 years 50% increase in 27/28 relative to baseline

Technical note on indicator data for PO 2:

2.1 PhD Enrolment as % of overall enrolment Levels 8–10: Includes full-time and part-time enrolments. Enrolment of programme types 27 (PhD) as a percentage of enrolment of programme types 11 (Undergraduate Honours Degree), 23 (Postgraduate Certificate), 25 (Masters Taught), 26 (Masters Research), 27 (PhD), 29 (Higher Diploma) and 30 (Postgraduate Diploma) (excluding overseas based students and incoming Erasmus students). The requirements of the TU Act remain the benchmark against which performance is measured, though we note the TU Act does not restrict its above the line count to PhDs only.

2.2 No national benchmark data is available against which to establish meaningful targets. We welcome a discussion with HEA with regard to this measure. In some cases, the sample size may be small and this may compromise the impact of the measure. The methodology applied was to take the incoming PhD cohort in a given year (2017-18 for the baseline) and examining how many of that cohort had graduated with PhDs within six years (accounting for both PT and FT cohorts).

2.3 Percentage of PhD projects directly linked to regional priorities: Calculated as the percentage of PhD students on programmes assigned to ISCED 04 Business, administration and law, ISCED 05 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, ISCED 06 Information and Communication Technologies, ISCED 07 Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction, and ISCED 09 Health and welfare out of the total number of PhD students. SETU questions the value of this measure and would welcome a discussion here.

2.4 We retain the benchmark data from the baseline year though national rankings are unavailable.

2.5 & 2.6 Targets are as determined by EI and are reflected in the benchmark data.

2.7 Number of Publications per annum: The number of SETU authored Scopus publications per annum. We have recalculated the sectoral average (now 2020-2024) and use this as benchmark data.

2.8 Percentage (%) of Publications per annum in High Impact Journals: The number of SETU authored Scopus publications per annum that were published in journals ranked as Quartile 1 and 2 by Scimago Journal Rank as a percentage of the number of publications per annum. We have recalculated the sectoral average (now 2020-2024) and use this as benchmark data.

2.9 For the purposes of this exercise, we exclude consultancy and innovation vouchers from these figures. We suggest a correction to the baseline to 283 (2022-23). Benchmark data is not available.

Pillar: Access & Participation

Performance Objective 3

To expand educational provision to maximise educational opportunities for people in the region, especially for under-represented groups, through a renewed programme portfolio, aligned with regional needs.

Transversal areas of impact: Flexibility, Upskilling, & Lifelong Learning; Region; Society; Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
3.1	Proportion (%) of overall HE enrolment from SE attending SETU	enrolment data 2023/24	2022/23: 35.6% of HE-going FT students from SE (CW, KK, WD, WX) enrol at SETU	HEI enrolment profile in select regions (ranging from 68% to 73% in 2022/23)	74.4% (SW) and 61.5% (MW) (2023/24)	36.5%	36.0%	37%	37.5%	39%	39% of HE-going FT students from SE (CW, KK, WD, WX) enrol at SETU 3.4 p.p. increase
3.2	Proportion of part-time enrolments as % total enrolments (WTE)	SETU SRS (2024-25) and HEA data (2024-25)	2023/24: 16.4%	Maintain sectoral ranking (2nd)	Maintain sectoral ranking of 2nd	16.5%	22.16% (sectoral ranking of 2 retained)	16.5%	17%	17%	17% (n=TBC) 0.6 p.p. increase

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
3.3	Proportion (%) of part-time enrolment from NAP target groups	SETUSRS & Equal Access Survey 2024-25	2023/24: 12% (~600)	Match or exceed TU sector average	N/A	12%	13.1%	13%	14%	15%	15% (~850) 3 p.p. increase
3.4	Number of full-time students with disabilities as a % of total FT enrolment²	SETU FSD Return 2023-24	2021/22: 8% (925)	Sustain at 1% or more above national average, 7% ³	8%	8% (945)	8.9% (965)	8% (965)	8% (990)	8% (1,015)	Maintain baseline of 8% 3,915 students over 4 years
3.5	Number of new entrants from the Traveller community⁴	Equal Access Survey 2024-25	2022/23: ■	NAP targets	NAP Targets (0.32% of new entrants or 150 nationally)	Maintain baseline	■	+1	+1	+3	+ 5

² For the purposes of this measure, we use the FSD as the data source.

³ National % Enrolments with a Disability as % of All Enrolment, FSD: 17,526/256,785=7%

⁴ The level of disaggregation of data disseminated publicly is subject to data protection considerations. Data disaggregated to a level which may allow individuals to be identified (even indirectly) is not disseminated publicly. See the HEA Statistics: [Privacy, Data Protection and Disclosure Control](#).

Technical note on indicator data for PO 3:

Where necessary, a brief explanatory note relating to the data in the table above may be provided here. For example, a note on data source or collection mechanisms, or on methodology for calculation or verification of metrics. Please note that analysis of performance in relation to targets should be reserved for Part B. [200 words approx.]

3.1 SETU benchmarks against the South West and the Mid-West and is guided by the aspiration within the National Development Plan for balanced regional development; the retention of HE-going students within the region is an important contributor to that balance.

3.2 Proportion of part-time enrolments as % total enrolments (WTE): The percentage of the whole time equivalent (WTE based on 60 credits being 1 WTE) for part-time students out of the overall WTE (excluding overseas based students). Note, however, that the ranking of second is based on enrolments not WTE as WTE are not available at a national level. SETU ranks second (30.4% enrolments are part-time) to ATU (49.2% of enrolments are part-time) based on published 2024-25 enrolment figures for the 12 universities and TUs.

3.3 Proportion (%) of part-time enrolment from NAP target groups: National Access Plan (NAP) target groups are taken as students with any Disability or are Irish Traveller/Roma for ethnicity in the annual Equal Access Survey. Benchmark data is not available.

3.4 Number of full-time students with disabilities as a % of total FT enrolment: Based on full-time students from SETU's Fund for Students with Disabilities (FSD) return as a proportion of all full-time students (excluding overseas based students). Presuming no change in the national average.

Pillar: Engagement

Performance Objective 4

To partner internationally to extend our reach and maximise our impact, enhance our attractiveness and reputation, and to drive an inclusive, outward-looking region.

Transversal areas of impact: International; Region.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
4.1	Proportion of non-EU full-time enrolment as % of total FT enrolment	HEA SRS, 2024/25	2022/23: 5.7% (600)	Exceed TU sector profile: 6% in 2022/23 (4,145/67,530) Towards average profile, all HEIs: 11.5% in 2022/23 (22,960/198,970)	TU sector: 7.2% (4,675/64,505) All HEIs: 14.1% (30,405/215,580)	6.4% (715)	6.6% (705/10,745)	7% (800)	7.5% (880)	8% (980)	8% 2.3 p.p. increase 3,375 non-EU FT enrolments over 4 years
4.2	Number of trans-national enrolments	SETU SRS 2024-25	2022/23: 566	Realise growth targets set out in existing transnational agreements	1,600	1,600	1,660	1,900	1,950	2,030	7,480 transnational enrolments over 4 years

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
4.3	Ratio of outward-bound to incoming students under Erasmus (physical and virtual)	SETU SRS/IO Records 2024-2025	2022/23: 22:78 (88 out, 307 in)	Towards balanced mobility	N/A	25:75	35:65 (153 out, 284 in)	30:70	32:68	35:65	35:65

Technical note on indicator data for PO 4:

4.1 Proportion of non-EU full-time enrolment as % of total FT enrolment: The number of full-time SETU students categorised as non-EU by the HEA (based on domicile country of origin) as a percentage of all full-time SETU students (excluding overseas based students and incoming Erasmus students).

4.2 We refer here to SETU's own agreements as the benchmark data and these have not changed.

4.3 The benchmark remains as described.

Performance Objective 5

To lead and deepen regional strategic partnerships, maximising regional cohesion and impact, and enhance the university's capacity to plan for and respond dynamically to current and emerging skills and educational needs of employers.

Transversal areas of impact: Region; Enterprise; Society; Sectoral & Tertiary Cohesion.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
5.1	Proportion (%) of students undertaking work placement on FT degree programmes, Levels 7-8	SETU curriculum (2025)	2022/23: 76%	Not available	N/A	78%	78.0%	80%	80%	85%	85% 9 p.p. increase
5.2	Apprentice enrolment as proportion (%) of total enrolment	SETU SRS 2024-25	2022/23: 6.25% (1,111)	National targets, Action Plan for Apprenticeship (Not available)	N/A	6.6% (1,200)	6.14% (1,008)	7% (1,300)	7.5% (1,400)	8% (1,500)	8% 1.75 p.p. increase 5400 apprentice enrolments across four years 35% increase on baseline in 27/28

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
5.3	Number of First Year Tertiary Programmes	SETU SRS 2024-25	2022: 2	Not available	N/A	8 (6 new)	8 (6 new)	13 (5 new)	15 (2 new)	17 (2 new)	17 first-year tertiary programmes (850% of baseline)
5.4	Number of participants in New Frontiers Phase 2⁵	Tech Transfer Office records 2025	18 p.a. (2023/24)	KTI targets	18	18	18	18	18	18	72 participants in NF Phase 2
5.5	New Registered Spin Out Companies [and those achieving HPSU status]	Tech Transfer Office records 2024	2023: 0 7 existing spin-outs, though none was added in 2023.	EI targets	1	1 [0] in 2024	1 [0] in 2024	2 [1] in 2025	2 [1] in 2026	2 [1] In 2027	7 new spin-outs over 4 years 100% increase [3 spin-outs achieving HPSU status]
5.6	Number of employees in companies supported by	Incubation centre records 2025	2023: 350	Not available	N/A	350	350	375	400	420	420 employees (+20%)

⁵ Targets for New Frontiers assume a continuation of funding beyond the current cycle, due to conclude in 2026.

No.	Indicator	Data source & timeframe	Baseline	Benchmark	Benchmark data	2024/25 target	2024/25 result	2025/26 target	2026/27 target	2027/28 target	Cumulative target
	SETU innovation centres										
5.7	No. of students participating in entrepreneurship events in GrowthHub⁶	GrowthHub Reports 2025	48 students have engaged with GrowthHub (2022/2023)	SE Enterprise Plan	N/A	125 in 2023/24	125	175 in 2024/25	300** in 2025/26	400** in 2026/27	400 students p.a.**

Technical note on indicator data for PO 5:

5.1 Proportion (%) of students undertaking work placement on FT degree programmes, Levels 7-8: This indicator has been calculated as the percentage of full-time level 7 and 8 CAO programmes that offered work placement as either a mandatory requirement or an optional module as per Approved Programme Schedules. Propose change wording of indicator to: Proportion (%) of FT degree programmes, Levels 7-8 that offer work placement. We welcome discussion on this KPI as it may be more appropriate to measure outputs here (e.g. graduate employment) than the constituent parts of the curriculum for measuring SETU's effectiveness.

⁶ Targets for GrowthHub student engagement presume a continuation in some form of GrowthHub beyond the current funding period which concludes in 2025.

Part B: Performance Evaluation and Strategic Reflection

Text should be added to the white boxes in each of the tables below. Word count should be recorded as indicated. Guidance on the information required in each table is provided in the shaded boxes. Pre-populated elements of Part B reflect the Performance Agreement and these entries should not be amended.

Section 1: Context

Provide an update on the context for the implementation of the institution's Performance Agreement in academic year 2024/25. This should include information on the following, as relevant:

- Institutional strategy, including stage of development and/or implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- Changes to the organisation's structure and/or senior leadership.
- Changes to the profile of the institution, i.e. significant changes to the number of staff and/or students or to programme delivery.
- Improvement or development of data collection and evaluation systems and processes, e.g. action taken to address data challenges or gaps, or any new challenges or data gaps that have been identified since the development of the Performance Agreement or submission of the previous SER.
- Any modifications (requested or approved) to the Performance Agreement.

Word limit: 500

- SETU was established on 1 May 2022 and launched its first Strategic Plan, *Connecting for Impact*, in May 2023, articulating an ambitious vision to establish SETU as *a leading global Technological University with transformative impact on the South East of Ireland and beyond*. The Plan provides the framework for the development and monitoring of institutional performance, including as captured in the Performance Agreement.
- The University has engaged in a large-scale and far-reaching integration programme across corporate, academic, and operational domains as the principal focus of activity since its foundation. The University can point to strengthened cross-campus operations, greater alignment across campuses in student supports, and significant changes in governance and management as evidence of an increasingly unitary approach. New senior leadership positions have been created that support operational consistency across campuses. Academic faculties were established in 2024-25 as the principal units of academic management. The pace of restructuring has been slowed by national-level discussions regarding senior leadership roles. A cyber-attack in 2024-25 significantly

delayed digital systems integration, though recovery has enabled the creation of more robust foundations for future integration.

- SETU is the only university in the South East of Ireland and as such has a critical role in delivering on national plans with regard to regional development. The university is proactive in engaging with regional stakeholders, including with regional ETBs on the development of a unified and coherent tertiary platform to prospective learners. The university remains by far the largest destination for higher education-going learners from the region. Enrolment, while relatively static since designation, is expected to increase, especially with new programmes in Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine.
- Research in support of regional innovation has advanced, supported by TU-RISE funding. The appointment of research professors, along with revised workload allocation practices, are critical to maintain momentum.
- While regionally-embedded, SETU is also globally connected. International enrolment targets are largely on track and significant activity has taken place in relation to transnational provision with a number of partners in China. SETU is an active participant in the EU-CONEXUS European University consortium. SETU continues to make advances in the area of sustainability supported by investment in a dedicated office.
- Some aspects of SETU's development are constrained by a reliance on Exchequer funding, with capital development progressing more slowly than planned, including with regard to student accommodation.
- The University was commended as part of the CINNTE review for its investment in institutional data and research. Data governance and integrity is a priority for the coming period. The University collects data against a very large number of KPIs that might be rationalised, as indicated in the comments in individual sections below.
- While SETU's focus in the last year has been on consolidation and capacity building arising from designation and institutional merger, the University remains largely on track towards its objectives and towards realising its ambition.
- Note our requests for further discussion on KPIs 1.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 5.1 with a view to potentially modifying the approach.

[Word count: 500]

Section 2: Evaluation of Performance

Provide an evaluation of the institution's performance in relation to each Performance Objective, with reference to the indicator data provided in Part A. This should include:

- Analysis of the indicator data for this Performance Objective, e.g.:
 - Trend analysis and benchmarking of performance with reference to baselines, benchmarks, and targets. Graphs or charts to illustrate the analysis provided should be labelled and cross-referenced in the commentary.
- Assessment of implementation, e.g.:
 - Effectiveness of the specific actions related to the Performance Objective as demonstrated by the analysis of the indicator data.
 - Internal or external factors that have supported or impeded the achievement of targets.
 - Any additional evidence of performance, e.g. qualitative evidence of outcomes.
- Strategic reflection, e.g.:
 - Any learning from the analysis of the institution's performance.
 - How learning is being applied to maintain and/or enhance implementation and outcomes in future.
 - How learning is being used to inform decision making, strategy development, policy, and/or strategic planning.
 - New or emerging opportunities, challenges, and risks related to the Performance Objective.
 - Priority(s) in relation to this Performance Objective for the year ahead, with reference to any new actions or initiatives to support implementation.

Word limit: 1,000

Pillar: Teaching & Learning

Performance Objective 1

To reshape the curriculum to take account of changing patterns of employment and civic and social needs, especially in relation to sustainability and EDI, and to enhance learner support infrastructure and the learning environment.

Transversal areas of impact:

Student Success; Flexibility, Upskilling & Lifelong Learning; Climate & Sustainable Development; Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging.

Learning Environment

- SETU's priority over 2024-25 has been on elevating the quality of learner support structures across all campuses to ensure alignment and commonality in student experience across the wider University. The measures of student satisfaction visible in indicators **1.2** and **1.3** are therefore encouraging and above national averages. The CINNTE review that took place in 2025 also validated the quality of SETU's programmes and curriculum and the SETU learning environment. An implementation plan for the recommendations arising from the report has been developed and is being actioned.
- Academic integration leads continue to drive integration in the academic regulatory affairs of the university and have created common sets of policies and procedures to support students and their achievement. Similarly, the university continues to map out, in conjunction with our software vendors, a coherent path to full integration of our student record systems due for completion in 2028.
- The expression of this common learner support platform in the form of a common VLE has been frustrated by the cyber-incident encountered on the Waterford campus. Recovery from the attack has put the university back approximately by one year though progress will be accelerated from this point.
- The SETU Centre for Academic Practice has now been fully integrated and is operational and offers supports for teaching, learning and assessment for both staff and learners across all campuses.
- In terms of academic governance and quality assurance, the SETU Academic Council is fully operational and key committees and structures created to support the Council's work. The University continues to move towards academic integration and has restructured academic units as cross-campus Faculties.
- It is understood that, more than ever, factors external to the University have a material impact on a learner's ability to engage fully with programmes, progress, and flourish. Many SETU learners struggle to secure good living accommodation and it is the

University's ambition to increase the available University-controlled student accommodation to meet those strong needs. The inability to progress indicator **1.5** therefore is disappointing. The University continues to engage nationally to advance this discussion.

Progression

- The University has prioritised student retention and progression and has initiated a major thematic review of approach and support activity in this area. The review will conclude in Q4 2025 with an external panel visiting in Q2 2026. The performance indicated in **1.4**, with SETU tracking below national figures, is extremely concerning. Detailed analysis of this profile has taken place and is informing the thematic review. SETU remains focussed on achieving its target by 2028.
- We note the divergence in methodologies between SETU and HEA in determining performance under this measure which makes benchmarking somewhat flawed. (In essence, SETU measures progression and bases its analysis on cases of students who do not progress from the first year of a programme to the second year of the same programme. HEA adopts a broader definition and is largely measuring retention, that is, whether students who do not complete year one of a programme are retained within HE, either in the same institution or another or on the same programme or another. We suggest SETU's measure invariably will be lower.)

Curriculum and Programme Portfolio

- A root-and-branch review of the SETU programme portfolio has commenced as part of the University ROaD project (Realising Opportunities and Development). The project is due to conclude in 2026. Significant resources in the form of the appointment of a number of academic leads have been directed towards the project with the emphasis on identifying, planning for, and realising new programme opportunities with a view to recruiting new learners to the University.
- The project is in part founded on ongoing and regular work to determine and describe learner need. An assessment of lifelong learning needs took place and was published by the University in 2025. The University remains closely focussed on delivering on regional need in the first instance and continues to carry a comprehensive programme portfolio across all major disciplines and at all levels on the NFQ from 6 to 10.
- Informed by the ongoing ROaD programme, the University will shortly embark on a full set of academic reviews. This will be the main instrument by which the University effects the reform of its curriculum, and specifically by which it embeds a defined set of graduate attributes (including those related to the SDGs) into the curriculum. Investment in the first instance in the creation of a Sustainability Office within the University, with dedicated Executive leadership, represents a significant commitment to enhancing all aspects of sustainability across the organisation and will inform the approach to curriculum reform.

- SETU wishes to review indicator **1.1** however as it does not adequately capture, in a meaningful way, our ambitions in this regard. Our aim is to embed an ESD approach and an awareness of the SDGs and propose modifying the target to “% of programmes which have embedded an ESD approach”, retaining the targets as 100% with perhaps a second or sub target around increasing awareness of the SDGs. We welcome the advice of the review panel on this measure. “Input” measures with regard to the curriculum may not be as meaningful as “output” measures, and we would be open to a discussion on recasting our approach here.

Risk and Challenges

- A. The ROaD project is a very significant institutional programme of work with multiple interdependencies, some of which (especially in relation to workload allocation and workforce development) are contingent on external developments.
- B. Further progress on academic structures is required in order not to hinder momentum on academic reviews and the wider portfolio redevelopment. Furthermore, the workload on Academic Council that will arise when reviews commence is not negligible. Institutional capacity, in other words, may well be a factor in how curriculum reform accelerates from here.
- C. The delivery of enhanced accommodation options for students is a critical enabler of student success, especially for international students.

[Word count: 990]

Pillar: Research & Innovation

Performance Objective 2

To elevate research and innovation, in domains aligned to regional priority, to levels consistent with a top young global university, maximising impact on regional enterprise and society.

Transversal areas of impact:

Region; Enterprise; Society; Climate & Sustainable Development.

Research Performance

- A key capacity-building activity over the last year was the development of the inaugural SETU research and innovation strategy, *Connecting Research to Impact, 2025-2028*. This gives strong strategic direction to the University into the future. The strategy has been fully approved, costed and is now being operationalised.
- There is a steady elevation in research and innovation activity evident across the key performance measures. PhD enrolments (indicator **2.1**) have steadily increased and SETU will be broadly on track over the coming period, if the trajectory continues to grow, to reach the performance levels established in legislation. The growth in PhD enrolments has in part been supported by Presidential Scholarships, TU-RISE scholarships and a growing industry co-fund scheme. SETU also encourages supervisors to support doctoral candidates to apply for GOI scholarships. Ongoing investment at scale in these supports is required to meet targets.
- SETU is confident as to the quality of its PhD programmes and is committed to measuring that quality (indicator **2.2**). The University has been challenged however to benchmark that data nationally as well as by some anomalies arising from relatively small numbers that may skew measurement. We would welcome a detailed conversation on how best to proceed here, given the relative lack of benchmarks.
- SETU is the highest TU for Horizon drawdown, is a partner in 18 projects and lead PI on 5 European projects (indicator **2.9**). There is evidence of good increases also in national funding, with the largest funder being Enterprise Ireland. There has been a modest increase in publication numbers (**2.7**). The slight drop in the proportion of peer reviewed journal publications (**2.8**) hides a development in the Scopus data-sets where there is greater capture of non-journal publications. We note SETU's actual number of articles is up, even if the proportion has decreased.
- Support for postdoctoral fellows has been strengthened through TU-RISE funding, alongside encouragement for all principal investigators to incorporate postdoctoral positions into grant applications. There is also increased focus on the post-doctoral cohort

in relation to career planning and post-docs form an important part of the HRS4S framework.

- The percentage of academic staff with PhDs remains relatively static. The requirements in legislation, which will be due to be met by 2032, remain challenging in this respect, especially without a full career structure for researchers set out.
- Investment in staff sabbaticals will greatly increase the volume of research outputs, including research funding applications which remain on target (indicator **2.9**).

Knowledge Transfer and Regional Impact

- SETU continues to build research capacity especially in areas linked to regional industrial priority (**2.4**, **2.5** and **2.6**). SETU has benefitted from the award of significant funding under the TU-RISE programme, allowing SETU to invest in the PhD scholarships mentioned above, in staff research sabbaticals (whereby staff can be freed from teaching to pursue research of strategic importance to SETU and regional industry alignment, solidifying our regional industry links), in enhancing technology transfer (through the appointment of officers with direct responsibility for engagement with industry), in further developing research support infrastructure at the university and concentrated investment in rural engagement and entrepreneurship (through the development of four rural innovation hubs in Hacketstown, Urlingford, Rosslare, Dungarvan). The measures indicated in the Performance Agreement largely pre-date the investment from TU-RISE and are all expected to increase in the coming period. Performance remains on track.
- SETU PhDs, especially those attached to core research centres (several of which are EI regional enterprise Gateways) invariably engage in projects with regional dimensions and with regional impact. Indicator **2.3**, we submit, is a poor KPI when it comes to determining regional impact and we request a discussion on how best to capture a key area for SETU. The SETU research strategy identified regional development priorities as ICT, sustainability, health, advanced manufacturing, business and entrepreneurship, social inclusion.
- The development of the University Enterprise Quarter (now called Glassworks) has progressed significantly with the Quarter launched in 2025. Glassworks will be a core enabler for the scaling up of innovation activity across the South East region. The SETU *Impact Report*, which benchmarks research and knowledge transfer impact, has been completed and shows continued good performance, with evidence of increases in a number of areas towards longer-term targets.
- For the recording and monitoring of research activities and outputs, SETU has implemented a well-established Current Research Information System (CRIS) called Pure, which is currently being rolled out across all SETU campuses. SETU also utilises external data sets, including bibliometric data sets, to determine its performance and for benchmarking purposes.

Risk and Challenges

- A. The further development of research careers, and in particular the creation of Professoriate roles within the University, is a high priority for SETU in the coming period. SETU anticipates the appointment of research professors will support growth in research activity as well as in knowledge transfer to industry. Likewise, changes in workload allocation will be necessary to sustain high research performance.
- B. The growth in PhD enrolments requires a parallel growth in supervisory capacity by existing PhD-qualified staff and, most importantly, in staff with supervisory experience. Faculties need to integrate PhD training support for staff into their existing training budgets. There are potential opportunities in widening visiting fellow and visitor professor schemes to support capacity building as well as to encourage collaboration with leading academic and experts worldwide.
- C. There are risks emerging that have to do with the high proportion of international students joining the PhD programme related to visas, research security, and the long-term contribution to the region.
- D. SETU PIs do not systematically encourage PhD students to publish, and this is a missed opportunity. In addition, it may be appropriate to offer and encourage more PhDs by Publications which would allow SETU upskill our staff faster as well as increase publication count.
- E. While some training has been delivered, there remains a moderate understanding of research and knowledge transfer impact by research staff at SETU. Additional training and support is needed here and is planned.

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Pillar: Access & Participation

Performance Objective 3

To expand educational provision to maximise educational opportunities for people in the region, especially for under-represented groups, through a renewed programme portfolio, aligned with regional needs.

Transversal areas of impact:

Flexibility, Upskilling, & Lifelong Learning; Region; Society; Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging.

Capacity Building

- The SETU Lifelong Learning Strategy and its support needs assessment are key developments delivered in 2024-5 that support capacity building in this domain. They form the basis for the ongoing refinement and enhancement of the regionally engaged SETU proposition and programme offering. That proposition is developed in part in the context of the Learning Region initiative.

Regional Enrolment

- SETU is the only university in the South East and as such has a responsibility to the region not shared with any other HEI. SETU remains the largest single provider of higher education to the region and continues to recruit approximately 36% HEI-going learners from the region (indicator **3.1**). There has been a slight slippage from the baseline but the University anticipates the inclusion of a number of new professional programmes (Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy) in its programme portfolio, as well as a major review and refresh of that portfolio underway, will enhance the attractiveness of the institution to regional learners. Regional stakeholders are agreed that the realisation of national plans with regard to regional development, as expressed in the National Development Plan and elsewhere, necessitate continued investment in SETU as a regional anchor institution and key enabler.
- As indicated above, a root-and-branch review of the SETU programme portfolio has commenced as part of the University ROaD project (Realising Opportunities and Development) with the emphasis on identifying, planning for, and realising new programme opportunities with a view to recruiting new learners to the University. Part of this work will ensure that there will be expanded SETU educational provision in order to maximise educational opportunities for people in the region through a renewed programme portfolio that aligns to regional skills and educational needs, develops new discipline areas to address regional demand and arrest the outward migration of students from the region, and that enhances access and progression pathways.
- A branding and marketing strategy for the portfolio has been undertaken and will be

completed by Q2 2026.

Access and Participation

- SETU continues to work closely with educational partners across the region and is a lead partner in the South East Learning Region initiative building on the designation of Waterford as a UNESCO Learning City.
- Taking account of significant successes to date, SETU is developing an enhanced Student Access and Widening Participation Project to review all access routes across the portfolio and develop detailed plans to increase access and progression opportunities in the portfolio. An RPL policy has been approved by Academic Council and is currently in consultation with trade unions. An RPL hub has put in place with the work due to be completed in the summer of 2025.
- SETU's Lifelong Learning strategy, supported by a detailed learning needs assessment report, has been published. A sustainable business model for Lifelong Learning taking account of our position as market leader (see indicator **3.2**) and of our strong existing relationships and partnerships, has been developed and along with the work of the Tertiary Office, is making progress with regard to access routes. We note the continued high performance of SETU in attracting part-time learners. We note also (see objective 5 below and KPI 5.3) the increased number of tertiary programmes offered by SETU in partnership with regional ETBs.
- SETU is on target with regard to the enrolment from target NAP groups (**3.3, 3.4, 3.5**) and exceeds the national average.
- We note ongoing partnerships with the Defence Forces and with the Irish Prison Service, both of which offer atypical but nonetheless effective access and progression routes into HE. An ongoing project with the Defence Forces is focussed, effectively, on elevating the educational attainment levels of recruits within the DF: enlisted personnel gain access to higher education through the collaboration, giving individuals opportunities to participate that they would not otherwise have, and support public service reform by ensuring staff are well-equipped for their roles now and into the future. This project was awarded Performance Funding in 2024.
- SETU continues to collaborate with Tiglin, a non-profit organisation supporting individuals overcoming addiction and homelessness, and, funded by the HEA performance funding (2022 award) has developed a programme to integrate higher education into Tiglin's rehabilitation programmes. Courses offered include the Certificate in the Foundations of Adult Learning, the Certificate in Communication, and the Certificate in Critical and Ethical Thinking. They are designed to equip participants with the essential skills for reintegration into society. SETU also collaborates with An Cosán, a community education organisation in Dublin, in the delivery of programmes, again with a firm focus on developing access routes. This initiative attracted performance funding in 2023.

Risks and Challenges

- A. We note the very high baseline for activity in the Lifelong Learning domain for SETU that has led to some distortion in the long-term mapping of trends.
- B. The development of a systematic reporting capability with regard to non-traditional learner groups including developing capability in reporting on learners with disabilities, first generation learners, and others, is in progress with initial scoping already taken place. There remain fundamental problems and inconsistencies with data on disability and in other categories. Capturing reliable data on student access remains a challenge, in part because of the incompleteness of the reach of existing data sets (namely the EAS and the FSD return) when it comes to capturing data on disability, for instance. It is proposed to review data sources and approaches in the light of enhanced capacity within the institutional data unit and in the light of discussions with HEA.

[Word count: 900]

Pillar: Engagement

Performance Objective 4

To partner internationally to extend our reach and maximise our impact, enhance our attractiveness and reputation, and to drive an inclusive, outward-looking region.

Transversal areas of impact:

International; Region.

Capacity Building

- The SETU *Global Partnerships and Internationalisation Strategy* which is aligned with Global Citizens 2030, the Irish national strategy, provides detailed direction to the organisation across the multiple domains associated with international education. This strategy has been operational through 2024-25.
- Much work has taken place in the last year to build the necessary infrastructure to facilitate increased in non-EU enrolment, which shows strong performance against the baseline (indicator **4.1**). SETU has recently submitted an application for the TrustEd quality mark. An important strand of work feeding into the TrustEd application has been the creation of the University Global Recruitment Representative Network, comprising at this point approximately 130 agencies. This has involved a substantial programme of activity, including the completion of a competitive tender process and rigorous due diligence across multiple areas, and the development and agreement of new partnership contracts. These developments have taken place within the framework and code of practice required by TrustEd. There will be ongoing monitoring and interrogation of partnerships to ensure impact and alignment with SETU goals. Much work has been done in the reporting period on an externally-facing website for the area which is now live. The quality of information for international students has improved. A range of policies have been developed, including an important repeat fees policy.
- Much work has taken place in aligning the existing campus-specific international offices and associated recruitment processes. The appointment of the Global Business Development manager has strengthened the leadership team and facilitated further integration with the function no longer operating in a siloed fashion.
- Significant activity continues in support of SETU's overseas campus activity in China (see indicator **4.2**) where enrolments has increased very considerably. Detailed work has gone into ensuring the robustness of governance and financial arrangements in the case of the SETU-NUIST partnership that has allowed for activity to take place. Significant increases in enrolment from TNE are anticipated for the coming period and are evident in existing KPIs. Financial agreements are now fully in place. The workload for students across both Joint Institutes remains a concern, requiring rationalisation of consortium delivery and ongoing

programme development and curriculum reform to enhance quality and ensure students are not overburdened.

- The strategy for the internationalisation of the curriculum is described in the broader Global Partnerships and Internationalisation Strategy. Faculties will be required to produce their own protocol vis-a-vis the internationalisation of the curriculum and in this context it is critical that the Programmatic Reviews are aligned here to execute curriculum development plans including specific plans with regard to Internationalisation at Home. A Faculty-based resource in support of teaching and learning in this domain may well be required. SETU has demonstrated a leadership position in Internationalisation at Home Conference from 2025 which represents a very considerable strength to be built on into the future. *It would be worth considering an additional KPI against this objective to measure the internationalisation of the curriculum.*
- SETU continues to be an attractive destination for European students for student exchange opportunities, as is evident in indicator **4.3**. It remains a challenge to encourage SETU students to go on mobility experiences to Europe in equivalent numbers. The goal is to reach something of an improved balance as expressed in the above KPI bearing in mind SETU capacity constraints. The University continues to be an active partner in the EU-CONEXUS European University and to take a lead role in a number of aspects of the work of the consortium. A new strategy for EU-CONEXUS is in development currently and EU-CONEXUS is one vehicle through which outward mobility for students and staff can be encouraged and facilitated.
- SETU has now adopted the QS MoveOn system which is adding to our ability to manage Erasmus+ mobility and international partnerships. This tool ensures compliance with Erasmus requirements while providing oversight of partnership levels and activity. Activity has also been supported by the implementation of the CRM Recruit, also a prerequisite for the TrustEd application and a very considerable body of work. The platform underpins how SETU engages with international students and, when fully implemented, will provide the infrastructure to capture and interrogate data, identify trends, and deliver the reporting and feedback required by the University (as well as by TrustEd).

Risks and Challenges

- It is recognised that geopolitical changes, increase competition within Ireland for international students and partnerships, and policy changes with regard to visa and other enablers of educational mobility, could influence future outcomes. TNE activity requires ongoing investment and support from multiple University offices and remains an area of ongoing challenge. Resources will need to follow at Faculty level in support of internationalising the curriculum. The agreed principle of delegating decision-making on some aspects of student entry needs to be further supported by the development of the necessary enabling academic framework as a priority. It is important that, in the development of new programmes, Faculties take account of Non-EU recruitment plans and, accordingly, ensure capacity to recruit the desired number of students is taken into account in planning. SETU's approach to international rankings will be, in the first instance to model

and test our profile before formally submitting to being ranked. This is to ensure we do not risk being ranked much lower than anticipated because of technical issues with data or interpretations of data requirements.

- Dedicated accommodation for international students would greatly assist with international recruitment and is the subject of ongoing discussion.

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Performance Objective 5

To lead and deepen regional strategic partnerships, maximising regional cohesion and impact, and enhance the university's capacity to plan for and respond dynamically to current and emerging skills and educational needs of employers.

Transversal areas of impact:

Region; Enterprise; Society; Sectoral & Tertiary Cohesion.

Capacity Building

- Recruitment challenges delayed the full staffing of the University External Engagement function but this has now taken place. The University's Engagement Strategy is in the final stages of development.

Regional Partnership

- SETU has demonstrated strong progress in building, sustaining and leveraging partnerships at regional level. The University has progressed in performing a positive leadership role, especially in the region. We note for instance SETU's role in leading the South East region Learning Region initiative. Progress has also been made with regard to partnerships that support the regional Gaeltacht. SETU continues to strengthen its partnership with Carlow College and with a number of other providers.
- The CINNTE Review team commended SETU's close strategic engagement with industry and employers, noting the strong alignment of academic provision and research with regional skills needs and the integration of work placements to produce workplace-ready graduates. The meaningful measurement of work-readiness in the curriculum (indicator **5.1**) is challenging and we would welcome ongoing discussion about developing KPIs in this area.

Apprenticeship and Tertiary Degrees

- The development of the university Apprenticeship Strategy is underway in collaboration with regional ETBs and other partners as relevant, which will reinvigorate our apprenticeship offering and its profile and increase apprentice numbers, positioning SETU as a leader in the field in the development, management, delivery and quality assurance of

apprenticeship programmes. We note numbers are holding steady, at capacity (indicator **5.2**), in areas directly aligned with regional need. The strategic management of apprentice provision requires careful planning; demand may be cyclical and there must be managed recruitment to ensure maximum flexibility in the utilisation of resources should there be a downturn in enrolment.

- SETU has prioritised responding to developments in ORE and anticipates significant activity in this domain into the future, with particular relevance to the South East.
- The increase in the number of tertiary degree programmes indicates an ongoing strengthening of partnership with regional ETBs and further education providers (indicator **5.3**). The University Tertiary Office ensures ever closer alignment with regional ETBs and formalised strategic engagement structures are in place. The increased volume of tertiary programmes (which allow for learners to commence their programme within an ETB environment before transferring to SETU) has opened up additional access routes to the University as well as strengthened and formalised partnership with regional further education partners. The University strongly advocates for and supports an all-of-education-system approach to addressing regional needs. The Learning Region initiative offers a framework within which some aspects of this approach may be pursued.

Technology Transfer

- The Technology Transfer Office activity, supported by the Industry–Academic Liaison Officers appointed under TU-RISE, continues to facilitate expanded knowledge transfer activity (**5.5**). A programme of training activity in support of knowledge transfer has been delivered. The SETU XCELERATE strategy has also been finalised, and a rebranding and repositioning of the SETU innovation proposition is taking place. We anticipate this will lead to further increases across the relevant metrics (**5.4, 5.5, 5.6**).
- SETU signed a number of bilateral MoUs with organisations such as ESB Networks, GreenTech HQ, Waterford Airport as well as private enterprise to deepen our strategic partnerships. It has a leadership role in the South East Off Shore Renewable Energy Partnership collaborating with regional local authorities, regional ports, enterprise support agencies and industry to advance this agenda. SETU and Coláiste na Rinne formed a new partnership to strengthen and enhance Irish language education, culture, and heritage in Gaeltacht na nDéise and the South East region. An Irish Language Officer has been appointed and SETU’s Irish Languages Strategy is in draft stage to be approved in 2025.
- Student entrepreneurial activity has been facilitated by the HCI-funded GrowthHub initiative (see indicator **5.7**). SETU has mainstreamed funding for this initiative following the cessation of HCI funding. The development of a student entrepreneur pipeline is called out in the regional enterprise plan and is a key component in the wider SETU and South East regional innovation ecosystem.
- As indicated earlier, the Glassworks development manifests SETU’s focus on engagement with industry and other partners towards the development of the South East as an innovation-focussed, learning region, with SETU as the anchor institution. The focus on

commercialisation through spin-outs, spin-ins, and supporting companies as they develop and grow forms a key part of the Glassworks proposition (see indicators **5.4, 5.5, 5.6**).

Measurement of Impact

- The measurement of SETU's engagement impact remains challenging. An impact assessment report has been commissioned and is expected Q3 2025. This will assist with further developing impact measures especially at regional level. Progress on the implementation of CRM system was impeded owing to cyber incident. Progress on this development is scheduled for 2025/26.

Risk and Challenges

- A. Staffing and recruitment challenges have led to delays in developing the Regional Engagement Plan. The coming months will be pivotal in delivering the plan and framework within which institutional teams can be mobilised to address regional issues, which is the Grand Challenges programme. Attracting and retaining specialist staff to support engagement/knowledge transfer activities is an ongoing challenge.
- B. The future funding and operations models for New Frontiers 2026-2030 is currently under review by Enterprise Ireland and that may well impact on performance into the future.
- C. The refinement of the approach to apprenticeship requires some direction nationally.

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Section 3: System Learning and Policy Development

Comment on any learning or insights arising from the institution's self-evaluation of performance in relation to the Performance Agreement that may contribute to system learning and/or national policy development and implementation.

Word limit: 300

- The SER process is a welcome opportunity to reflect on institutional progress. The integration of the monitoring and reporting on progress against Performance Agreement objectives with the institutional Strategic Plan has been helpful in ensuring close alignment. It may be appropriate to formalise this link in future Frameworks.
- We note that there is considerable nuance when it comes to institutional performance that may not find expression in KPIs. As an established method for tracking institutional activity, the value associated with bank of KPIs above is acknowledged, but institutional challenges with regard to reliable and consistent data, as well challenges with regard to establishing meaningful benchmarks, make the completion of the entire suite very difficult. It is important that the approach nationally ensures they are not just collected for their own sakes but give meaningful expression to institutional priorities and give institutions a useful instrument for performance monitoring and improvement. Some ongoing engagement and flexibility with regard to KPIs is necessary to ensure they retain relevance. External expert support may well be useful in developing thinking.
- SETU, along with other TUs, calibrates its activities in the main against the demands and needs of the region in which it is located. The alignment of regional expectations of the University, available resources, and performance targets needs perhaps to be more completely articulated at a national level (perhaps in line with the ongoing revisions to the National Development Plan) as a guideline to institutional performance requirements. Significant barriers to performance remain outside of the control of the University. These need to be articulated and considered in evaluating performance. Balancing competing expectations (regional and national) with internal organisational management in the absence of key enablers is a dynamic at play within the University that must be recognised.

[Word count: 300]

Section 4: Signature of the Head of the Institution

The SER should be signed by the Head of the Institution prior to submission.

On behalf of **South East Technological University**, I declare that the particulars supplied in this report are true and correct.

Signature:	
Print Name:	Prof. Veronica Campbell
Date:	24/09/25